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Huawei commits \$50m to train 2m ICT professionals

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'West discussing reviewing biting sanctions against Zimbabwe people'

By Henry Mwangonde

TANZANIA'S call to Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states to unanimously throw their support on Zimbabwe's bid for lifting of economic sanctions imposed by the West has started paying off with indications that discussions to review them has begun.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Prof. Yalagamba Kabudi (pictured), affirmed this yesterday when briefing journalists on the coming SADC council of ministers expected to start in Dar es Salaam in a fortnight.

Prof Kabudi said the international community has started discussions with Zimbabwe to review and lift the sanctions.

Through various communication modes the Tanzania government has been informed of discussions between the European Union and Zimbabwe on the matter.

Prof Kabudi said the international community has started discussions with Zimbabwe to review and lift the sanctions

During the meeting, the minister outlined four issues that Tanzania has accomplished in the six months of its chairmanship of the economic block, listing them as adoption of Kiswahili as the fourth official language of the block, lifting of sanctions against Zimbabwe, industrialization as well as inter-trade and job creation.

"We believe we have achieved our agendas superbly because most of the issues that we brought on board are on high stages of implementation," he said.

When he took over the SADC chairmanship in August last year, President John Magufuli called upon member states to throw their support behind Zimbabwe's bid to have economic sanctions imposed by the West lifted.

President Magufuli said the sanctions have not only been hurting Zimbabweans but people of the entire bloc. He said it was unacceptable that

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TRA, contractor to see PM on border post building March 11

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has deplored substandard work in the construction of a one-stop border post (OSBP) at Horohoro on the Tanzania-Kenya

border in Tanga Region, which has cost 7.6bn/-.

He has subsequently directed Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) property officer Haruna Sumwa, the contractor and other executives involved in the construction project to come to report to him in

Construction of the building started in July 2011 until September 2014

Dodoma mid next week.

The PM expressed his dismay yesterday during a tour of Mkinga District in the region, noting that the walls had already started to bulge, and demanding: "Why are TRA buildings substandard, while the authority has allowed them to

be used?"

"This is the country's image and its buildings should be good-looking and of high standard. It does not look right to have a visitor being served in a substandard building. We shall take action against

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Andrew Massawe (R), Permanent Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (Labour, Employment, Youth and People with Disabilities), leads a panel discussion at a meeting of ministerial permanent secretaries from Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

France unveils Paris, Dodoma sustainable cities project accord

By Felister Peter

PROVISION of expertise to promote sustainable cities is being readied between the French capital of Paris and the city of Dodoma.

The French Ambassador to Tanzania, Frédéric Clavier (pictured), said yesterday that France is also interested to scale-up similar project for other strategic urban centres, including Mwanza, Mbeya and Mtwara.

"Tanzania can set a good example of sustainable cities



in Africa. We are ready to support this endeavor through provision of expertise," said the envoy when briefing journalists on the visit of six French Senate members to Tanzania.

The six senators are led by Hervé Maurey, who is chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Sustainable Development and also deputy chairman of the Friendship Group with Indian Ocean Countries. They are in the country for a seven-day tour.

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UK supercomputer aids EA locust outbreak fight

LONDON

CLIMATE experts in East Africa are using a UK supercomputer to combat the continent's worst locust outbreak in 70 years, which is robbing people on the brink of starvation of much-needed food.

The supercomputer based in the regional climate

facility in Kenya (ICPAC- the IGAD Climate Prediction and Applications Centre) uses satellite data to track dangerous locust swarms which in just one day can travel nearly 100 miles and consume an amount of crops that would otherwise feed 35,000 people.

This innovative technology - supported by UK Aid and

the UK Met Office - also produces extensive weather forecasts to predict the high winds, rainfall and humidity situations that provide ideal breeding conditions for locusts so climate experts can predict their next destination.

"By improving early

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France unveils Paris, Dodoma sustainable cities project accord

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They will visit development projects supported by France and other local projects that may need French support.

He said the senators are visiting Tanzania ahead of the 2020 Africa-France summit, scheduled for June in Bordeaux, southwestern France, and they are expected to meet with several top government officials invited to attend the summit.

The ambassador highlighted that France through the French Agency for Development (AFD) has been supporting key sectors including water, energy and health to the tune of 760m euros in one decade, 2009 to 2019. The agency has now expanded its services to cover projects in infrastructure, environment and agriculture.

On agriculture, he said they are supporting agro-ecology projects in the Mainland and Zanzibar where small holder farmers are supported through various training sessions and market accessibility.

The senators will also meet executives of French companies active in developing the energy and transport sectors, linked with the creation of the French-Tanzania Chamber of Commerce, set to be inaugurated soon.

Senator Maurey said their visit is dedicated to sustainable cities as well as supporting Tanzania achieve the goal of becoming a middle-income nation.

"We aim to strengthen our relations, promote peace and stability through sustainable solutions," he declared.

Senator Marta de Cidrac, member of the committee for regional planning and

sustainable development said the team expects to visit various projects in agriculture, biodiversity and waste management.

"We want to see how we can work together in this area. We must think new solutions for promotion of sustainable cities," she emphasized.

Senator Jérôme Bignon, member of the committee for regional planning and sustainable development, said they will later hold a dialogue with authorities on how the countries can cooperate in securing the Indian Ocean as well as enhancing defence capacities.

In Dodoma the senators will meet the National Assembly Speaker, Job Ndogai, the Deputy Minister in the Vice-President's Office (Environment), Mussa Ramadhani Sima, the Natural Resources and Tourism minister Dr Hamis Kigwangala and the Dodoma Mayor, Prof Davis Mwamfupe.

In Arusha they will inspect a programme for empowering youth through vocational training, implemented by the Kilimanjaro International Institute for Telecommunications Electronics and Computers (KIITEC). In Morogoro the senators will visit an agro-ecology project coordinated by the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Morogoro Urban Water Supply and Sanitation Authority (MORUWASA) and the Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (SAT) project.

Others senators in the delegation are members of the committee for regional planning and sustainable development, namely Françoise Ramond, Joël Bigot and Guillaume Gontard.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa visits Horohoro One-Stop border post in Tanga Region yesterday. Photo: PMO

TRA, contractor to see PM on border post building March 11

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whoever was involved as public funds must be well spent," he declared.

Earlier, Mkinga district commissioner Yona Maki said the building was erected from July 2011 to September 2014 and started being used in August 2015, housing 16 government institutions.

The DC also explained that the TRA border centre is faced with many challenges, including the need for 62 houses for staff, erratic nature of safe water supply and a shortage of employees.

Majaliwa has meanwhile continued to stress that all people entering the country through the various entry points must be medically examined to rescue the nation from contagious diseases including the fast-spreading coronavirus.

He directed senior police officials in Tanga Region to beef up patrols at border areas, this

including examination of trucks - some of which have been found conveying illegal immigrants.

The PM also warned local residents against being used in the smuggling of illicit drugs "as whoever will be caught doing so will face the full wrath of the law".

He said last year 746 grammes of heroine, 485 kilogrammes of cannabis, 880 kilogrammes of the chewing drug 'qat' were smuggled through the district, urging the DC to ensure enhanced vigilance.

Majaliwa later inaugurated a dialysis services project at Bombo Referral Hospital in Tanga city meant to ease the pressure of referring patients to Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) in Dar es Salaam.

He has also inaugurated the 4-km Makorora-Msambweni road built at a cost of 5.9bn/- and making life easier for residents of Msambweni, Makorora and Mzin-

gani wards.

The two projects were inaugurated during his first day of the PM's regional tour here during which he stressed the government's intention to fast-track development for the good of the people.

He said the health sector has made great strides in the last four years and the government continues to improve health services, including improvement in workers' welfare.

He appealed to health sector workers to be calm, work more diligently and trust their government alongside preparing a procedure of providing systematic public education and sensitisation on how people can protect themselves against communicable and other diseases.

"Exercises are an important aspect, and you are experts in various diseases. You know the cure of most diseases, and that this

includes doing exercises. Some diseases can be cured by merely exercising," he noted.

Speaking about the Makorora-Msambweni road, the PM said that apart from easing the transport problem, the road has improved safety in the wards as it now has street lights.

Earlier, the Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister Umyy Mwalimu said kidney treatment services were being provided by 19 private clinics and five government hospitals - among them MNH, Mbeya, Bugando, KCMC and Benjamin Mkapa referral hospitals.

She said up to 2016 some 90 per cent of dialysis was provided by the private sector, which resulted in high costs to those in need especially those living in far away areas.

The government plans to widen the services by enabling all re-

ferred hospitals to provide kidney treatment, with the first phase of the plan having started in referral hospitals of eight regions - Bombo in Tanga, Meru in Arusha and those of Mtwara and Iringa, Bukoba in Kagera, Maweni in Kigoma and Sekou Toure in Mwanza.

The establishment of one dialysis centre until it starts operating as is in the case of Bombo Hospital costs 574.7m/-, in which case the eight centres will cost a total of 4.5bn/-, the minister noted.

Meanwhile, patients in Tanga with kidney problems expressed gratitude to the government for bringing the dialysis centre close to them as it will save them a lot of money needed if they were shifted to Muhimbili for the service.

They added that the government also needs to reduce the cost of the service as at present the cost is pegged at 250,000/- per single dialysis session.



French Ambassador Frédéric Clavier (2nd-R) briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on the arrival in Tanzania of a delegation of French senators led by Herve Maurey (3rd-L). Photo: Selemani Mpochi

'West discussing reviewing its biting sanctions against Zimbabwe people'

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a region endowed with vast natural resources should remain poor.

On inter-trade, Prof Kabudi said Tanzania was doing business with SADC countries more than it has done at any other time.

He however did not give a breakdown on how much Tanzania has been doing

business with SADC member states.

In 2002 and 2003, the United States imposed targeted measures on the government of Zimbabwe, including financial and visa sanctions against selected individuals, a ban on transfers of defence items and services, and a suspension of non-humanitarian government-

to-government assistance.

The SADC Council of Ministers will among others things discuss finance issues related to the economic block, including member states' contributions.

The ministers will also review and approve recommendations from various sectors for presenting to the summit of Head of State expected

to meet in Maputo, where Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi will be handed over the chairmanship.

SADC is an organization established in 1980 as the Southern African Development Coordinating Conference and later in August 1992 transformed into the Southern African Development Community.

Its mission is to promote

sustainable and equitable economic growth and socio-economic development through efficient productive systems, deeper cooperation and integration, good governance and durable peace and security so that the region emerges as a competitive and effective player in international relations and the world economy.

UK supercomputer aids EA locust outbreak fight

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warning systems, we are helping charities and African governments to take rapid action to protect vulnerable communities," the UK agency said in a statement.

The UK is also disbursing £5 million for an emergency UN appeal to help vulnerable communities in Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Sudan, South Sudan, Eritrea and Djibouti, and for Tanzania to use this data to prepare for the possible arrival of locusts. The fund covers the surveillance of the locusts and spraying of aerial pesticides to kill the insects, so as to protect at least 78,000 hectares of land.

The locust infestation - driven by longer rainy seasons and extreme weather - has already destroyed hundreds of thousands of hectares of vegetation in East Africa. This is decimating the livelihoods of farmers and worsening the humanitarian crisis in East Africa where close to 25 million people are on the brink of starvation.

International Development Secretary Anne-Marie Trevelyan said the devastating locust outbreak in East Africa has paralysed communities that are already facing the daily threat of starvation.

"Through UK Aid and British expertise, we are helping to track, stop and kill dangerous swarms of locust to help millions of people fighting for survival.

"With rising temperatures and increasing cyclones driving these infestations, Britain is stepping up to help vulnerable communities prepare for and adapt to the catastrophic impacts of climate change."

UK aid to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) has already helped protect 73,000 hectares across East Africa, supplied about 290,000 litres of pesticides and trained 600 people to carry out surveillance to stop the locust

spread.

On top of this, UK Aid is helping vulnerable communities cope better with extreme weather by improving access to clean water, and providing drought-resistant seeds, farming tools and nutrition packs to families.

The supercomputer is being provided through the Weather and Climate Information Services for Africa (WISER) programme of the Department for International Development (DFID) in collaboration with the Met Office and the Africa Climate Policy Centre in a £35 million programme that has run from 2015 and ends next year.

It is meant to help to build Africa's resistance to climate change by implementing new policies and practices to plan for extreme changes in weather.

The programme also works to improve the quality of weather and climate information by bringing together experts and support its use on the continent.

It provides expertise to improve climate forecasting ability and strengthen Africa's response to climate change.

UK Aid will support the UN FAO Regional Emergency Appeal for the locust outbreak in East Africa, as the FAO has initially asked donors worldwide for a total of £104million of funding, of which the UK will contribute £5million.

To fight this infestation, the UN Central Emergency Reserve Fund (CERF) has released £7.5 million to FAO as it has the skills and expertise in locust control needed to coordinate the response. The UK is the largest donor to CERF.

With UK Aid backed funding, the FAO is spraying pesticides on the ground and by air to prevent further damage to crops and protect livelihoods. The FAO is also working with governments in Africa to train experts to manage future outbreaks and to conduct research to better understand the swarm, the UK Aid statement specified.



Geita's Catholic Church Bishop Flavian Kassala (R) has a word with Natural Resources and Tourism deputy minister Constantine Kanyasu (L), who visited a church construction site in Geita yesterday shortly before gracing a fundraiser. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt dispatches first batch of 300 inmates into palm oil production

By Guardian Correspondent, Kigoma

THE government has relocated the first batch of 300 inmates to Kwitanga prison in Kigoma region as a strategic move to upgrade it to be the country's major oil palm producing centre.

In 2018, the government selected the Kwitanga prison in Kigoma as the national research centre for palm oil cultivation.

Deputy minister for Home Affairs, Hamad Masauni said this yesterday during his inspection tour at the prison to observe implementation of directives given by Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa during his visit at the prison last year.

The PM also directed the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Investment to establish a modern palm oil factory at the Kwitanga prison as part of efforts to revamp cultivation of the crop in the country.

He also directed the prison management to enhance the crop production by expanding farms, increase the number of prison officers with agricultural research skills and replace current palm trees with palm tree seeds.

Deputy minister Masauni stated that so far 150 inmates from Mwanza, Shinyanga and Tabora regions have been relocated to the prison.

"In implementing the Prime Minister's directive, we have increased workforce at the prison by bringing in 150 inmates. We

are expecting 300 more inmates to arrive in due course to scale up oil palm production", asserted Masauni noting about 6,000 acres have been set aside for the purpose.

He directed the Prisons Department to make sure the Kwitanga prison sustains itself financially instead of depending on funds from central government.

Kigoma region head of prison, ACP Leonard Bushiri supported the move to upgrade the prison into a major oil palm producer in the country. He said once the factory starts operating fully, the prison will no longer be financially dependent.

Kwitanga prison also engages in maize, rice, cassava, beans and vegetable farming, said Bushiri.

Kwitanga prison has been producing palm cooking oil each year whereby in the 2015/2016 season it produced 16,094 liters, 2016/2017 (12,674liters), 2017/2018 (16,000 liters) and 97 barrels of the edible oil in 2018/2019.

The produced cooking oil at Kwitanga prison is partly consumed at the prison and distributed to Bangwe, Kasulu, and Kibondo prisons in Kigoma and other prisons in Kagera, Mwanza, Shinyanga, Singida, Dodoma, Morogoro and Tabora region.

Over 30,000 smallholder farmers in Kigoma region generate income from cultivating oil palm trees and extracting and selling palm oil.

ATC plans to roll out special 'Safari' programme to train tour drivers

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THE state-owned, Arusha Technical College through its Automotive Engineering department, is kitting out special Safari training programme for drivers that intend to work in the country's tourism industry.

The special ATC driver training programme, targets those that will be handling 'Four Wheel Drive' (4WD) vehicles, such as Toyota Land Cruisers, Nissan Safaris and elongated Land-Rovers Defenders as well as the large overlander trucks used by mostly foreign tourists venturing into the wilderness of National Parks or Game Reserves to undertake game viewing, photography and filming safaris or hunting.

According to the head of Automotive Engineering Department at ATC, Dr Peter Mashingo, the new tourism focused driving classes are expected to commence from next August 2020. Arusha itself is home to more than 500 tour companies all with large fleets of vehicles.

And apart from other than dealing with gears, clutches and steering wheels, the training programme will also package in, foreign language courses, especially English, French, Germany and Spain to help local driver-guides communicate well with their tour-focused passengers that usually want to know many things en-route.

"We have already recruited foreign language experts who are to train the driver-guides in

English, German, Spanish and French; but more tongues will be included in future according to demand," said Dr Mashingo.

The ATC automotive department is specifically also targeting to train drivers on how to negotiate their way on rough roads, flooded tracks and other challenging environments during remote game driving or tracking.

Training sequence coordinator at Arusha Technical College, David Mtunguja explained that the 'Driving courses' at the ATC started two years ago and so far more than 700 students have benefitted in the training undertaken in association with the state Vocational Education Training Authority (VETA).

"We expect that, after the introduction of

special 'Safari Driving Course for Tour Driver-Guides, in five months' time, more trainees from within Tanzania and possibly outside the country will enroll and benefit from the new package," he said.

Pivoted in Arusha, the Northern Zone tourism circuit, which is home to the Ngorongoro Crater, Mount Kilimanjaro, Lake Manyara and Serengeti National Park, handles more than 80 percent of all tourists bound for Tanzania.

The country receives over 1.5 million leisure visitors per year but according to the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Dr Khamis Kigwangalla, Tanzania targets to increase the number to 2 million tourists by next December.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS
IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT

APPLICATION FOR TANZANIA CITIZENSHIP

Mr IKRAM ULLAH, P.O.Box 483 TANGA

The person whose photograph is shown is applying to the Minister for Home Affairs for Tanzania Citizenship. His/Her Nationality at present is PAKISTAN. His/Her Occupation is PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR. He/She has been in this country since 2010 that, any person who knows as to why citizenship should not be granted to the applicant, should send a written and signed Statement to the Principal Commissioner of Immigration Services P.O.Box 512 Dar-es-Salaam. Ref. DN TA/TP/4318

For COMMISSIONER GENERAL OF IMMIGRATION SERVICES

GARDAWORLD

INVITATION FOR PRE-QUALIFICATION OF SUPPLIERS GW/2020-2021/PQ/01

GardaWorld Tanzania is the leading security provider in Tanzania, GW has been providing security services to the Private and Commercial sectors in Tanzania since 1999. This has been predominantly in the mining, agricultural, and industrial, commercial and Residential security market throughout Tanzania.

The company boasts of being the market leader in Tanzania providing a full range of security services, ranging from man guarding, security dogs and robust electronic security solutions.

GW now invites suitably qualified and competent bidders to submit sealed prequalification bid(S) for the supply of various goods and services for the Financial Year 2020/2021. In one or more of the categories appearing below. The objective of the prequalification is to identify competent individual /firms /companies that will be called upon from time to time to quote / tender for supply of goods and services during the Financial year 2020/2021.

Category No.	Description
GW 2020/01	Supply and delivery of general office stationary and computer consumables
GW 2020/02	Supply and delivery of dog feeds and dog handling equipment
GW 2020/03	Supply and delivery of ICT equipment, computers and computer accessories
GW 2020/04	Supply, delivery and maintenance of firefighting equipment
GW 2020/05	Supply and delivery of tailored staff uniforms and footwear
GW 2020/06	Supply and delivery of Protective clothing and equipment
GW 2020/07	Supply and delivery of motor vehicle tyres, tubes and batteries
GW 2020/08	Supply, servicing and maintenance of air condition equipment
GW 2020/09	Motor vehicle servicing, maintenance & repairs
GW 2020/10	Motor cycles servicing, maintenance & repairs
GW 2020/11	Design and printing of promotional, communication and corporate branded materials
GW 2020/12	Supply and delivery of VHF Radios, Batteries, chargers, antennas, repeaters etc.
GW 2020/13	Supply and delivery of office furniture and equipment,
GW 2020/14	Supply and delivery hardware, Electricals and construction materials.
GW 2020/15	Supply and delivery of general Alarms, CCTV and Access Control equipment
GW 2020/16	Provision of Car hire Services
GW 2020/17	Provision of Clearing and Forwarding services
GW 2020/18	Provision of travel and air ticketing services
GW 2020/19	Provision of legal services
GW 2020/20	Supply of Fuels and Lubricants
GW 2020/21	Supply and delivery of Office cleaning materials, equipment, detergents and disinfectants

The Prequalification document with details can be obtained from GardaWorld Offices, DAR ES SALAAM, MWANZA and ARUSHA during working hours.

Please note that if you intend to provide multiple goods / services, a separate prequalification of suppliers document must be submitted for each category.

GW reserves the right to accept or reject any applicant wholly or in part and is not bound to accept the lowest offer. Prospective bidders are hereby notified that canvassing of any kind will lead to automatic disqualification. GW may plan to visit supplier premises to verify information contained in the bid documents and obtain assurance of the vendor's capacity to deliver.

Pre-qualification in plain sealed envelopes clearly marked "Pre- qualification of supplier for FY 2020/2021" and indicating the category number applied for on the envelope should be dropped at GW office (upon signing of register as evidence of submission) and addressed to:

Procurement Committee
GardaWorld
Plot 16, Lucy Lameck Street
P.O.Box 12747
Dar es Salaam

Branch Manager
GardaWorld
P.O.Box 2076
MWANZA

General Manager
GardaWorld
P.O.Box 10675
ARUSHA

215652701

The closing date for the submission of applications for prequalification of Suppliers is **Friday, 13th March 2020 5.00 PM**



INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION OF CONTRACTORS

- NMB Bank Plc. is the largest commercial Bank in Tanzania in terms of branch network, customer base and profitability.
- The Bank has set aside funds for year 2020, towards the cost of construction, repair and maintenance of its facility at Head Office and Branch network across the country. It is intended that part of these funds will be applied to eligible payments for provision of repair, maintenance and construction works for the Bank.
- The NMB Bank Plc. now invites all eligible, qualified and competent Building and Civil Contractors to apply for prequalification of various construction/fit-out/repair/refurbishment works of their premises in various regions across the country.
- The Selection of eligible and qualified Contractors will be conducted through the Competitive Tendering Procedures as specified in the NMB Procurement Policy and Procedures.
- This prequalification of contractors is required for all 8 zones namely Dar Es Salaam, Eastern, Central, Northern, Southern, Highland, Lake and Western. The required contractors are from class 1 to 7 (both Building & Civil) and should be located/have offices in the regions in where our zones are categorized. Selection of pre-qualified contractors will be done per each zone mentioned above. Details of the zone offices and selection criteria are as stipulated in the pre-qualification document.
- A complete set of prequalification document in English shall be obtained by interested applicants through NMB website through this link www.nmbbank.co.tz/tenders or through email request to procurement department via procurement@nmbbank.co.tz. Contractors will be required to purchase the document at a non-refundable fee of TSHS 50,000.00 for each zone you are applying to and payable to NMB Account No. 302040002 Account Name - Tender Fees at any NMB Branch. The original Bank slip MUST be accompanied with the pre-qualification document upon submission as one of the mandatory qualification criteria.
- A prospective applicant requiring any clarification regarding this pre-qualification may send their request in writing to NMB Secretary Tender Committee through email address procurement@nmbbank.co.tz. Any clarification/amendment of the pre-qualification document will be communicated through the same link of obtaining the tender document and can be accessible to all prospective applicants.
- All current and previous prequalified contractors that are working with the bank or in the bank preferred list of contractors are requested to apply.
- The closing time and date for submission of written Tenders is on Tuesday 24th March, 2020 at 15.00 hours, by that time your application document must be properly sealed and submitted to the respective **NMB Zonal Offices that you are applying for with exception of Dar Es Salaam Zone which must be submitted to NMB Head Office as per the addresses provided in the pre-qualification document.** The tender to be marked on top of the envelope: **PREQUALIFICATION OF BUILDING AND CIVIL WORKS CONTRACTORS FOR ZONE.** NMB BANK PLC shall be entitled to reject any application received after the due date and time or application not received at the respective zone. The address for delivery of the applications for each zone are as indicated in the prequalification document obtained in our website.
- Late applications, portion of applications, electronic applications, and applications not received, not opened and not read out aloud in public at the bid opening ceremony shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstances.

*Terms & conditions apply

The Managing Director, NMB Bank Plc
NMB Head Office Ohio/Ali Hassan Mwinyi Street.
P.O. Box 9213, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania.

215651601

www.nmbbank.co.tz

Tanzania attains 75 per cent in reduction of TB in Africa

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

TANZANIA is the second country in Africa in reducing infection and cure of Tuberculosis (TB) by attaining 75 per cent of the set targets, according to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children Dr Zainabu Chaula.

Dr Chaula revealed this here yesterday when receiving evaluation report on the TB and leprosy strategic plan.

She said the World Health Organization (WHO) made the evaluation in collaboration with health experts from inside and outside the country to see whether the targets set to fight the diseases had been attained.

"They evaluate how we have attained the targets we had set in 2015 including increase coverage to all sufferers by more than 29 percent," she said and added that the evaluation was also comparing with the world targets in the eradication of TB and Leprosy.

However, Dr Chaula said there is still the problem of education among the wananchi that TB is transmitted through the air.

"We advise the wananchi to avoid congestion, they should sleep in well ventilated rooms, personal hygiene and clean surroundings and those

with TB symptoms to immediately go to health centres as TB treatment is available from dispensary level," she said.

On her part the Acting Manager for the National Tuberculosis and Leprosy Programme (NTLP) Dr Zuweina Kondo said they have succeeded to identify sufferers from 37 percent in 2015 to 53 percent currently.

"We have reached 43 per cent of sufferers more for 2018 - 75,545 and in 2019 we reached 82,140 sufferers as the more we identify and reach the sufferers, the more we reduce the infection rate," she said.

On children Dr Kondo said they have attained the WHO goal by 15 percent which is the highest percentage set globally of which Tanzania is among seven countries

She said in regard to leprosy, they have eradicated the disease from 19 districts by 2015 by giving education, with 19 remaining..



We have reached 43 per cent of sufferers more for 2018 - 75,545 and in 2019 we reached 82,140 sufferers as the



NMB Bank Plc western zone Sospeter Magessa (R) symbolically hands over 1,800 T-shirts to Simiyu regional administrative secretary Jumanne Sagini for use during the upcoming International Women's Day (March 8) to be held at national level in Simiyu Region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Dr Shein cautions public servants over unethical conduct

By Guardian Reporter

ZANZIBAR President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein has cautioned leaders at the Ministry of Constitution and Legal Affairs over unethical conduct when executing their duties as they are dealing with sensitive matters.

He made the statement at State House yesterday during his meeting with ministry leaders who

presented to him reports for the first half of the 2019/2020 financial year from July to December.

He said: "Being diligent helps you to properly supervise activities under your docket. This ministry directly touches the lives of individual Zanzibaris".

President Shein said the government plans to establish a law school that will contribute into strengthening the country's law

sector. He said processes for establishment of the law school are ongoing through the Planning Commission and Public Service Office. He insisted that good leaders should be capable of transforming challenges into opportunities and continue working diligently.

Zanzibar Chief Secretary, Dr Abdulhamid Yahya Mzee said the report has been professionally prepared taking into consideration

that the ministry deals directly with the people. He said workers in the ministry are determined to ensure justice to every citizen.

Constitutional and Legal Affairs Minister in Zanzibar, Khamis Juma Mwalimu said the ministry has been implementing its duties in accordance with the 2015/2020 CCM election manifesto whereas issues related to justice and law are stated in Section 121 of the

document.

Mwalimu said the ministry has been working to prepare a draft document for establishment of the law school and that it has finalized processes for the establishment of the Justice Sector Forum. He said the ministry has printed Kiswahili copies of various laws which have been distributed to citizens in both, Pemba and Unguja Islands. "We also ad-

vised the government on various legal aspects including preparation of contracts", said Mwalimu.

Earlier, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Constitution and Legal Affairs, George Joseph Kazi when presenting the report on the ministry's implementation of work strategy said the office has provided capacity building training to a number of officials.

According to Kazi the ministry

has managed to reduce and control disputes especially at family levels whereby the number of divorces has been reduced. He attributed the achievement with regular trainings to officials in the office of Zanzibar Mufti.

He however informed that they are still facing difficulties to make decisions on rape cases due to poor cooperation from victims and parents.



Natural Protection Campaign "ambassador" Nangasu Wallema plants a tree at Uzambara in Kihurio ward yesterday in implementation of an initiative meant to arrest desertification in Same District, Kilimanjaro Region. Photo: Correspondent Ashton Balaigwa

Battle against corruption vital - Mwinyi

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

FORMER President Ali Hassan Mwinyi has said that the country has a lot to do towards total eradication of corruption, calling on the general public to support the government's efforts to fight the vice.

Mwinyi made the remarks here during the launch of an anti-corruption strategy which is aimed to reach 16 million children and students in various primary schools and universities in the country.

The strategy will be implemented by youths from the Tanzania Scouts Association.

"Tanzania still has a debt in fighting corruption; we should all together now support President John Magufuli's efforts to address the challenge. I hope that the launch of this strategy will contribute much in the war. We have a number of related vices which include theft, sabotage, bribery and others," he said.

Launching the strategy minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service and Good Governance) George Mkuchika

urged young people to be first ambassadors in the fight against corruption.

He launched the strategy on behalf of the Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan.

Minister Mkuchika said that corruption has affected communities and has led to others lose their lives.

"Every Tanzania has role to fight corruption, this involve unearthing those who engage in corrupt actions. We should fight this war together so as to make Tanzania free from corruption," he added.

According to him, children and young people in various primary and universities will be reached with the anti-corruption education equipping them with essential techniques to fighting corruption.

Mwantumu Mahiza, head of Scout said that the strategy's aimed to fight corruption for sake of the present and future generation.

"We hope that through the 16 million primary and college students, majority of Tanzanians will also be reached in the fight against corruption."

Concern as human settlements threaten wildlife corridors

By Guardian Reporter, Moshi

WILDLIFE experts have expressed concern over the blockage of wildlife corridors linking the protected areas with the adjacent ecosystems.

They want the involvement of

all stakeholders, including local governments and the surrounding communities, in addressing the crisis.

Senior official from the Tanzania National Parks (Tanapa), Herman Batio said that the situation contributes to the increase

of wildlife attacks to human settlements and farms.

He was speaking during the commemoration of the World Wildlife Day held at the College of African Wildlife Management (CAWM), Mwaka, in Moshi town.

"Constructing permanent set-

tlements in wildlife corridors do not only affect the animals' daily life but also threatens lives of the people and other properties in the surrounding areas," he said.

He named some of the blocked animal corridors as Ndarakwa, Meru and Endument area in Kili-

manjaro region.

"Other corridors which have been attacked by human activities are the one located between Kilimanjaro and Tsavo West and Kitendeni which is found between Kilimanjaro and Amboseli in Kenya.

Earlier, national coordinator of Malihai Club, Benjamin Kijika said that the wildlife attacks have been causing huge impacts to the environment in people's settlements and water sources.

Peter Tungu, hygiene and environment officer in Moshi said

that the government in collaboration with CAWM has embarked on tree planting in the villages near protection areas. "Our aim is to ensure that natural atmosphere in all villages surrounding the Kilimanjaro National Park (KINAPA) protects," he added.

Improved O&OD



Tanzania can develop dramatically and build a world exemplar Nation of the 21st Century with “People’s Self-Help Efforts” and “Government-Community Collaboration”

This article is to introduce to Tanzanian citizens one of the important cooperation activities between the two nations of Tanzania and Japan through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), namely Improved O&OD.

What is “Improved O&OD”?

For more than 10 years, JICA, Japan’s bilateral aid agency, has been closely cooperating with the Government of Tanzania (GoT), trying to develop a dynamic and sustainable style of local development and service delivery through an innovative local government administration with “Government-Community Collaboration”. This methodology is called “Improved O&OD”.

“O&OD” is an abbreviation of “Opportunities and Obstacles to Development” and this idea was originally established by GoT in 2001 to promote participatory local development planning.

Since 2009, the President’s Office - Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) and JICA have been implementing the cooperation project to improve this “O&OD” mechanism to more effectively nurture “Self-Help Efforts” of the communities and deepen collaborative relationship between Local Government and communities. This so-called “Improved O&OD” concept is based on the great unique advantage of the Country inherited from the founder of the nation, the late Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere.

The World Unique Advantage of Tanzania

JICA found with great appreciation that in Tanzania, there are a lot of communities where people organize themselves to improve their lives and develop their own communities without waiting for the Government to come and do for them. Many of the basic facilities in communities, such as primary/secondary schools, dispensaries, Kitongoji roads, irrigation schemes, water supply systems, etc., are constructed by community people themselves.

And we learned that it is a precious heritage from Mwalimu Nyerere, who believed: “Development is the participation of people in a mutual learning experience involving themselves, their local resources, external change agents, and outside resources. People cannot be developed but they can only develop themselves by participating in activities, which affect their well-being. People are not being developed when they are herded like animals into new ventures.”

However, it is a pity that nowadays many people seem to have discontinued this outstanding practice of development.

“Improved O&OD” aims at recalling and reviving this dormant virtue of the Nation.

Japan developed the Nation in a similar way

This valuable practice of Tanzania reminds us of our own experience of development in Japan.

At the beginning of the development and nation building of Japan in late 19th and early 20th Century, the Government was still poor, and the very limited resources had to be concentrated on national strategic development, especially industrialization and militarization, to avoid being colonized by then-European superpowers.

While the Government did not have adequate resources to attend the needs of the people, each community tried to overcome poverty and improve their lives through “Self-Help Efforts” of the people themselves to-

gether with the local leaders, and collaboration amongst themselves. Local Governments played an important role to accompany such efforts of the people, encourage and support them. The Central Government also tried to provide maximum support to create an enabling environment for the Local Governments to carry out this task.

As seen above, Japan’s development was not attained by the Government’s efforts alone, but it was basically each citizen, communities and groups (small companies) who made efforts to develop themselves. The Government appreciated, accompanied, encouraged and nurtured such people’s efforts.

Government cannot do everything alone

Just like the Japanese Government at that time, the GoT is facing a similar challenge of limited resources in terms of budget as well as staff inadequacy to pursue huge and diversified tasks. It is almost impossible for the Government to do everything all alone.

It was based on such analysis that PO-RALG and JICA perceived the most effective way of development in this Country is to take full advantage of its great virtue of “People’s Self-Help Efforts” to complement the Government’s efforts towards national/local development and improvement of people’s livelihood.

For that sake, the “Improved O&OD” Project considered that the key is to build an appropriate capacity of the Ward Extension Officers (Agriculture, Community Development, Education, Health, Livestock, etc.) who are in the frontline to accompany community people and collaborate with them. They are expected to be a bridge between people and the Government.

Training the Ward Extension Staff to facilitate community people

The Project established an innovative mechanism to train such extension officers in a very practical way. It will enable them to facilitate the community so that people can con-



A Ward Facilitator (Left) accompanies a hamlet group representative (Right) while engaging in the field watering. (Mughunga ward, Singida DC)

firm their felt needs, organize them and carry out activities by themselves whenever possible instead of waiting for the Government to do for them. Such trained extension officers are called “Ward Facilitators” (WFs). WFs, after having been trained, visit the Villages and Vitongoji frequently. With their facilitation, community people implement their priority projects by themselves within their capacity. The following are some examples of what has been happening in such villages (It is a pity that we can show only two cases among dozens.):

Villages are changing dramatically with Improved O&OD

Maseyu Village: Pre-Primary School in all 5 Vitongoji and Completion of an Unfinished Dispensary

If you drive from Morogoro to Dar es Salaam, you will find Maseyu Village along the highway within a 30 minutes’ drive. The villagers’ long worry was to send their children to pre-primary school far away located across the dangerous highway. After a tragic accident of a boy killed by a snake on his way back from school, the villagers stood up and decided to construct their own pre-primary

school in their respective Vitongoji. WF played a crucial role to facilitate them to decide, agree and organize themselves to realize their dream. After two years, all the 5 Vitongoji have constructed their own pre-primary schools which reduced time to commute and risks of accident, and also raised enrolment rate dramatically. Not only did they construct, but they also looked for someone who can teach within or around their community and paid their salary.

Morogoro District Council (DC) recognized such precious efforts of Maseyu people with high appreciation. These schools now have been registered by the Government and teachers have been assigned officially.

Being convinced with this experience of accomplishing pre-primary school construction, the villagers decided to complete the unfinished dispensary that has been abandoned for years. It took almost another 7 years. But they continued without giving up, advancing little by little, and finally completed it recently. Morogoro DC supported them by providing material for roofing, and now assigning medical staff. The dispensary started its services in July 2018.

People have strong confidence to WFs and Local Government, and they

proudly say that their village is the BEST in Tanzania. Furthermore, the Village Executive Officer (VEO) won the election and became a District Councillor, leading the development of the area.

Mang’ula B & Mshikamano: Beautiful Mindset Change of the Villagers

Mang’ula B Village is located in Kilombo District on the way from Mikumi to Ifakara. Facing the gate of Udzungwa National Park, it is considered as a Semi-Urban village with a lot of movement and migration of people. Thus, it was one of the most difficult villages for the WFs to organize their “Self-Help Efforts”.

“We had never trusted the Government Officers before.” A woman of this village told us and continued; “They seldom visit us, and when they come, they command things that we don’t want. But these WFs were different. We found them

[Improved O&OD has been approved by the Government as part of National Planning and Implementation system in October 2019, and it will be introduced to all the 26 Regional Secretariat and 185 LGAs through Initial Orientation Workshops to the concerned officers from January 2020]

always accompanying us in our activities, listen to us, and they are a part of the community now. We consider them as part of our family.” (Similar scenery can be seen in the photo) “I didn’t contribute my land before when TASAF came to construct roads and demanded it. But this time I did, because it was ourselves who decided to make this road together with WFs.”

Mang’ula B village is now one of the best villages in the Project. People are united. They trust the WFs and Village Leaders. The Village Chairperson, Hamisi was elected, since he was a very active group leader of such activities.

They constructed 14km of road in the Village, and built a bridge so that their children can go to school crossing the river safely (see the photo), set bee hives to avoid elephants to enter and disturb farms, etc. They also decided to construct some business spaces to rent so that the village can have additional revenue sources to support more activities.

“I had never attended a village assembly before.” One of the women’s group leaders told us; “I had never thought it was for us. It was for the leaders. But now I do attend, because having been working in our group activities, I felt that I need to participate in decision making of the village that affects us.”

She is now attending village meetings, not because “she has to”, but because “she wants to”.

We have a DREAM

It is our sincere dream that Tanzania will have such beautiful villages throughout the Country, full of vitality and ownership towards their own development, based on strong patriotism, pride and love to their own community. We do believe that it is very possible in this Country, developing close collaborative relationship between the communities and the Local Governments, together with strong support from the Central Government to ensure an enabling environment for it.

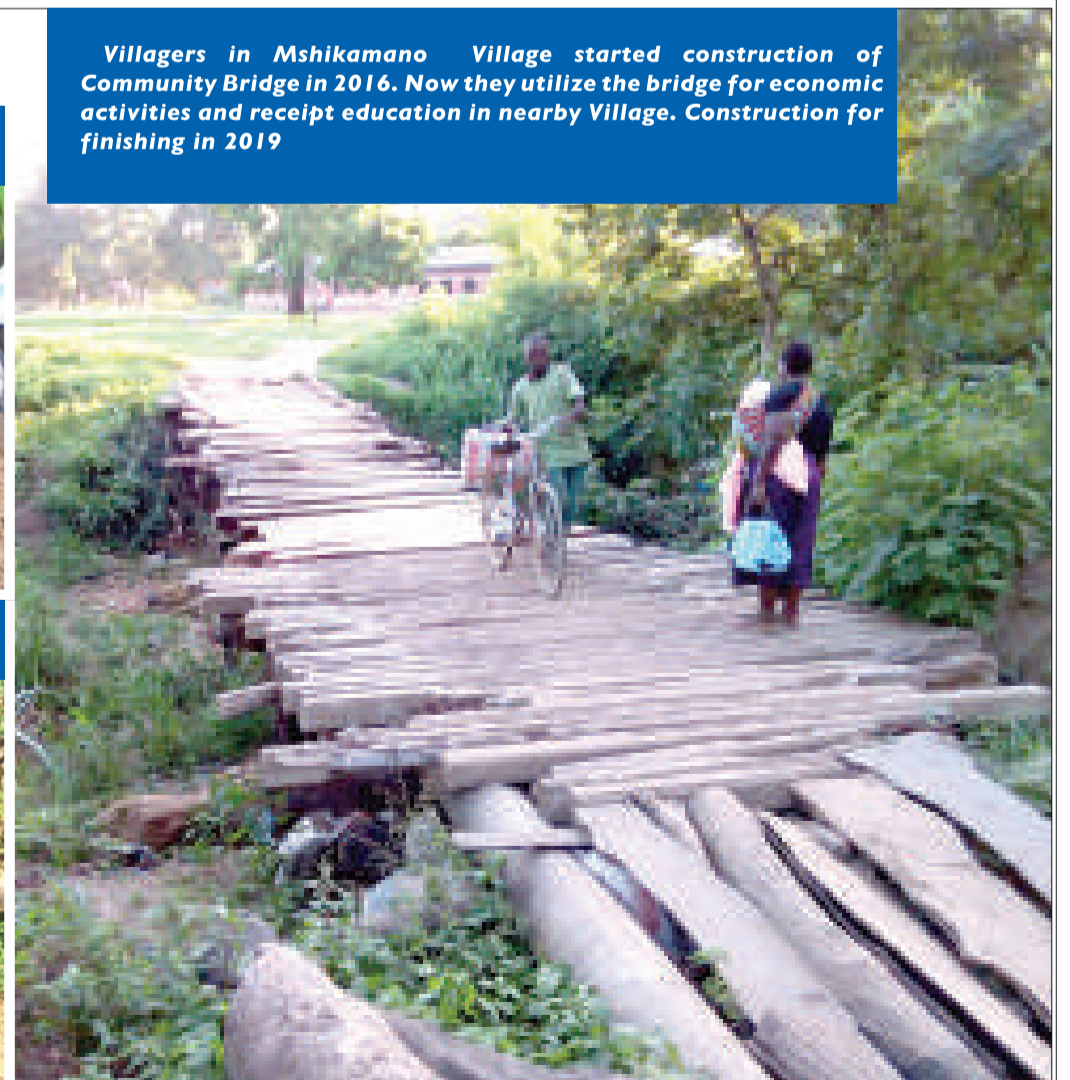
By doing so, the Government can provide good services to the people with minimum cost while concentrating its limited resources on vigorous and dynamic national economic development, just like how Japan developed its economy and welfare of the people.



Villagers in Mang’ula B construct Community Road in 2015



Bridge construction in Mshikamano Village



Villagers in Mshikamano Village started construction of Community Bridge in 2016. Now they utilize the bridge for economic activities and receipt education in nearby Village. Construction for finishing in 2019

Young people most prone to road accidents, WHO states

By Guardian Correspondent, Kibaha

It is widely acknowledged that the number eight cause of deaths in the world is road accidents and that young people are more likely to be involved in accidents.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), children aged 15 to 29 years are said to be more prone to danger due to their fond of being at driver's seats in motorcycles (bodaboda) and tricycles (bajaj).

This was revealed at the weekend in Kibaha at the closing of part of training seminar on Road Safety to 12 primary and secondary schools from Coast Region.

The Ambassador for Road Safety, who is also the Director of Road Safety association (RSA) Augustus Fungo said the eight-month project began in November 2019 and was to be implemented in Coast and Kilimanjaro regions.

He said according to WHO statistics 1,350,000 people die and 50,000 remain with permanent disabilities in the world every year.

"This situation has forced us to provide education and we will continue doing so to rescue young people many of who drive boda boda and bajajs," he said.

They also plan to educate people with disabilities so that they should also be well conversant with road safety rules to avoid accidents.

The acting Coast Region Traffic Officer ASP Africanus Sulle said the training will assist in at least reducing accidents especially to students who cross roads to go to school.

He called on parents to assist children to cross the road instead of leaving them on their own.

He said in areas where the zebra crossing signs are indiscernible they should be redrawn to avoid accidents.

Kongowe Primary School student Nyambura Marwa said the education has helped them as now they are also assisting others to cross the road and believe that by doing so they have contributed in reducing accidents.



This situation has forced us to provide education and we will continue doing so to rescue young people many of who drive boda boda and bajajs



Construction of a bridge to link Dar es Salaam's Magomeni Kwa Harubu and Mwananyamala suburbs well under way yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

30 potato trucks stuck along Mbeya-Makete road for one week

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

MORE than 30 drivers of trucks that transport potatoes from villages in Ilungu Ward in Mbeya District have asked the government to improve the Mbeya-Makete road through Isy-

enje claiming that it is in very bad state and is a hazard to their safety.

Speaking to this paper at Igoma Village when they were filling potholes the drivers said they are stuck at the village for more than one week after one of

the trucks was stuck in the mud and blocked the road.

One of the drivers Abdalla Juma said the road as of now has been severely damaged due to the ongoing rains in the area and added that they decided among themselves to fill the potholes

on some road sections in order to remove the truck that was stuck in the mud but still they have not been successful.

Another driver Raphael Mwandembwa said some trucks have broken down due to the poor road and use a lot of time

travelling just a short distance.

He said the area is the biggest potato producer in Mbeya region and the government collects a lot of revenue thereof, but no one remembers to improve the road. He said whenever their trucks get stuck they are forced

to use some youths to offload potato bags to reduce truck weight and reload again after the truck is freed.

Recently the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication Elius Mwakalinga directed

Mbeya Region TANROADS Manager Eliazary Rwekaza to make emergency repairs to the road.

He directed that the road should be improved to gravel level to enable the wananchi use it in their economic and social activities.

Africa calls for more economic empowerment for its women

WINDHOEK

THE Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) has called for enhanced efforts to empower African women economically in the lead-up to International Women's Day, March 8.

Founded in 1962, the PAWO is Africa's first and oldest women's organization.

During its 10th congress last week, it concluded that although the continent has made much progress in achieving gaps in gender equality, parity and empowerment, more still needs to be done.

The conclusion is in accordance with International Women's Day observed by the United Nations to recognize and promote the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women.

PAWO President Assetou Koite called for a maximum investment in women to reduce discrimination and enhance their participation in social issues.

She also asked all 55 African Union (AU) member states to create an enabling environment for women and girls, including those in rural areas, by ensuring that they participated in the bottom-top approach to eradicate poverty.

"Economic empowerment on the African continent can only be attained if women occupy high political and social positions," the AU quoted her as saying. "We must make efforts in a number of areas to ensure women achieve education and also take advantage of the emerging opportunities in science and technology.

"We must eliminate the obstacles and discrimination women face in terms of access to financing."

Meanwhile, Namibian President Hage Geingob underscored the contribution of the women's organizations including PAWO for Africans to attain human dignity, and break the chains of oppression, when he lauded the African leaders' recent decision to declare 2020-30 as the new Decade for African Women's Financial and Economic Inclusion.

President Geingob noted that Namibia had prioritized gender parity as a means of addressing historical imbalances and injustices toward women.

He explained that 46 percent of Namibia's parliament was comprised of women and also that the government's leadership positions are required to be filled 50 percent by women.

"To further demonstrate our commitment to enhance capacity on gender equality, Namibia is in the process of establishing an International Women's Peace Centre, which will focus on national, regional, and international conflict resolutions and management activities, as well as aspects of mediation and negotiations," he said.

"I however urge you, that as we focus on the girl-child, we should not forget the boy-child. In addition, youth should be empowered in order for the continent to benefit from their vast and untapped potential."

Citing AU Commission Chairman Moussa Faki Mahamat, the chairman's special representative Hawa Ahmed Yousouf underscored eliminating all forms of discrimination against women to ensure full participation in the economic, political and social development of their countries.

Faki has regularly observed that despite the suffering of women and children during conflicts, women have always demonstrated their resilience to fight the scourge of poverty and they remained the agents of change the continent needed.



Wilson Makalanga (R) of the Kahama office of the Tanzania Revenue Authority addresses Bajaj owners yesterday on a range of tax-related issues. Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia

TFS starts restoring natural vegetation in Same District

By Guardian Correspondent, Same

TANZANIA Forest Services Agency (TFS) Northern Zone has started restoring the natural vegetation in Same District, Kilimanjaro Region after beginning to plant 4,000 natural fruit trees in every ward in the district.

Speaking at the launching of the tree planting exercise in Kihurio Ward, TFS manager Edward Shil-

ogile said through the Eradicate Drought from Same (Tokomeza Ukame Same) campaign they have started planting trees in all areas in the ward by using primary and secondary school students.

"These trees will be planted in areas of government institutions including schools, health centres, along the roads and all residential houses and every mwananchi is re-

sponsible to take care of them," said the TFS Manager.

Shilogile said they will closely make follow up to ensure the trees are being taken care of so that they bring the intended benefits in restoring Same District's natural vegetation that was being depleted.

For his part, the Ambassador of the campaign for the conservation of the country resources Ngasu

Wallema said they decided to use students in the campaign in order to teach them on the importance of environmental conservation while still young.

He said the campaign targets to plant 4,000 trees starting with all 15 wards in Same East Constituency and later it will be the turn for Same West Constituency.

Kihurio Ward Councillor Mariane

Mariane (CCM) said the hazards from environmental destruction started to be seen and the campaign stands to arrest the situation.

He said through all village chairmen in the ward they have agreed among themselves that all livestock that wander about should be penned in and steps will be taken against owners whose animals will be seen wandering about.

Residence IDs are a basic right for every Zanzibari - Dr Shein

By Guardian reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein has allayed fears among the wananchi who have not been given Zanzibar Residence Identity Cards saying they should be patient as the IDs are a right to all Zanzibari residents.

Speaking to reporters at the weekend soon after he had his own details verified in the Permanent Voters Register at Bungi Primary School polling centre in Zanzibar South Region, Dr Shein said the Residence IDs are very important as they help him in accom-

plishing many undertakings, not in elections alone.

Dr Shein who was accompanied by his spouse, Mwanamema Shein, appealed to wananchi not to harbour any worries as the Zanzibar Electoral Commission (ZEC) will do its duty in ensuring that every Zanzibari qualified to obtain the ID will get it in accordance with the laid down laws and procedures.

Dr Shein explained that the exercise was going on well according to the time schedule and has enabled thousands of Zanzibaris to have their per-

sonal details verified.

He said all exercises are normally faced by challenges especially those involving many people including the integration of the new technology, hence he called on the wananchi to exercise tolerance.

He also said the Zanzibar government will ensure that this year's election will be free and fair and stressed that whoever plans to create violence will be dealt with.

He said the government is for all people. And not one person and that after he leaves the office the Zanzibar government will remain adding that he believes it will be a CCM led government as it has always been.

He called upon the wananchi to pray for him as well as for the government so that tax collection continues so as to enable him to keep his promise of salary increase before he leaves office.

He stressed that ZEC is an independent body that has been in place since the inception of multipartism and has been doing very well as it is run in accordance with the Zanzibar constitution and other regulations.



Zanzibar Education and Vocational Training deputy minister of Simai Muhammed Said (R) visits an exhibition featuring training equipment and aids held at the State University of Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Rahma Suleiman

Africa needs to stop being Eurobond price taker, AfDB says

JOHANNESBURG

AFRICAN governments need to be tougher when negotiating the terms of Eurobonds and commercial loans, the African Development Bank said.

Some external debts mature before the infrastructure projects they fund start generating returns,

which raises refinancing risks, the president of the development-finance lender warned. Neither should African borrowers be "price takers," he said.

"The short-term maturity of some of these debts does not match the long-term revenue streams," Akinwumi Adesina said. "You are going to have to pay

back when you are not earning the money. These bonds are oversubscribed because people see opportunities to make a killing."

Governments have increased their issuance of dollar and euro bonds in recent years as loose monetary conditions in developed nations push global investors to buy higher-yielding assets, not

least those in emerging markets.

Africa's sovereign issuance in the two currencies totaled \$53 billion in 2018 and 2019, according to data compiled by Bloomberg. Egypt, Angola, South Africa and Nigeria were the most prolific borrowers in that period.

This year, Angola, Gabon and Ghana have tapped the Eurobond

market. Ghana got around \$15 billion of orders for a \$3 billion deal last month.

Investors have been richly rewarded for buying African sovereign dollar debt. It generated a total return of 21% in 2019, more than any other region in emerging markets.

Public debt in sub-Saharan Af-

rica has doubled to 50% of gross domestic product since 2008, the International Monetary Fund estimates. Kenya raised its debt ceiling last year and the IMF said the government should be more cautious in building credit. In South Africa, authorities see debt spiking to 78% of GDP by 2028, from just above 60%. And while Nigeria's debt is

low as a proportion of GDP, the government spends more than half its revenue servicing it, according to the IMF.

Rising debt-service ratios are "increasingly problematic," Razia Khan, Standard Chartered Plc's chief economist for the Middle East and Africa, said in a tweet Sunday.



Home Affairs deputy minister Hamad Masauni (2nd-R) and Dominick Kazmil of Kwitanga Prison in Kigoma Region have a feel of palm oil fruit harvested in the prison's farm yesterday. Photo: Home Affairs ministry

UNECA: Africa's rapid urbanisation largely unplanned

ADDIS ABABA

THE current rapid urbanisation across the African continent is largely unplanned and "potentially catastrophic," the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UN-ECA) has stressed.

The remark was made by Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Director of Gender, Poverty and Social Policy Division at the ECA, during a high-level continental meeting that was held under the theme "Accelerating Progress with Agenda 2030 and

Agenda 2063 in Africa: The local Dimension," which brought together mayors and local authority leaders from around Africa.

"While urbanization inherently enables economic productivity and improvements in social outcomes, and the opportunities for this in Africa are enormous, it does so only when it is planned and managed," Ruzvidzo said.

The ECA official also stressed that the current "business as usual" scenario of urban planning and management in Africa is threatening

sustainable development targets raising the need for sub-national authorities including city leaders, who are critical actors to accelerating the implementation of the two Agendas to be fully engaged in related processes.

"Urbanization is one of the mega trends that are transforming the global and African continent's development landscapes irreversibly across the rural-urban continuum," she emphasized, adding while it is costly to act on planning and managing urbanization, it is costlier not to do so in the longer term.

"Inevitably, the world is rapidly moving towards becoming an urban world, so it is imperative to consider how the urban context shapes sustainable development," Ruzvidzo added. Ruzvidzo further indicated that the global 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, among other things, encourages member states to conduct regular and inclusive reviews of progress at the national and sub-national levels, which are country-led and country-driven.

The high-level continental meeting facilitated an exchange between

the UN and sub-national authorities and city leaders on the implementation, follow-up and review of Agendas 2030 and 2063 in Africa, according to the ECA.

African city mayors and officials who have gathered from Ghana, Uganda, and Namibia, among others, also underscored that the meeting enabled them to interactively debate on the critical issues pertaining to the sub-national dimension of Agenda 2030 and 2063, which are easily overshadowed by various national dimensions.

Check on weight of all cooking gas cylinders, LPG dealers told

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

LIQUEFIED petroleum gas (LPG) dealers in the Lake Victoria Zone should ensure that cooking gas cylinders have the right weight as required by the law to curb cooking gas cheats.

Zonal manager of the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA), George Mhina made the call yesterday here when speaking at a seminar that involved LPG distributors from seven Lake Zone regions—Kigoma, Mwanza, Kagera, Mara, Shinyanga, Simiyu and Geita.

The seminar is meant to empower dealers with better skills on how to store cooking gas cylinders for the safety of consumers.

"All dealers have to ensure that they have proper measurement equipment and whoever who will be caught conducting the businesses without having the tools, will face legal measures," he said.

According to him, EWURA will be embarking on regular inspections to fight fraudulent dealers.

"Distributors and traders should also educate the public on the use of the measurements when purchasing," he added.

Mhina also warned those transporting the gas cylinders using motorcycles saying that the product should be handled with extra care.

"I encourage the general public to prefer using gas than charcoal. It is very cheap, for example per month a household can spend only 48,000/- using gas in cooking instead of 72,000/- spend in charcoal."

For his part, Lake Zone Senior Petroleum Inspector-EWURA Joseph Shija said that the seminar also meant to fight cheating in gas business.

"EWURA will continue reinforcing efforts to fight various challenges facing the trade which include taking stern measures to fraudulent LPG dealers. These will also involve all traders who are operating without having our license," he said.

Shija said that gas is an important need but it should be handled well to avoid unnecessary fires.

Experts also recommend that gas cylinders should not be in the kitchen with the stove, burner or cooker. They must be kept outside the house at a safer place and their tube should be changed regularly.

EWURA head of communications and public relation Wilfred Mwakalosi said that gas business has been expanding annually following increase of demand.

According to him, gas use has currently increased to 142,000 tonnes from 20,000 tonnes in 2017 something which needs more education on better use of the service.

The Guardian

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TUESDAY 3 MARCH 2020

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

Food and nutrition security is vital in sub-Saharan Africa

LEGUMES are an engine to intensify and diversify farming systems of smallholders in sub-Saharan Africa and Tanzania is no exception. They can improve productivity and also provide food and protein, income, and animal feed.

We should focus on testing various improved technologies to boost legume production. These include new improved varieties that are high yielding, good and innovative agricultural management practices such as the appropriate use of fertilizers as well as postharvest management and processing technologies.

Agriculture is under increasing pressure to produce greater quantities of food, feed and biofuel on limited land resources for the projected nine billion people on the planet by 2050. It is envisioned that agricultural production has to increase by 70 per cent by 2050 to cope with an estimated 40 per cent increase in world population.

Legumes have been used by indigenous peoples in Africa for centuries, their full potential has never been realized. With modern technology there is scope for rapid improvement of both plant and microbial germplasm.

The cowpea is an annual herbaceous legume from the genus *Vigna*. Due to its tolerance for sandy soil and low rainfall, it is an important crop in the semiarid regions across Africa and Asia. It requires very few inputs, as the plant's root nodules are able to fix atmospheric nitrogen, making it a valuable crop for resource-poor farmers and well-suited to intercropping with other crops. The whole plant is used as forage for animals, with its use as cattle feed likely responsible for its name.

Four subspecies of cowpeas are recognised, of which three are cultivated. A

high level of morphological diversity is found within the species with large variations in the size, shape, and structure of the plant. Cowpeas can be erect, semi-erect (trailing), or climbing. The crop is mainly grown for its seeds, which are high in protein, although the leaves and immature seed pods can also be consumed.

Cultivated cowpeas are known by the common names black-eyed pea, southern pea, yardlong bean, catjang, and crowder pea. They were domesticated in Africa and are one of the oldest crops to be farmed. The seeds are usually cooked and made into stews and curries, or ground into flour or paste.

Most cowpeas are grown on the African continent, particularly in Nigeria and Niger, which account for 66 per cent of world production. Insect infestation is a major constraint to the production of cowpea, sometimes causing over 90 per cent loss in yield.

Government efforts to look for foreign markets for local produce are yielding fruit as it has found a market for rice and maize in seven countries in the region, in which case producers need to tap these opportunities.

The government through its embassies had secured ready markets for crops in Oman, Egypt, Rwanda, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Zambia, Burundi and Comoro Islands.

Through TANTRADE, the government received requests from the private sector in Rwanda seeking to purchase 102,000 tonnes of maize, Burundi 100,000 tonnes, Zambia 3,000 tonnes and Comoro Island 3,000 tonnes of the produce in the current financial year, she said.

Statistics from the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) on crop exports show at least 39,218 tonnes had already been sold.

Peace across Africa is a necessary condition for economic prosperity

A CONFLICT is a clash of interest. The basis of conflict may vary but, it is always a part of society. Basis of conflict may be personal, racial, class, caste, political and international. Conflict in groups often follows a specific course.

Routine group interaction is first disrupted by an initial conflict, often caused by differences of opinion, disagreements between members, or scarcity of resources. At this point, the group is no longer united, and may split into coalitions. This period of conflict escalation in some cases gives way to a conflict resolution stage, after which the group can eventually return to routine group interaction.

In the same vein, Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau recently convened a meeting for African heads of state, foreign ministers and representatives of the United Nations and other multilateral bodies to discuss ways to secure peace across the continent as a necessary condition for prosperity.

Trudeau, the 2020 chair of the United Nations Peace Building Commission, called for cooperation among international partners and governments to create economic opportunity and prosperity that is broadly shared. "... as a way not just of countering the pull of extremism in some places or the cynicism of populism, but as a way of building a real and tangible future for countries around the world."

The breakfast meeting, which was held on the sidelines of the 33rd African Union Summit in Addis Ababa, was intended to strengthen the Commission's partnership with the African Union (AU) and to better integrate African priorities in conflict prevention and bolstering economic security. Among issues discussed were the role that international financial institutions and youth job creation can play in Africa in averting extremism and conflict; and the AU leadership in

peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts.

The talks, titled Sustaining Peace and Economic Security, aligned with the Summit's theme: Silencing the Guns: Creating Conducive Conditions for Africa's Development.

Trudeau acknowledged that one of the biggest challenges both developed and developing countries face is the perception that governments are indifferent.

"In this time of change, in this time of transformation of the global economy, time of conflict, time of climate change, people worry that the system has no place for them and isn't providing them with what they need," the Canadian Prime Minister said.

Among participants were President Roch Marc Christian Kabore of Burkina Faso; the Vice President of Gambia, Isatou Touray; President of the United Nations General Assembly, Tijjani Muhammad-Bande; Vera Songwe, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, and the foreign ministers of Sierra Leone and Rwanda.

President Kabore offered his reflections on the issues. Burkina Faso is one of several nations in the Sahel region that have seen economic growth adversely affected by conflict and instability.

In opening remarks, African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina noted the shifting nature of conflicts across Africa. While the number of outright wars in Africa has declined substantially, they have been replaced with greater fluidity with rising cases of terrorism, extremism, conflicts from non-state actors.

The root causes of conflict, according to Adesina, include "rising inequalities, lack of political inclusiveness, extreme poverty, management and control over natural resources, youth unemployment that causes social unrest, climate change, to name a few."

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Girls have the right to education but...

By Felician Kilahama

THE Almighty God is always good to us; created us in his own image blessed us and said: "be fruitful, and multiply" meaning produce both boys and girls. Additionally, humans are supposed to grasp education with all the efforts and commitment. Otherwise, in absence of wisdom, an outcome of education, humans can easily perish. Thus children seriously must be well educated in order to live better lives. In principle, education is acquired through schools during the young age; where a combination of both pupils and teachers interact and the latter teaching the former about various subjects. However, the issue of pregnancy while attending school is contrary to our norms and laws hence should not be encouraged.

The late Mbaraka during 1970s, in one of his songs, cautioned by saying "youths when you are at school stick to your studies and avoid indulging yourselves in love affairs otherwise you will cause sufferings to your parents". By saying so he warned pupils to commit themselves to education: indulging in sexual intercourse will lead to unnecessary hardships. During the "middle schools" time (class



five to eight), it was common for co-education. For instance, in 1965 completed standard eight in which pupils were aged 18+ years. Despite that age, issues of sexual intercourse were not in our minds but concentrated on academic work. Furthermore, it was shame and something infuriating to parents and the society as a whole.

Before and after independence (1961) the society was well organized with great obedience including respect to one another in the context of high integrity; good behaviour and guided by society norms, rules and regulations. It was disgusting for a family seeing their schooling girl becoming pregnant. However, currently the society environment has changed and regarded as the age of "dotcom". It is

flooded with various electronics gadgets; globalization including freedom of speech and human rights (doing what one feels is right to him/her) without bothering its impact to others including the society/nation as a whole. For instance, posting sexual or love making pictures and movies in the society media and yet treating such affairs as the human rights while they conflict with society norms and integrity, is abnormal?

Nowadays the youths do not want to listen and obey the warnings or directives given by parents and/or the teachers hence have lost sense of respect to elders. It is not a surprise to hear in Dar-es-Salaam such embarrassing statements "no elderly people in the city of Dar-es-Salaam because such people live in "Msata and Chalinze". This clearly demonstrates loss of integrity and erosion of society values in Tanzania. Recalling on what the Father of the nation, the Late Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, soon after independence (1961) emphasized "human respect and integrity and self respect while upholding society norms and good behaviour".

The Late Mwalimu Nyerere also emphasized the importance of education and told pupils and students to work and acquire skills for bright future and the

advancement of our nation. Additionally, the then policy about "Socialism and Self-reliance" also underscored the importance of education associated with respect to all in the context of human integrity and adhering to social values but not engaging in sexual intercourse.

Furthermore, during the past, there were also Laws and Regulations enabling the society to live in harmony. Again, in the beginning the Almighty God created "Adam" and "Hawa" as the first humans and blessed them. God gave them the freedom to use all the resources before them but commanded them not to eat the fruits from the tree at the centre of the Garden of Eden. That was the first principle to humans but also God warned them that if they will not comply; truly they will die. Unfortunately it never took long as "Hawa" obeyed the snake and picked the forbidden fruits and they ate. This was the beginning of human sufferings as a result of not obeying the instruction from God the creator. Later on God through Musa the Prophet, introduced Laws (Deuteronomy) and that signalled the beginning of the rule of Law.

Schools whether government or privately managed have own laws and Regulations and our children go to schools to be educated. One of the laws forbids sexual intercourse while schooling; if happens that school girls become pregnant dismissal follows. Personally agree that it is not opportune time for making babies while schooling and the girls must be extra-careful on this matter.

They should not be deceived thinking they can remain at school after delivery; it is either/or sort of options. Again, it is crucial to observe the rule that you cannot serve two masters at the same time; otherwise one will slip out of your way. Schools are not the right places for bearing children but only for mentoring your brains for the better future. Girls, while at school, stick your minds to education or go and make babies if deemed necessary.

Dr Felician Kilahama is chairman of the Wildlife Conservation Society of Tanzania and retired Officer director of Forestry and Beekeeping Division, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism.

Namibia's first lady promises to give all her wealth to charity

By Kim Harrisberg

PROMISING to give away all her wealth - estimated at \$3 million - to charity when she dies, Monica Geingos is on a mission to change the image of African first ladies and tackle sexism and inequality in Namibia, the world's second most unequal country.

Geingos married Hage Geingob on Valentine's Day in 2015 - a month before he was sworn in as president of the southern African desert nation, which gained independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990 but remains starkly unequal.

The couple then voluntarily declared their combined assets of some 110 million Namibian dollars (\$744 million), a popular move in a continent where politicians and their wives, like Zimbabwe's Grace Mugabe, grab headlines over unexplained riches.

"I strongly believe that inheritance is one of the biggest drivers of inequality," the 43-year-old lawyer and former head of Namibia's first and largest private equity fund, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in an interview at State House.

"If I'm telling poor children that they must be well educated, have the right attitude, and they must stay away from self-destructive behaviour and they'll be fine, then surely that message should apply to my kids too?"

About 6% of Namibia's 2.5 million people are white. They dominate businesses and land ownership, a legacy of German and South African colonial rule, along with a growing black elite.

Her veteran politician husband, who is about 30 years her senior, both have children from previous marriages.



Geingob faced criticism last year over the 'fishrot' scandal involving allegations that two ministers received kickbacks from an Icelandic fishing company in exchange for fishing quotas. Both men were arrested.

While presidents' wives are often portrayed as promiscuous, materialistic or political meddlers, said Geingos, her contemporaries are in reality doctors, economists and academics "who ran very productive lives before they became first ladies".

Geingos has thrown her weight as first lady behind the One Economy Foundation, which she founded in 2016, and plans to leave all her money to it when she dies.

"Of all my achievements, the title of first lady resonates the least with me because it's the one title that I have really done nothing to deserve, that I got by virtue of marriage," said Geingos, whose husband won a second and final term in November.

"It is, to me, a form of unearned privilege but ... it has changed a lot of my views on socio-economic issues in the country," she said, adding that it felt "schizophrenic" to witness both wealth and poverty in her life and work.

Geingos' parents were only allowed a basic primary

education under Namibia's racially segregated regime - an injustice which she said drives her to make the most of her life.

Her charity lends money to entrepreneurs, gives grants to students and supports victims of gender-based violence. Its board members include a security guard and a domestic worker.

Geingos offered free legal and psychosocial support to victims of sexual harassment last year when Namibia's own #MeToo movement went viral on social media, with hundreds of women naming and shaming sexual predators.

Namibia ranked 12 out of 153 surveyed countries in the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap, beating Denmark and France.

But Geingos said sexism remains common in Namibia's private sector and media, which is quick to tear down prominent women like Isabel Dos Santos, Africa's richest woman and daughter of Angola's former president, recently accused of corruption.

"I am not saying she isn't guilty. But there is a lack of consistency (in media coverage)," Geingos said adding that she and Geingob will soon update their wealth declaration.

"You will always be accused of everything under the sun in these kind of roles. But what you can do is put the information out there and let people decide themselves."

She denied rumours of her presidential ambitions. "I am not available for any executive political function ... I am very convinced that you do not need to be a politician to effect change," she said. "But I do feel this deep need that I can and I must do more."

Multivitamins and coronavirus: Lessons from HIV/Aids mitigations

By Anil Kija

CORONAVIRUS is picking up in Africa gradually, so the idea that Tanzania will stay out of it entirely, or any of our neighbours is by and large far-fetched, so like other countries we need to think hard and hopefully with accuracy as to what to do to contain the virus. Currently there is plenty of confusion nearly everywhere, and it is so far unclear what immediate remedies those found with the virus are given, what drug assortment, dosage, etc. Errors are likely as many deaths are reported.

Superficial indications on the basis of recent experience elsewhere suggest that the most important line of defence against the virus, outside preventing an infection, is speed in handling that case. It is unclear at what level an infected person starts being an agent of transmission, with the grim danger that the person doesn't have to be sick already or showing direct symptoms of distress. In that sense a curative approach is unfeasible for COVID-19, as before anyone is treated he or she will have infected scores of other persons, spreading the disease like a summer wildfire.

In other words a preventive strategy is unworkable in the long run because someone is checked at the airport and cleared, found with nothing, but the virus is incubating inside before it shows any symptoms. Airport checks are an important line of defense to prevent any testable case from entering into circulation before the person is treated, but it can't help with those whose viral level is still too low, incubating as yet. In that case the first aid approach is needed, to start treatment without undergoing lengthy medical processes which are costly in cash and

lives.

Reports from Nairobi for instance say that blood samples to seek out those with a possible COVID-19 were sent to South Africa, implying that there are no facilities to detect COVID-19 in that country. While there might be improvements on that score this side of the border, the capacity is likely to be limited and unable to cope with an avalanche of cases needing to be cleared. And when treatment cannot start without a 'full blood picture' being obtained, it is evident that a catastrophic situation shall build up rapidly, as no waiting time is admissible in the case of a coronavirus outbreak. That is where the whole issue of a first aid method arises.

That is partially why in the US Congress for instance the debate has been on outlays that the Federal Government is putting up to prevent an outbreak, and to that end Vice President Mike Pence was appointed to head the task force for such purpose. It is evident that constituting such a task force here would require that the sort of outlays we seek to put up be within our means, in the sense firstly of the proximity of material to be procured. Anything that relies on imports shall fail, similarly as anything that can't be spread out on a mass scale, or is user-pay based.

What this implies is to find a method that is halfway between a curative and what could be called a preventive application, as the latter isn't within reach, and only a first aid curative application can work. The sort of outlays needed isn't putting up a comprehensive medical procedure for each person suspected of infection, as the procedure is costly and possibly catastrophic. It means there ought to



be ready made materials (drugs) that can be spread out with minimal strategic liability or inconvenience for the Ministry of Health or the Treasury, as disbursing of tangible public funds is unavoidable with emergencies of this sort, as it was with AIDS, etc.

For those with some experience in the matter, either for having been in the field or via life-long experiences, the most effective first line curative application for viral infections is multivitamins. What this specific set of drugs does is to build body defences ahead of any properly curative application in the sense of an applicable line of drugs, while the very presence of tangential diseases like the flu that is associated with coronavirus implies the presence of parasites. It implies that a line of relatively powerful drugs against the rapid multiplication of parasites is arsenal that can be deployed

along with multivitamins, at the moment the fever it noticed - when it is say attached with a sort of flu, and perhaps even without flu being felt.

It means that the Ministry of Health linked up with the Treasury (and for that matter the Ministry of Industries) need to put up a task force for manufacturing of multivitamins on a large scale for their distribution in all health centres regionally. There also ought to be equally available 'doses' of ampiclox as a standard drug for fighting infections that are tied to parasites, plus the pain killer paracetamol. A focus on treatment by combating parasites can lead to numerous deaths as it leaves the body without defences, whereas the first line of reaction ought to be reinvigorating of body defences. It makes the use of antibiotics more effective and rapid. Hence, treatment in a procedural sense could follow only with that fortress being built.

International society calls for strengthened solidarity in fight against novel coronavirus epidemic

INTERNATIONAL organizations, governments of various countries, experts, scholars, and media are calling for scientific approaches, rationality, and cooperation to cope with the current public health challenge facing mankind.

Highlighting the huge challenge the coronavirus outbreak is posing, United Nations (UN) Secretary-General Antonio Guterres (pictured) said recently that China has made a "very strong and very impressive response." The huge efforts made by the country will curb the spread of the virus, he added.

Since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus pneumonia, or COVID-19, China has strengthened communication with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the international society in an open, transparent, and responsible manner.

It has saved valuable time for global epidemic prevention, built a line of defense to control the spread of the epidemic, and set a new benchmark for global epidemic prevention.

Recently, representatives of the WHO and American technology companies held a special meeting on how to prevent the spread of misinformation about the epidemic on the internet.

WHO representative Andy Pattinson described the fake information surrounding the novel coronavirus outbreak as an "information epidemic". At the meeting, the WHO and U.S. technology enterprises reached an agreement on issues regarding the epidemic, with the latter pledging to take measures to guide information searching, promoting reliable information sources and purifying the public opinion environment for epidemic prevention and control.

"While the virus spreads, misinformation makes the job of our heroic health workers even harder. It is diverting the attention of decision makers. And it causes confusion and spreads fear to the general public. At WHO, we're not just battling the virus; we're also battling the trolls and conspiracy theorists that push misinformation and undermine the outbreak response," said WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The European Union (EU) appreciates China's epidemic prevention and control measures, European Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli said on a recent plenary session of the European Parliament held in Strasbourg, France, during which discussion on the COVID-19 was carried out.

Fighting the epidemic is not a task for China alone, as the epidemic is a challenge facing the whole world. The EU should strengthen cooperation with China and take its global responsibility, Dalli said, adding discrimination against Asians or persons perceived as Asians or any other race or ethnicity is contrary to EU law and the organization will not tolerate any racial discrimination.

Most of the Members of European Parliament (MEP) believe that no country could address the challenge of the epidemic alone.

The EU should promote information sharing among its member states and share information with China in



order to eliminate social panic caused by fake information, they said, believing that the recent cases of discrimination in some countries are inhumane and run counter to the basic values of the EU, and every effort should be made to stop discrimination.

Rumors always frighten the public who lack relevant knowledge amid epidemic. Therefore, media and medical experts in many countries are actively spreading knowledge about the epidemic through various channels to break down rumors and help them establish correct understanding.

In The Daily Show with Trevor Noah, Chinese Malaysian comedian and actor Ronny Chieng staged a talk show to break down the misinformation and racism surrounding the coronavirus outbreak.

He humorously refuted the claim that drinking bleach, eating garlic, and rinsing nose with saline help prevent the virus, and asked people to stop calling the virus an Asian virus and stereotyping Asian people. The show received a warm response from the audience after it was aired.

Facing the threat of unknown viruses, people often feel anxious and helpless, and the demand for information has risen sharply. This has created a market for various rumors and conspiracy theories, according to Dr. Cheng Huang, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Global Health at George Washington University.

In addition to objectively and comprehensively presenting evidence and clarifying facts, authorities also need to reveal why such ridiculous remarks are made, he pointed out.

"This is a time for facts, not fear. This is a time for rationality, not rumors. This is a time for solidarity, not stigma," Tedros has repeatedly stressed.

The Chinese government has always maintained close cooperation with the WHO in the fight against the outbreak of the novel coronavirus, said Dr. Michael Ryan, executive director of the WHO Health Emergencies Program, at a regular media briefing on Feb. 14. The global response to the outbreak should be based on facts rather than speculations, he noted.

At a recent press conference, Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova condemned some Western media for using false information to vilify China.

At a time when the Chinese people are facing the unprecedented novel coronavirus pneumonia, writers of many reports were using disinformation and fraudulent facts, and were showing a lack of respect and sympathy, she said.

People's Daily

Coronavirus claims its first UN casualty

UNITED NATIONS

THE deadly coronavirus COVID-19, which is spreading across China, Japan, South Korea, Iran, Italy, the Philippines- along with new cases in Asia, Western Europe and the Middle East- has claimed one of its first casualties at the United Nations.

The annual inter-governmental meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), due to take place March 9-20, is being described as dead on arrival (DOA).

But it is still likely to take place as scheduled- minus the participation of over 5,000 to 6,000 delegates from overseas.

The 11-day meeting, the largest single gathering of women delegates from 193 countries, is being significantly downgraded because of the threat of COVID-19.

The United States, meanwhile, has postponed its own summit of world leaders of the 10-member Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) due to take place in Las Vegas March 14.

"As the international community works together to defeat the novel coronavirus, the United States, in consultation with ASEAN partners, has made the difficult decision to postpone the ASEAN leaders meeting previously scheduled for mid-March," a senior administration official was quoted as saying.

MaVictoria (Mavic) Cabrera Balleza, Chief Executive Officer, Global Network of Women Peacebuilders, told IPS the 64th session of the upcoming CSW session should not be cancelled because of the outbreak of coronavirus disease - but its methodology should be modified.

"It is a very important event that brings a big momentum to our advocacy for women's rights and gender equality, especially this year as we are commemorating the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the most comprehensive global women's rights agenda," she pointed out.

In light of the outbreak of coronavirus disease, the UN Secretary-General's suggestion to the Chair of the CSW that Member States consider amending the format and conduct of the session is a good idea, she said.

"However, I don't think it should be limited to New York-based delegations only. The valued-added of CSW sessions lie on the huge participation of women's rights activists and gender experts from around the world," said Cabrera Balleza.

Such strong participation allows for discussions on diverse topics that impact on women's enjoyment of their rights in political, economic, and social arenas, she noted.

UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric told reporters February 28 that given the fast evolving situation regarding COVID-19- and the need to balance the UN's critical work and public health concerns-UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has suggested to the Bureau of the Committee on the Status of Women that they hold a scaled down meeting, limiting participation to New York based representation.

This, in effect, would bar delegates coming from their home countries preventing the spread of the virus through travel.

The limited participation, Dujarric pointed out, would still enable the CSW to adopt decisions and implement its mandate.

The final decision, which is likely to be aligned with the recommendation made by Guterres, will be taken by the 193 member states later this week.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said his first priority "is to protect our homeland. We have imposed prudent travel restrictions and strong travel advisories to slow the spread of the virus in the United States."

This could, in effect, prevent women delegates from some of the US blacklisted countries from entering the US and participating in the CSW session.

Dr. Nancy Messonnier, director of the US National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, said at a news briefing February 24: "It's not so much of a question if this will happen anymore but rather more of a question of exactly when this will happen."

She said that cities and towns should plan for "social distancing measures," like dividing school classes into smaller groups of students or closing schools altogether. Meetings and conferences may have to be canceled, she said. And businesses should arrange for employees to work from home.



Purnima Mane, a former UN Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), told IPS the CSW session, like in the case of other large meetings and conferences, is under serious consideration on the part of the organizers of canceling the meeting due to the growing epidemic of the coronavirus COVID-19.

"As an advocate of women's issues, I will of course be disappointed if the meeting is not held as planned but as a public health professional as well, I would advocate for caution."

She said the situation of the virus is evolving rapidly and merits a careful assessment of the risks of any global meeting.

The meeting is next week and countries remain at different stages of preparedness to deal with the epidemic, said Mane, a former President and CEO of Pathfinder International.

She pointed out that the World Health Organization (WHO) has consistently advised against the application of travel restrictions.

However, several countries have imposed restrictions nonetheless, such as quarantine, visa restrictions or denial of entry of passengers.

In others there is far stricter screening of passengers on arrival and discrimination against citizens from certain regions of the world, even though the epidemic has spread to every continent except Antarctica, and cases are growing on a daily basis, she declared.

Cabrera Balleza told IPS: If most CSW participants will not be able to travel to New York, virtual conferences can be organized.

However, UN country teams and governments in developing and conflict-affected countries should open up their offices so grassroots women's rights activists can go there, use the internet and participate in virtual conferences.

The UN should also provide transportation and interpretation support during virtual conferences, she noted.

As WHO has declared a global emergency over the coronavirus and has been lending support to China and other countries, the UN HQ in NY should ensure that it is taking all necessary precautions and its operations are not in any way contributing to the spread of the disease.

There are a number of logistical challenges in organizing a modified CSW session but they are not insurmountable.

If the UN and Member States are truly committed to women's rights, gender equality, and women's empowerment, they will mobilize necessary resources to ensure that the CSW session in 2020, will contribute to making this a pivotal year for the accelerated realization of women's empowerment and gender equality for all women and girls around the world, said Cabrera Balleza.

The other key concern, she said, is the lack of "care planning" if participants catch the virus.

"What if they get sick when they are already in New York? Are there enough facilities that are equipped to handle coronavirus cases? Let alone the cost of medical care in NY. What if they get sick on the way back to their countries? Not having immediate access to care when traveling is a big problem," she cautioned.

Agencies

2020 retrospective vision: Next decade will need to bring more than just echoes of 'Africa rising'

By Lyal White, Liezl Rees and Nikitta Hahn

HERE was no shortage of hype and hope around Africa's emergence in 2010. Off a global super-cycle, which delivered Africa's strongest growth decade on record, annual economic growth hovered around 5.5% between 2000 and 2010. In 10 short years, the African narrative had swung from the "hopeless continent" to "Africa rising".

This remarkable story of linear growth and endless expansion, however, was born from an ill-informed combination of commodity-driven interests, straight-line projections and ballooning demographic trends. Reports like McKinsey's *Lions on the Move* in 2010, highlighting Africa's compelling business opportunities and the rise of the African consumer, fuelled the excitement. Little regard was given to the detail, including a broad range of non-economic issues or contextually relevant nuances across the continent, not to mention shifting global dynamics.

Expectations across the board were high. Interest from around the world surged with European firms reigniting dormant investments, while mining and engineering giants from Brazil to China committed to rail, port and energy projects that guaranteed double-digit growth across the continent. Global brands, such as Walmart, which acquired 51% of South African retailer Massmart in 2011, clamoured to gain a foothold on the continent. All wanted to be a part of the new global frontier, the dawn of the African decade.

But as we enter 2020, the hype has failed to meet the lofty expectations of 2010. In 2020, reflecting on progress over the past decade, what is the reality on the ground today? What strides has the continent made economically, politically and socially over this period of unprecedented interest and opportunity?

Some growth, but erratic performance prevails

Part of the problem in projecting Africa's performance lies in interpreting it according to the Chinese model



of unfettered economic and population growth. The reality is that Africa is part of an international system characterised by a diminishing rate of growth.

In 2007, at the height of the global super-cycle and commodity boom, more than 60 countries worldwide enjoyed economic growth in excess of 7%. By 2017, fewer than 10 economies were growing above 7%. Africa was a part of this story, and has been severely impacted by this downward trend.

At the start of 2010, Africa's projected economic growth was 4.5%. Today that projection is 3.5%. In 2010 eight of the 20 fastest-growing economies were African. These included The Republic of the Congo, Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia, Zimbabwe and Uganda, Tanzania and Sudan.

Ten years on, the mix of countries making up the list of high-growth economies is quite different. The fastest-growing African economies in 2020 will be South Sudan, Rwanda, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Senegal, Benin and Uganda. Interestingly, these African economies appear to be re-establishing pre-2010 rates of growth, which appears to be good news.

The star performer between 2010 and 2020 was Ethiopia. The true lion of Africa has averaged 9% growth a year since 2000, making it Africa's

As we enter a new decade, the hype and hope for Africa from 2010 lingers. For a continent boasting the youngest population in the world, but with a grossly uneven track record of development over the past decade, Africa has reached a tipping point, say the writers. File photo

fastest-growing economy over the past 20 years. As the second-most populated country on the continent, with more than 110 million people, this is significant.

South Africa and Nigeria, Africa's two largest economies, were the gross under-performers over the past decade. Plagued by political uncertainty, corruption and rising unemployment, South Africa and Nigeria account for more than 50% of Africa's total economic output, but have failed to meet their potential and have dragged down the overall growth of the continent.

Growth disparities and increasing levels of development over the past decade characterise the heterogeneous nature of Africa, where a single Africa rising or falling narrative fails as a description. There is far more to the story than conventional upward and downward economic growth cycles.

Some countries took advantage of the commodity boom by implementing genuine structural changes to encourage greater diversity and industrialisation. This was often coupled with increased connectedness through liberal policies in pursuit of new

export markets, or targeting foreign investment and innovative thinking. These industrious African countries have enjoyed sustained levels of growth and broad-based development. Ethiopia is the best example of this.

Those that failed to reform are still trapped in commodity cycles, where 2010 to 2020 was yet another lost decade, characterised by economic stagnation or even regression, at a time where their populations are growing less tolerant in light of the vast African potential.

Rising political risk with democratic failure

Political stability is an undeniable prerequisite for business and economic progress in Africa. Inextricably intertwined, politics remains the primary driver and shaper of context and society, and is the foundation of business confidence.

The Economist Intelligence Unit's (EIU) Democracy Index 2019 found that democracy has failed to improve across Africa over the past decade. The average score for the region fell from 4.36 in 2018 to 4.26 in 2019, the worst score since 2010.

There were some exceptions

among the 44 countries measured across sub-Saharan Africa. While 16 African countries improved their score, 24 countries recorded a decline in electoral processes and political pluralism. Between 2010 and 2020 only Mauritius ranked as a "Full Democracy".

Overall, six sub-Saharan African countries were ranked as "flawed democracies" in 2019. This is a marginal improvement from eight in 2010. But 15 are regarded as "hybrids" or a mix of authoritarian rule and democracy, compared to 10 in 2010. The remaining 22 are classified as authoritarian, a disappointing improvement on 25 in 2010.

The results are clear: Creeping authoritarianism and democratic backsliding have characterised the political landscape in Africa over the past decade. This is simply unacceptable at this crucial stage of development.

Promise of regional integration

Economic and social integration is key to Africa's growth and development. Industries and firms need economies of scale and access to new markets. It is well known that greater openness to trade and investment is one of the reasons behind Africa's growth since 2000. But despite the obvious benefits, African countries remain by and large disconnected from one another and fail to leverage off the vast potential of the continental collective.

Intra-regional trade in Africa is still the lowest of any region in the world. In 2010, intra-Africa trade was a dismal 10% of total African trade. This figure has risen to 17% in 2019, but is still far from the untapped potential of the continent. While freer movement of trade under the much-anticipated African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) is finally expected to begin on 1 July 2020, a greater focus on tangible connectedness from infrastructure to streamlined border crossings is needed more than grand agreements. These improvements will be a step toward harnessing the promise of a single market of around \$3-trillion, beyond the agreements dis-

ussed ad nauseam since 2010. Digitalisation and mobile connectivity

The ubiquitous mobile phone

has been the greatest driver of connectedness and African modernisation and is the symbol of the progress made since 2010. This is most evident in the rapid adoption and pervasive spread of smartphones, which have enabled internet penetration and transactional connectivity deep into the furthest corners of the continent.

Over the past decade, mobile internet subscribers quadrupled and sim connections reached more than one billion, with more than 80% penetration. There are an estimated 600 million smartphones in circulation across the continent, driving down the cost of data to a fraction of what it was in 2010. Meanwhile, technology development in Africa is booming. WeeTracker estimates that \$1.3-billion was invested in tech start-ups in Africa during 2019, the most successful year to date.

But Africa still lags behind other digital economies around the world. The continent's level of internet bandwidth used represents just 1% of the world's total. Less than 10% of African households subscribe to high-speed internet services. And despite the mobile revolution, just one-quarter of Africans have access to the internet.

Digital aspirations aside, basic needs from the previous industrial revolution remain a challenge. Africa's severe infrastructure deficit continues to be a problem. More than 600 million people across the continent are still living without electricity in their homes.

There is an urgent need to provide the basics while, at the same time, the need for deeper investments in the digital economy for Africa to keep pace and avoid falling further behind the rest of the world, yet again.

Demographics and urbanisation Home to one billion people in 2010, Africa's current population is around 1.3 billion people. This number is expected to breach 1.6 billion by 2030, and 2.4 billion by 2050. **AGENCIES**

What is the future of poverty in Africa?

BY ZACHARY DONNENFELD

THE global burden of poverty is highly concentrated in Africa, with more than 150 million people living in extreme poverty in just two countries - Nigeria and the Democratic Republic of the Congo - according to World Data Lab.

Projections from its system estimate that nearly 80% of the countries unable to eliminate poverty by 2030 will be in Africa. When weighted for absolute number of people living in poverty, that figure increases to more than 90%.

In September 2020, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will conclude their fifth year. While countries still have ample time to implement more aggressive policies before the SDGs expire in 2030, five years is enough time to begin talking about what progress has been made. Or in many cases, how much work remains to be done.

The SDGs are a broad suite of 17 development goals with an even more extensive list of 169 targets established by the United Nations (UN) in 2015. They aim to advance solutions for everything from climate change to urban planning to gender equality - and nearly everything in between.

People in sub-Saharan Africa are more than twice as likely to live in poverty as those in South Asia

At base however, the SDGs are about poverty reduction. "The SDGs are a bold commitment to finish what we started (i.e. Millennium Development Goals), and end poverty in all forms and dimensions by 2030," according to the UN.

The reality is that Africa is showing both gains and losses. Roughly 40% of people in Africa live below US\$1.90 a day. People in sub-Saharan Africa are more than twice as likely to live in poverty as those in South Asia, the next poorest region globally.

According to projections from the



International Futures (IFs) modelling platform, hosted by the Frederick S Pardee Center for International Futures at the University of Denver, sub-Saharan Africa accounts for roughly 60% of the global population living in poverty in 2020.

There does appear to be marginal progress, as that figure is down slightly from about 70% in 2015. This coincides with a recent report from the Brookings Institution, which noted that for the first time in decades more Africans are escaping poverty than are being dragged into it.

The global economy has been churning at a pace not seen since before the great financial crisis

However, that snapshot ought to be taken with a pinch of salt. For one, the global economy has been churning at a pace not seen since before the great financial crisis. Calls for a global recession have eased slightly, but a

Recent trends in poverty reduction could prove difficult to maintain.

global slowdown is still possible, particularly given recent financial shocks in the United States, uncertainty regarding the economic future of the United Kingdom and various concerns in China.

There are also other factors that contributed to the recent boom that could reverse. The recovery of oil prices since 2016 has no doubt enabled governments to step up social grant programmes and other poverty-reduction measures.

Brent Crude is trading 40% higher than in September 2015, and many African governments tend to use commodity revenues in the absence of sustainable revenue collection practices, a phenomenon sometimes called the resource curse. A global slowdown would dampen

demand for oil - among other things.

By 2030 only 11 of Africa's 54 countries are projected to be able to eliminate extreme poverty, according to World Data Lab. Nearly all the countries projected to achieve the target are in North Africa or are small island states.

Throughout the rest of the world, only 12 other countries are forecast to fall short of the SDG target.

The challenge to reduce poverty is massive, and the resources required to combat it are no less overwhelming

Both IFs and World Data Lab projections point to a reversal of the current trend of declining poverty. In other words, the burden of poverty is not only expected to be concentrated in

Africa, but the number of people living in poverty in Africa is also forecast to rise over the next 10 years.

One factor undeniably driving this long-term increase in poverty is Africa's rapid population growth. Africa is projected to decrease the proportion of people living in poverty by nearly five percentage points between 2015 and 2030, according to IFs. But despite that percentage reduction, the absolute number of people living in poverty is forecast to more than double over that same period, swelling from around 270 million in 2015 to more than 550 million in 2030.

The elimination of extreme poverty must be the foundation of any comprehensive development strategy for Africa, regardless of the stakeholders devel-

oping the guiding documents. African governments, development agencies, non-governmental organisations and civil society need to design policies and advocate strategies that have, at their core, poverty elimination as their primary focus.

Providing basic infrastructure (Goal 6), quality healthcare (Goal 3) and education (Goal 4) while attempting to create a globally competitive economy (Goal 8) are all worthwhile ambitions. But these achievements are less meaningful if hundreds of millions of Africans continue to miss out on those opportunities.

Furthermore, it is likely that gaps in inequality will only continue to increase, with unpredictable consequences for political and economic stability.

The investment necessary to achieve the full suite of SDGs is enormous and potentially beyond the scope of African governments to achieve without significant help from the international community. Even if Africa were to halve extreme poverty from its current levels by 2030, that would be a significant achievement based on current projections.

The international community should not view a halving of poverty in Africa as a failure because the continent did not officially meet Target 1.1. The challenge is massive, and the resources required to combat it are no less overwhelming. But if this is an issue the international community takes seriously, then it is already behind schedule.

Zachary Donnensfeld, Research Consultant, ISS Pretoria

Researchers examine nations losing fish species to climate change

DELAWARE, USA

AS ocean warming causes fish stocks to migrate toward cooler waters to maintain their preferred thermal environment, many of the nations that rely on commercial fish species as an integral part of their economy could suffer.

A new study published in Nature Sustainability from the University of Delaware, the University of California, Santa Barbara and Hokkaido University, shows that nations in the tropics—especially Northwest African nations—are especially vulnerable to this potential species loss due to climate change. Not only are tropical countries at risk for the loss of fish stocks, the study found there are not currently any adequate policy in-

terventions to help mitigate affected countries' potential losses.

Kimberly Oremus, assistant professor in the School of Marine Science and Policy in UD's College of Earth, Ocean and Environment, explained that when the researchers looked at international agreements, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, they found no specific text for what happens when fish leave a country's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), a zone established to give a country national jurisdiction over a fishery resource.

That means countries could be vulnerable to economic losses, and those potential losses could make the fish populations themselves vulnerable as well.

"We realized there was an

incentive for countries when they lose a fish or anticipate that loss to go ahead and overfish before it leaves because otherwise, they don't get the monetary benefits of the resource," said Oremus.

Mapping Species Loss

The researchers used previously projected changes in the distribution range of 779 commercial fish species to estimate the number of species exiting national jurisdiction under contrasting emissions scenarios up to 2100.

Tropical nations in particular stand to lose the most species because there are few if any stocks to replace those leaving. Under a moderate emissions scenario, the research showed that by the year 2100, the average tropical nation could lose 7 percent of the species that were present in 2012.

"The tropics are predicted to lose more fish species than other regions because fish usually have a temperature range that they're comfortable living in and if it gets too hot, and they have nowhere else to go, they're going to migrate towards the poles," said Oremus.

Northwestern African EEZs could lose the highest percentage of species, with a 6-25% reduction predicted by 2050 and a 30-58% reduction predicted by 2100 under the moderate and most se-

vere scenarios, respectively.

While the exit of stocks from national fisheries is inevitable, carefully designed international cooperation could ease the impact on individual nations while preserving the resource for others.

In addition to looking at the species loss, the researchers examined 127 international fisheries agreements, looking at the large, regional ones as well as smaller bi-lateral agreements. They found that none of the agreements have language that prepares countries for the exits of stock, climate change or range shifts.

"We found that there is no fisheries agreement that is explicitly focused on this issue. None," said co-author James Salzman, a distinguished professor of environmental law at UC Santa Barbara's Bren School of Environmental Science and Management. "There's a gap in international law."

Traditional fisheries management assumes that fish are a renewable natural resource and that so long as their geographic range is static, they will remain plentiful in the absence of overfishing.

But the long-term migration of a species out of a country due to climate change means that fish stocks may not always be renewable on the level of a given jurisdiction, even if they remain renewable on an international scale. For the jurisdiction

losing the stock, this creates an incentive to overfish before it exits.

Oremus said that policy makers need to think about how those countries could be compensated for the loss of fish stocks due to climate change, which might help prevent countries from overfishing stocks before they exit their EEZs. International agreements regarding climate change have mechanisms to consider compensation for losses, and that policy avenue may work better than the scores of fisheries agreements that Oremus' team found were not set up to wrestle with the question at all.

How to handle liability for loss and damages from climate change—including whether countries that are more developed and have emitted more carbon dioxide should be compensating countries that are less developed—has been an ongoing discussion throughout the annual United Nations' Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings during which countries work to address climate change.

In the most recent COP 25 meeting in Madrid in December, compensation was again discussed, and the meeting highlighted the interplay between climate change and the ocean, but fisheries were not addressed.

"Policy in the tropics really needs to focus on this now," said Salzman. "I think this could shift some of the way the loss and damage debate happens in the climate arena, because fisheries really have been overlooked."

While the Small Island Developing States have so far concentrated on concerns about becoming climate migrants as their land is overtaken by the ocean, Oremus said the study should encourage them and other tropical nations to bring fisheries into the conversation.

"For many nations where fish are one of the main economic resources driving their gross domestic product, this is something that they'll want to take into account when they join together to try and negotiate climate agreements," said Oremus.

Wealthy countries could be asked to pay billions to protect biodiversity

ROME

WEALTHY nations could be asked to make significant financial contributions to biodiverse countries such as Brazil under proposals put forward during talks on a global agreement to halt and reverse biodiversity decline.

Paying countries with life-sustaining ecosystems such as the Amazon rainforest billions of pounds a year for the services those ecosystems provide for the world was proposed during negotiations on a Paris-style UN agreement on nature in Rome last week.

Conservationists hope the eventual agreement will provide an accessible, science-based global goal on biodiversity loss, equivalent to targets to limit global heating, following warnings from scientists that humans are driving the sixth mass extinction event in Earth's history.

Delegates from more than 140 countries were responding for the first time to a draft 20-point agreement that includes proposals to protect almost a third of the world's oceans and land and reduce pollution from plastic waste and excess nutrients by 50%.

During the talks at the Food and Agriculture Organization headquarters in Rome, several African and Latin

American countries expressed the need for financial support to protect life-supporting ecosystems and develop mechanisms to share profits from discoveries linked to their genetic resources, such as new drugs.

The negotiating team for Brazil, led by Leonardo Cleaver de Athayde, was particularly robust about the need for financial payments for ecosystem services.

Small-scale schemes to protect ecosystems already exist under the UN climate convention, with countries with large forests receiving payments to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation.

When asked whether obtaining sufficient financial backing from developed nations for so-called mega biodiverse countries would be the key sticking point in the agreement, senior UN officials cautioned that negotiations were ongoing but said the targets would not be implemented without resources.

Francis Ogwal, a co-chair of the negotiations, said: "When you're talking about biodiversity, it's not just biodiversity, it's our life on this planet. If the loss of biodiversity continues at this pace, human beings won't be on this planet."



The Amazon rainforest is a key life-sustaining ecosystem.

"It's about us assuring our survival here and for generations to come. So really, on that basis, why wouldn't more money be put there? It's for our own good."

Countries with high biodiversity include China, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and India, according to various definitions. The payments would support poorer countries with high biodiversity to help conserve life-supporting ecosys-

tems.

This week's talks had been scheduled to be held in the Chinese city of Kunming, and governments are expected to adopt the agreement at a summit there in October, replacing targets for the previous decade that countries largely failed to meet.

The negotiations were moved to Rome following the outbreak of the new coronavirus, and the Chinese delegation was not able to attend due

to quarantine measures. The planned Kunming agreement has been highlighted as the first time China is taking the lead on environmental global issues, and UN officials said officials had been in contact from afar.

Another co-chair, Basile van Havre, said: "In terms of China's engagement with the discussions, I don't know how many hundreds of WeChat messages I've exchanged with Beijing and the delegation here. Their team were

up during our schedule, listening and engaging."

Despite warm words from some negotiators, many NGOs expressed disappointment with the ambition of the talks and the level of urgency following the first round of negotiations.

Marco Lambertini, the director general of WWF International, said: "Our relationship with nature is dangerously unbalanced. One million species are threatened with extinction and the way we currently produce and consume is risking irreparable damage to the very natural systems that underpin human wellbeing and prosperity, from forests to oceans and river systems. With science and society calling for urgent action on nature, alongside climate, it is disappointing to see limited ambition and leadership displayed by countries in Rome."

"The world must not miss the chance this year's UN talks provide to secure a Paris-style agreement for nature that includes a clear 2030 set of science-based and measurable goals and targets. It will now be critical that countries step up to the challenge in the next round of negotiations and ensure the draft agreement arrives in Kunming with the necessary ambition to deliver a nature-positive world by the end of the decade."

At the World Economic Forum at the start of this year, biodiversity loss was highlighted as the third biggest risk to the world in terms of likelihood and severity.

The next round of formal negotiations will be held in Cali, Colombia, in July.

Tim the elephant dies in Kenya: Africa loses one of its last giant tuskers

By Mike Mwenda

ONE of Africa's last and largest "tuskers", Tim the elephant, died from natural causes after roaming Amboseli National Park for five decades and surviving multiple life-threatening attacks.

Africa has lost its most famous iconic elephant, nicknamed Big Tim, recognised as one of the continent's largest elephant. The giant bull who roamed the wilderness of Amboseli National Park in Kenya belonged to a clade of impressive pachyderms whose genes produce enormous tusks. He died aged 50, from natural causes.

Post-mortem results show that Tim died from a twisted gut and the only marks on his body were the imprints left by his companion who presumably tried to lift the great "tusk" back on his feet. Meanwhile, Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) have retrieved the animal's body and moved it to the National Museum in Nairobi for exhibition and education purposes.

"Our hearts are broken, because Tim was one of Africa's very few super tuskers, and an incredible elephant whose presence awed and inspired many," Wildlife Direct, a Nairobi-based conservation campaign group, commented. "He was one of Kenya's national treasures and we'll forever miss him".

In the words of former Save the Elephants field assistant Ryan Wilkie, "Tim was a special elephant not just to me but to hundreds, thousands of people who would flock to Amboseli



Big Tim was a benevolent, slow-moving preserver of peace at Amboseli National Park in Kenya

just for the chance to get a glimpse on him. The giant was so incredibly intelligent, mischievous, yes, but also a truly gentle giant and in that way a real ambassador for his species".

"It's remarkable that Tim had gotten to that age, given that each day he faced just about every threat possible to his species," according to the Big Life Foundation, a non-profit conservation organisation focused on preserving the wildlife and habitats of the Amboseli-Tsavokilimanjaro ecosystem.

"Within his first few years of life he lost three of his relatives to suspected poaching incidents, followed by his mother Trista, who was speared to death in 1978 by poachers when he (Tim) was only 8 years old. And there was worse, Tim continued to lose more family members as time passed, including his much-loved sister Tallulah, ruthlessly speared in 2003 .

According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Africa's elephant population had seen its worst decline in 25 years, mostly as the result of intensified poaching for ivory. In East Africa, elephant populations have nearly halved in a decade. Meanwhile, southern Africa remains a stronghold in which more than 293,000 animals live, or 70 per cent of the estimated remaining African elephants.

Undoubtedly, Big Tim has left a huge hole in the heart of Amboseli, though it's comforting to think that his genes live on in many of the national park's other elephants.

On the other hand, Tim's ravenous hunger for crops nearly cost him his life: in the last five years on his way to 50, he was speared three times by angry farmers during his routine night-time raids into farmlands. Most recently, in November 2018, Tim got stuck in a mud-pit deep in Kimana Swamp. It took Kenya Wildlife Service, Big Life and Sheldrick Wildlife Trust a monumental effort to rescue him.

Furthermore, this was not the first time Tim's life was threatened. In 2014 he was spotted limping around the park as he'd been speared in the rump and the wound turned septic. Luckily, the vets packed the injury with green clay, which has antibacterial properties, and he soon recovered.

Change in China's attitude towards wildlife exploitation may just save the planet

By Tiara Walters

IN the summer of 1966, Chairman Mao Zedong, China's Communist Party leader, swam across the Yangtze River in Wuhan, Hubei's provincial capital. In tow? Hundreds of other swimmers, his bodyguards and an armada of waterborne installations celebrating, among others, the hale-and-hearty 72-year-old's virile image.

TIME Magazine would dub the swim one of the cult figure's "greatest acts of political theatre". It was the machismo roar that led millions of his followers through the blowing winds and beating waves of the hyper-violent Cultural Revolution. It also set a putative world record with a catchy ring: 15km in 65 minutes.

Last week, Wuhan provided the first act to another possible revolution when China announced that buying and selling wild animals for food was now thoroughly banned.

A Wuhan wildlife "wet" market – so named for its thrills and spills of animal slaughter, often live – had forced Beijing to make the call. Authorities had traced the deadly Coronavirus (Covid-19) outbreak to unsanitary conditions at the market – a cog in a multibillion-dollar trade before a temporary ban was slapped on the industry in January.

'Most monumental announcement' since ivory ban

Declared by the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, China's top legislature, the ban may be tighter, but it is not yet clear if it is permanent.

Nonetheless, conservationists have praised it as a potential turning point in a decades-long activist campaign to choke an industry that not only holds non-human life to ransom. Threatening to quarantine much of the human planet, the outbreak has taken 2,800-plus human lives in China and sickened 87,000-plus people globally.

The ban's new rules include forbidding the consumption of all terrestrial animals, wild and captive; and making hunting, transporting and trading wildlife a criminal offence. They also seek to refine which animals can be used for science, medicine and display; and recognise the need to support producers affected by the ban.

Offenders may be fined up to 50,000 yuan (around \$7,000) for eating wildlife; and "people running wildlife businesses" may have to cough up as much as 200,000 yuan. Licences would be revoked, official state news agency Xinhua noted.

"China's statements indicate a sea change in the government's attitude towards wildlife exploitation since the 2002-03 Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) epidemic. This is reflected in changed public values," WildAid CEO Peter Knights told Daily Maverick. Knights has had some success lobbying the Chinese government after his organisation joined forces with basketball icon Yao Ming to raise awareness of the destructive shark-fin trade. The consumption of shark-fin soup has fallen by more than 80% in recent years.

"This is China's most monumental announcement since it banned ivory in 2017," Humane Society International said in a statement. The "decision has the potential to affect even more animals, because of the sheer volume and number involved in the wildlife trade".

The welfare organisation hailed the move as China's "most decisive action yet". It "elevates the ban from admin-



istrative action to the level of national law".

TRAFFIC, the wildlife-trade monitoring network, praised "China's firm and targeted measures".

A boiling point in the political pressure cooker

The urgency for a comprehensive ban had piled on Beijing in early February when Chinese scientists announced the makings of a perfect storm: the pangolin, said to be among the world's most trafficked and endangered mammals, might be an intermediate carrier of Covid-19.

On the same day, Daily Maverick broke the news that the Baylor College of Medicine in Texas had isolated the critically endangered Malayan (Sunda) pangolin (*Manis javanica*) as a possible vector.

Both teams – who worked independently for separate institutions – cautioned the findings were preliminary and still due for peer review. The initial Chinese findings, which have since been revealed to focus on an aspect of the virus rather than the whole genome as initially stated, have been challenged by some scientists.

Even so, the two announcements represented the publication of similar research by independent teams at virtually the same time, helping to catapult the species' plight into an international talking point. The debate provoked fears that ne'er-do-wells may retaliate and kill pangolins. However, it also prompted calls to harness the charismatic scaly animals as a flagship to end the trade for good.

Formally declaring the ban's stricter measures, Xinhua illustrated its report with an image of a Sunda pangolin. The decision aimed "to safeguard ecological safety" – although it is likely that pangolin scales will still be consumed under medicinal regulations. Campaigners are not happy about this.

An update to the state news report changed the wording from "ecological safety" to "ecological security" – this may be taken as a signal that the Standing Committee is eager to show the ban is not just a conservation decision, but a security decision, too. As a 2019 climate report by the US Department of Defence shows, there is military recognition at the highest levels of government that

A Temminck's pangolin on the look-out for ants and termites. Last week, Wuhan provided the first act to another possible revolution when China announced that buying and selling wild animals for food was now thoroughly banned. File photo

fundamental threats to ecological security endanger human safety in the most existential sense of the word.

These are all contributing factors that show Beijing may enforce a permanent ban of a trade that has repeatedly enabled a petri dish for outbreaks with cumulative costs of which are running into billions of dollars.

Or, in the case of Covid-19, potentially \$1-trillion.

Bird flu. Swine flu. Ebola. Middle East Respiratory Syndrome. SARS. Each of these zoonotics cuts a forensic trail to people who interacted with sick or dead animals at some point.

"This crisis has done more for conservation than all western NGOs have achieved in decades of being in China and spending billions," said Karl Ammann, an investigative journalist and activist whom a 1999 New York Times article names as the "chief nemesis of the bushmeat trade, and persona non grata to governments whose indifference he exposes". In the 1990s and 2000s, Ammann blew the lid off the consumption of primate bushmeat, the source of simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV) that mutated into human HIV.

As long as this ban is permanent, simple to understand and gets the full weight of the Standing Committee's authority, China could even find itself in a favourable position: besides the European Union, it would be the most influential superpower with a multilateral conservation approach at a time that geopolitics, and long-term collective interest, demand just this.

In fact, US President Donald Trump's controversial attempts to create a policy environment that puts industry above sustainability may hand Chinese President Xi Jinping the opportunity to define himself in opposition to a dearth of US environmental leadership. This, despite vocal opposition on domestic soil to Trump's policies by US civil society, the private sector and majority of lawmakers.

Such a potential axis shift may have seemed a bridge too far in the pre-Covid-19 era – one in which former US president Barack Obama's pro-environment, multilateral policies provided a useful counterpoint to criminals riding roughshod over China's wildlife laws – and who continue to fan out across dwindling wilderness.

Indeed, there is no small irony in suggesting that the country which plunged the world into what may yet become a global shutdown could also lead a multilateral effort to revamp geopolitics.

There is also the country's troubling human-rights record, which should presumably ring loudly in every person's amygdala.

Yet, multilateral diplomacy could prove to be China's metier as the Anthropocene clock reveals its biggest reckoning: that natural disaster does not respect sovereign borders.

"It's antiquated to say China could not take a global environmental leadership role. The

US looks at the next election. China looks 50 years ahead. Not many governments do that," said Knights.

"When you work on that timeline, you have to start taking global developments like climate change seriously – and much of the rest of the world is now looking for 'long-view' leadership. China, as the world's superpower, is stepping into that void."

Dr Peter J Li, associate professor of East Asian politics at the University of Houston-Downtown, Texas, echoed these views. He is also a China policy specialist with Humane Society International.

"President Xi has an opportunity to act in favour of global environmental protection. It is never too late for China to act. Xi can plan long-term development," said Li.

"Trump's concentration is the next election. I don't see environment and wildlife inside and outside the US as a concern for Trump."

Trump's strategy missteps range from the ecology to cutting back on the US State Department, added Knights.

The US officially leaves the UN Paris Climate Accord in November. By forfeiting the US seat at the world's biggest climate round table, Trump, for better or worse, gives the world's next-biggest single economy more clout to broker an exceedingly potent chapter in geopolitics – climate negotiations.

The move also hands China more power at the intersection of the world's most influential – if flawed, critics say – environmental treaties: the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. These treaties are not formally connected, but species trade diplomacy is more important on a heating planet that may well simplify ecosystems.

Trump's Paris departure, Knights pointed out, is "a real step back from all sorts of international engagement".

Or, as an observer who did not want to be named lamented: "Yoh. Trump. He seems to be consciously and actively planning to trash the planet. You think he's an alien who wants to get rid of unwanted life forms – us?"

China may be the world's largest greenhouse gas emitter, but the European Commission's vice-president, the Dutch socialist Frans Timmermans, told Daily Maverick during a visit to Cape Town this week that he was optimistically cautious about China's potential to capitalise on shifting geopolitics.

"Even before Trump, China was decisive on reaching an agreement in Paris. It has built a reputation that it deserves as global leader," said Timmermans, who heads up the European Union's Green Deal. However, he was concerned the Covid-19 outbreak would hamper China's ability to meet its Paris commitments. They are "sitting on the fence a bit".

"It is clear there is a strong willingness of Chinese leadership to be part of those who go ahead ... [It's about] looking at the numbers

and seeing whether they can afford it at this stage – given other international developments."

'No nationalist rhetoric will scare off a virus'

On the ballooning US debt bill – despite bullish claims of domestic economic growth – Timmermans was much starker.

"Look at the debt Trump is building up. That's coming back at some point – if we reduce international relations to transactional relations between sovereign nations, we misunderstand the complete and integrated nature of today's world," he warned.

"There is no national border that is going to stop coronavirus. There is no level of nationalism in your rhetoric that is going to scare off a virus. This is not some foreigner's fault. This is what happens in an integrated world and this is something we will have to face within the collective responsibility – and I think the climate crisis is the most important."

Online watchdog Climate Action Tracker says China's commitments are "highly insufficient". However, the watchdog adds, as "the world's largest consumer of coal and the largest developer of renewable energy – the choice [China] makes, domestically and abroad, between the technology of the past versus the renewable future will have a lasting effect on the world's ability to limit warming to 1.5°C".

China's charm offensive

Right now, a teensy viral villain is playing Russian roulette with one of the brightest feathers in Xi's cap: lifting all 1.4-billion Chinese out of poverty.

That target is still within the central government's reach, China's South Africa Ambassador Lin Songtian insisted at a recent press conference. A forceful personality with a mischievous grin, the ambassador had been on a spirited tour throughout South Africa, hammering home a single maxim:

'Keep calm – China's Communist Party has everything under control.'

Watching poverty alleviation disintegrate just beyond their fingertips may be too much for Beijing to bear. This is yet another contributing factor that plays into the possibility of a more sustained dusting down of criminal activity.

Said Ammann, who has spent decades documenting the dark side of trade in Asia's backstreets: "In China, face loss is worse than share prices declining by 50%."

At a junket in Bishoptown, that Cape Town bastion of leafy privilege, there was hardly a crack in the veneer of the Chinese embassy's well-oiled staff complement. If they felt under siege, this showed only in their eagerness to impress.

A driveway attendant gesticulated the press corps' vehicles into an awkward line of double-parking. (Daily Maverick declined, later avoiding an international incident between journalists rushing out to be the first to file.)

Another staff member stood to attention in tie and suit with an

open umbrella, providing shelter against a freak summer storm. Inside, a flotilla of media officers glided up to journalists, producing business cards and offering quotable insights, always polite.

While Daily Maverick interviewed the ambassador, they hovered nearby, afterwards admitting on the sly: "Our boss keeps us on our toes." (That is public-relations talk for the challenges of "managing" an ambassador who does not always stick to the script).

"Pangolin is one of the endangered species, right? They are not allowed in the market like rhino horn is not allowed. The ivory product is not allowed. But unfortunately some snake ... I mean how do people eat the bat!" the ambassador said, and laughed in italics at these apparent non-sequiturs. He shrugged, seemingly at a loss for words. "I don't know."

He underlined, frequently, that most "educated" Chinese – including his "own boy" studying in the US – disassociated themselves from the wildlife trade and its "old traditions".

In January an online poll by the Peking University Centre for Nature Society found that 97% of some 100,000 participants were against eating wild animals. Nearly 80% rejected using wildlife products. Knights said the poll was "probably biased to more educated people, but, you know, that's a large proportion of the Chinese population now."

By contrast, 14 million people worked in wildlife and trade consumption before the ban, some media have suggested.

"A minority is still a minority; the majority have changed," Lin said when Daily Maverick pointed out a minority in China could mean tens, if not hundreds, of millions of people.

"The dog is a member of the family. It's the baby," he continued. "Do something against the dog, people give you strange eyes."

This embassy scene was hardly the tableau of an evil empire plotting to overthrow the planet with biological warfare, as some unsubstantiated conspiracy rumours have suggested.

Lin was upbeat about the prospects of a permanent ban. "It's possible," he said. "Of course."

A single spark, a prairie fire

If authorities' recent crackdown is a harbinger, the results of a permanent ban could be impressive, even if more trade goes underground amid deeply held cultural preferences and newer fads, which criminals are good at inventing. (This is what Ammann warns about in his 2018 investigation on the rhino-horn trade.)

"Some 5-10% of what was going on legally will carry on underground. People do things illicitly for reasons ranging from avoiding taxes to health regulations," added Knights.

"But a main argument for a blanket ban is that it's easy for everybody to understand. Anyone can enforce it. The key is public education. Keeping the law simple and clear."

So far, Chinese authorities say they have closed down some 20,000 wildlife farms; 2,550-plus people have been "punished" for wildlife crimes, reported state news. Online, "750,000 pieces of information about wildlife trade were removed or blocked", while "17,000 online stores or accounts were closed". Secret codes would be "screened out".

Knights hoped China would also play a role to help "countries around the world. It's no good simply banning the trade in China. The same risks are very much out there in Asia as well as Africa."

Current revisions also create the platform for lawmakers to revisit critical omissions in anti-cruelty legislation. Updates would go further to prevent the conditions that tolerate unsanitary practices, Li suggested.

"China does NOT have an anti-cruelty law," he stressed. One reason is "strong opposition from the country's business interests for fear such a law would slow economic growth".

Agencies

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD =062=

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

3 Letter word: NEO, SON, AID, AGO, HUG,
4 Letter word: NEED, DEER, HARE, HAIK, IRBM, KIBO
5 Letter word: ALIVE, SEEM, RABBI, MODEL, TOKEN
6 Letter word: SOLEMN, MOISTEN, AGREED, MTWARA
7 Letter word: IMAGINE
8 Letter word: CARRIAGE, FREE LOVE,
9 Letter word: SHINYANGA, ENTERTAIN,
10 Letter word: LEADERSHIP

Clues: Across
1. Kill large number of people (8)
2. Monkey (3)
3. Largest country in the World (6,5)
4. Run away from somebody (5)
5. Imagined series of events when you fall asleep (5)
6. First man (4)
7. Payment in return for work (4)
8. Drink by taking small mouthfuls (3)
9. Cabonated drink (5)
10. Ship used in war (7)
11. Half of something (4)
12. Not imaginary (4)
13. Gentle of light wind (6)
14. French name for lake Geneva (5)

Down:
1. Act of rubbing parts of the body (7)
2. Person who rescues (6)
3. List of items to be attended to (7)
4. Circular shape (5)
5. Her monetary unit is Balboa (6)
6. Direct descent from ancestor (7)
7. Proficient in something requiring skill (5)
8. To become slightly wet (7)
9. Request for relief (6)
10. Take an oath (5)
11. Person who is speaking (3)
12. Sense of personal worth (5)
13. Portion of something owned (5)
14. Beer (3)

WORD FIT

CROSSWORD

Comments: 0/0 (0/0)



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Health ministry advised on how to use patients' lab test results

By Francis Kajubi

PRIVATE health officials have warned that an attempt by the Health ministry to ban the use of laboratory results of patients in public hospitals to treat the victims will negatively impact their investments worth billions of shillings.

Association of Private Health Facilities in Tanzania (Aphfta) CEO Dr Samuel Ogillo said the ban means that patients should not trust and use private laboratories because they results will not be entertained by public health facilities.

Dr Ogillo said Minister for Health, Ummu Mwalimu's decision needs a well-defined approach to address the issue of unfaithful health professionals in public hospitals other than ban the whole private laboratory facilities.

"The minister posed a ban on acceptance of prescriptions that can be tested at public facilities and not otherwise, but patients have the freedom to choose where to have their tests and treatments

in the first place," he pointed out.

The Aphfta CEO added, "There is a big number of health professionals who are not government employees but rather work in private health facilities including laboratories who will be affected by such a ban if not defined properly," Dr Ogillo warned.

He asserted that he is aware that some public medical health personnel also work for private facilities and that some are being paid according to the number of patients they attend but not necessarily being owners of such facilities.

"It's costly for a patient to have two tests on the same medical condition at two separate facilities with incurred charges," he noted while noting that telling patients not to go for private health facilities will deny them customers hence kill their investments.

Outgoing Executive Director of Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF), Godfrey Simbeye said the minister's order which is a result of breach of code of ethics by a few medical professionals

in the public health sector, is unfortunate.

Simbeye said the move will frustrate private investments in the health sector where TPSF has seen more investments being made in recent years because of better relations with public health facilities.

"The problem here is that if patients opt to have their treatment at public facilities medical doctors have to respect that. They shouldn't be instructed to go for diagnosis at private facilities then bring prescriptions back for treatment at public facilities which is absolutely unacceptable," the TPSF CEO noted.

He however said, on the other hand, if the ministry is confident that public hospitals and health centers are now fully equipped with all testing facilities then it simply needs good tracking mechanism against its unethical employees rather imposing a bracket ban on private health facilities.



Minister of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children, Ummu Mwalimu.

Recently, Minister of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elders and Children, Ummu Mwalimu said while on a visit at Temeke Referral Hospital in Dar es Salaam that laboratory results and prescription reports from private health facilities will not be accepted by public hospitals because

some doctors are colluding with private investors.

She said the government has invested heavily in procurements of health equipment for public facilities such that medical doctors are supposed to only accept prescriptions of tests that cannot be done at public hospitals to curb cheating.

Coronavirus: Shares worldwide on course for the worst week in last twelve years

NEW YORK

Fear over the economic fallout from the spreading coronavirus tightened its grip on global markets, sending US equities to a seventh straight loss and sparking demand for safe assets from Treasuries to the yen.

The S&P 500 plunged more than 3% Friday and is now down over 15% from its record. The index is mired in its longest slump in over three years and careening toward its worst week since the financial crisis. The Dow Jones Industrial Average has shed more than 4 000 points this week.

Treasury yields sank to all-time lows, with the two-year tumbling through 1% and 30-year rates under 1.7%. Crude slid toward \$44 a barrel, while gold lost 2%. European shares headed for August lows and Asian equities fell more than 2.5%.

The sell-off picked up steam after a White House official suggested the virus could force some schools to close and more companies warned that disruptions could upend sales and profit forecasts. Germany quarantined about 1 000 people and Switzerland banned large events, leading to the Geneva car show being cancelled.

WHO upgrades global risk of virus spread to 'very high'

World Health Organization (WHO) chief Tedros Adhanom Gebreyesus says the UN health agency upgrades the global risk from the new coronavirus to "very high." Iran and South Korea revealed more infections while the first cases appeared in Mexico and Nigeria, Africa's most populous country.

Worst week since 2008 crisis

That's all put shares worldwide on course for the worst week since the 2008 crisis, down around 10%. With the likes of Citigroup saying they want to see markets "closer to panic" before going all-in on global equities, the dip buyers who have helped make this bull market the longest on record are nowhere to be seen.

"Investors are selling stocks first and asking questions later," Keith Lerner, SunTrust's chief market strategist, wrote in a note. "We are seeing signs of pure liquidation. 'Get me out at any cost' seems to be the prevailing mood. There is little doubt the coronavirus will continue to weigh on the global economy, and the US will not be immune. There is much we do not know. However, it is also premature to suggest the base case for the US economy is recession."

Downgrades to the global outlook keep rolling in and money markets now see three Federal Reserve interest-rate cuts this year. Bank of America predicted that the global economy will see its weakest year since the financial crisis as the virus damages demand in China and beyond.

"Asset prices diverged significantly from growth in the past year, in part because of central bank policy, but also because passive investment's main signal is price action," reckons James McCormick, global head of desk strategy at NatWest Markets. "The COVID-19 escalation runs a real risk of virtuous cycle turning to a vicious one. Either way, given where growth estimates are heading for the next few months, I'd expect more downside." Amid the hunt for havens, the yen is on course for its biggest weekly gain since mid-2016, though gold was set for a decline after a multi-month rally.

Elsewhere, New Zealand's dollar fell 1% Friday as the country reported its first case of the virus and investors bet on policy easing from the central bank. Turkish stocks plunged as tensions between Ankara and Moscow soared.

Top brands accused of using forced Chinese labour

SYDNEY

China is transferring tens of thousands of Uighur detainees out of internment camps and into factories that supply some of the world's leading brands, an Australian think tank said Monday.

Top global brands such as Apple, BMW and Sony have been accused of getting supplies from factories using the forced labour, an explosive allegation that could reverberate in boardrooms across the world.

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute said the Chinese government has transferred 80,000 or more Uighurs out of camps in Xinjiang and into factories across the country. "Uighurs are working in factories that are in the supply chains of at least 83 well-known global brands in the technology, clothing and automotive sectors," the think tank said.

"Some factories across China are using forced Uighur labour under a state-sponsored labour transfer scheme that is tainting the global supply chain." The brands, it added, included "Apple, BMW, Gap,



Top global brands such as Apple, BMW and Sony have been accused of getting supplies from China factories using the forced labour.

Huawei, Nike, Samsung, Sony and Volkswagen."

"Companies using forced Uighur labour in their supply chains could find themselves in breach of laws

which prohibit the importation of goods made with forced labour or mandate disclosure of forced labour supply chain risks," the report said.

"The companies listed in this report should conduct immediate and thorough human rights due diligence on their factory labour in China, including robust and

independent social audits and inspections."

AFP has contacted the firms for a response to the claims. An estimated one million mostly Muslim ethnic minorities have been held in internment camps in Xinjiang. After initially denying their existence, Beijing cast the facilities as "vocational education centres" where "students" learn Mandarin and job skills in an effort to steer them away from religious extremism, terrorism and separatism.

Rights groups and witnesses accuse China of forcibly trying to draw Uighurs away from their Islamic customs and integrate them into the majority Han culture. Officially, the Chinese government says it is transferring "surplus" Xinjiang labour to other regions in the name of poverty alleviation.

According to official news agency Xinhua, more than 25,000 workers from Xinjiang were slated to be transferred "inland" in 2019. China's foreign ministry and the Xinjiang government did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the report.

Huawei commits \$50m to train 2m ICT professionals

JOHANNESBURG

Chinese multinational, Huawei has pledged a \$50 million-five year investment to train two million ICT professionals, as part of the next phase of its Huawei ICT Academy Programme.

The academy, launched in 2013, is part of Huawei's digital inclusion initiative, TECH4ALL, which is intended to expand the access and benefits of ICT training throughout the globe. The second phase of the initiative, the Huawei

ICT Academy Programme 2.0, was introduced this week at the Industrial Digital Transformation Conference-Live in Shenzhen, China.

It seeks to provide ICT courses and support services to universities and colleges throughout the globe to help them train students, post-grad students and teachers to establish and optimise ICT majors, improve the curriculum system, and build standard labs.

It also aims to introduce students to Huawei's ICT technologies and

products in universities around the world, encouraging them to participate in Huawei certification, and developing innovative and application-oriented technical talent for societies and the global ICT industry.

To cement its plans, the Huawei says it will set up the Huawei ICT Academy Development Incentive Fund (ADIF), which will focus on different areas of implementation. Since 2015, Huawei says it has partnered with more than 600 international universities by setting

up Huawei ICT academies within the campuses, and has trained more than 1 500 teachers.

In August last year, Huawei SA, in partnership with the Department of Communications and Digital Technologies, announced plans to launch free online and on-site training in 5G and fourth industrial revolution technologies, targeting 6 000 South Africans, who are either post-graduate ICT students or practitioners. The initiative, which is part of the Seeds for

the Future training programme, kicked off this week.

In November the company launched its Developer Programme in SA aimed at creating training and development opportunities for local developers, through hands-on workshops and one-on-one coaching sessions and support.

The Huawei ADIF that will focus on four key pillars of the Huawei ICT Academy Programme 2.0: IProviding teaching experiment equipment for cooperative universities to improve

students' practical skills. ITraining teachers through ADIF, providing free exam vouchers to encourage students to take Huawei's certification exams, and setting up an education fund to reward excellent teachers and students.

IHolding the Huawei ICT Competition to provide a platform for students to communicate with their peers and show their talents. ICooperating with partners on ICT Talent Job Fairs to help students find jobs and promote efficient matching between talent supply and demand.



TRA commissioner general Dr Edwin Mhede.

TRA 'following up' Shanta Gold Limited bonus shares awarded to top executives

By Smart Money Reporter

OVER 2bn/- bonus shares awarded to Shanta Gold Limited's top executives is being followed up by Tanzania Revenue Authority for tax purposes.

A senior official from Domestic Revenue Department said the taxman is closely scrutinizing Shanta Gold's records to establish if all taxes were paid. "I can simply tell you that bonus share are subject to taxation just like bonus cash so we are definitely following this up," said the official who said details will be given by Commissioner of Domestic Revenue, Abdul Mapeembe. "You will get the details of the tax payment if concluded from the Commissioner," said the official.

Recently, the London Stock Exchange listed company said

the bonus shares were given to Person Discharging Managerial Responsibilities who included CEO, Eric Zurrin, Chief Financial Officer Luke Leslie, New Luika Gold Mine's General Manager, Honest Mrema, Singida Gold Mine's General Manager, Philbert Rweyemanu and Head of Corporate Affairs, Calvin Mlingi.

"Performance pay in shares is based on prescribed KPIs (key performance index) set out at the beginning of 2019 and the number of shares awarded is calculated based on an average share price over the calendar year 2019," the company said in its statement.

Shanta's flagship New Luika Gold Mine commenced production in 2012 and produced 84,506 ounces in 2019. The statement further noted that each of the top executives were issued with ordinary shares of 0.01p each in

the company. In aggregate, this will result in the issuance of 6,555,926 ordinary shares.

The company said Zurrin earned 2,762,284 shares worth over £290,039 (over 869.4m/-) while Leslie got 2,301,903 shares worth over £241,699 (over 724.6m/-). The statement however did not give details of earnings by local managers Mrema, Rweyemanu and Mlingi although by calculation they got 1,491,739 shares worth over 434.2m/-.

"Application has been made to London Stock Exchange Plc for those 6,555,926 ordinary shares to be admitted to trading on AIM. Admission is expected to occur and dealings in the new ordinary shares are expected to commence on the LSE at 8.00 a.m. on or around 6 February 2020," the statement added.

The January 20, 2020 dated

statement further noted that from admission, the company's issued ordinary share capital will comprise 793,931,012 ordinary shares with voting rights. No ordinary shares are held in treasury.

The figure of 793,931,012 may be used by the company's shareholders as the denominator for the calculations by which they will determine if they are required to notify their interest in, or a change to their interest in, the company under the Financial Conduct Authority's Disclosure Guidance and Transparency Rules.

Shanta Gold is an East Africa-focused gold producer, developer and explorer. It currently has defined ore resources on the New Luika project in Mbeya region and holds exploration licenses covering approximately 1,500 square kilometres.

Industrialists condemn multiple county levies

NAIROBI

Manufacturers have renewed calls for elimination of multiple county and national government levies that have slowed their efforts to sell in the domestic market.

Speaking when they launched their Manufacturing Priority Agenda 2020 (MPA2020) last week, the industrialists said an agreement must be reached to scrap the multiple business permits and other levies charged as goods move across counties.

Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) chairman Sachin Gudka said the numerous county charges coupled with other regulatory licences at national level made Kenya unattractive to do business with Kenya-made goods priced beyond reach of most citizens.

"While county governments were to become the new frontiers for the promotion of investments and growth of the manufacturing sector, they have turned out to be major impediments in their quest to raise local revenue targets," he said.

Mr Gudka said this saw product-makers pass on the county expenses to consumers via price increments. In Nairobi, manufacturers delivering

goods to retail chains must acquire a trade licence for every line of business and for each vehicle as well as pay of loading fees on a per-trip basis.

MPA2020 calls for a national consensus on licences that must be agreed upon on a participatory basis where a manufacturer will be allowed to pay county fees once annually within the county they operate from and not in every county they visit.

To promote competitiveness and a level playing field, it calls for establishment of a high level government approval process for any regulatory agency imposing corrective measures touching on businesses.

Manufacturers said counties must be discouraged from introducing no-service linked fees, charges and levies and that the county government revenue raising regulation bill (2018) be expedited to provide mechanisms for new levies, fees and charges by county governments.

Additionally MPA2020 urges the national and county governments to play an active role in opening up markets for local goods by implementing the 'Buy Kenya, Build Kenya' decree by instituting strict policies that discourage sale of illicit and imported goods.



KAM chairman Sachin Gudka.

Competition Appeal Court: SA banks can be fined over allegations of rate rigging

JOHANNESBURG

South Africa's Competition Appeal Court has overturned a decision that a host of international banks cannot be fined if found guilty for alleged exchange rate rigging, the country's Competition Commission said on Friday.

The watchdog is seeking to fine 23 local and foreign banks that it alleges colluded when giving quotes to customers buying or selling the rand and the dollar. Its investigation came during a global clampdown that has led to dozens of traders being fined and several big banks fined around \$10 billion in total for rigging the level of Libor and other forex benchmarks.

The foreign banks it has investigated that have no presence in South Africa are Bank of America Merrill Lynch International, JP Morgan Chase & Co, Australia and New Zealand Bank Ltd, Standard New York Securities Inc, Nomura International, Macquarie Bank Ltd, HBC Bank USA, National Association (N.A), Merrill Lynch Pierce Fenner and Smith and Credit Suisse Securities (USA) LLC.

"The CAC said, within 40 days, the Commission must file a new (charge sheet)... and must set out the facts it relies on to allege it was foreseeable that the alleged conduct would have direct or immediate, and substantial effect in South Africa," the commission's statement said.

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Mozambique govt bans canned pilchards being recalled in South Africa

MAPUTO

Mozambique's government is to withdraw canned goods from South Africa, after information indicating the existence of badly processed products unfit for human consumption, it said on Thursday.

"It is confirmed that there are canned products unfit for human consumption and our recommendation is to withdraw these products," Rosa Marlene, National Health Director, told reporters on Thursday.

The warning about the existence of canned South African products unfit for human consumption was given to Mozambique by the World Health Organisation and by South Africa itself, a neighbouring country from which Mozambique imports a considerable number of products,

especially food.

"We advised the National Inspection of Economic Activities (INAE) as soon as we had the information and now this body is organising the mechanisms it has for the products to be withdrawn throughout the country," the National Health Director said.

It's not just West Point Processors' tinned pilchards in tomato sauce that has been recalled, but their pilchards in chilli sauce as well – sold by retailers country-wide under 12 brands, South Africa's National Regulator for Compulsory Specifications (NRCS) announced on Monday night, Times Live reports.

That's because the product was "compromised" on the production line when the sauce was added to the fish in the can, and "therefore could affect the safety of consumers", the NRCS said.

The affected products include not only the Shoprite group's house brands, but the Spar house brand pilchards as well, all bearing the production codes ZST29 or ZSC29 on top of the can.

"The problem manifests itself after months of storage, which causes the content of the can to react with the metal of the can," the NRCS said. The regulator made no mention of bloating tins. At the weekend, West Point Processors announced a recall of its pilchards in tomato sauce 400g tins, but was silent about its chilli variant. Customers who've purchased the cans were urged to return them for a refund.

The company said there was a small possibility that some tins in the specified batch may have a "canning deficiency," which could make them "unfit for consumption." Whereas Westpoint named

six products as being part of its recall – Cape Point, Saldanha, Shoprite Ritebrand, Checkers Housebrand, U-brand and OK Housebrand – and only the Tomato Sauce variant, the NRCS has named nine brands and said both the Tomato Sauce and Chilli Sauce variants are part of the recall.

The NRCS, which regulates the manufacture, production and treatment of canned fish, is now "impugning" formal wholesalers, retailers and informal traders to remove and stop selling the 400g Pilchards in Tomato Sauce and 400g Pilchards in Chilli Sauce with immediate effect.

"We are engaging all role players to ensure that the affected products are removed from the market to protect consumers against unsafe products in line with our mandate," the South African regulator said.

Lions Club comes to rescue of hundreds of Dar students with supply of potable water



Air Wing Primary School pupils take time off recently to drink tap clean water from a point sponsored by Mzimba Lions Club of Dar es Salaam. Photo: Guardian photographer.

By Smart Money Reporter

FOR Benigna Kapinga, Head-teacher at Majani ya Chai Primary School in Dar es Salaam, clean tap water supply for the school has been a very important aspect, thanks to Mzimba Lions Club's School Water Programme financing.

Through the program's funding, over 2,100 pupils and 38 teachers are now safe from waterborne diseases which are spread by dirty water from boreholes, and wells. "We didn't have reliable water sources before the Lion Club project, pupils used to come with water gallons from home and often they were fetching it from boreholes and wells near which is unsafe and contaminated," Kapinga said.

She stated that Mzimba Lions Club's School Water Program has been very promising and sustainable because the donors have continued to manage it on a regular basis. "Many donors tend to bring a project to the community and let the community manage it, but the situation is different for the Mzimba Lions Club who not only continue to manage it, but also fix it when broken down, say in case of a water pump malfunction," added Kapinga.

She further noted that the only challenge that the school is facing is lack of a wall fencing to protect the project, pupils and other school property from being vandalised by intruders who ease use the water at any time.

Majani ya Chai Primary School is one of the 20 public schools in Dar es Salaam which are benefiting from Mzimba Lions Club's School Water Program which is in line with UN's Sustainable Development Goal No. 6 and the National Sanitation Campaign, Water and Sanitation Development Program (WSDP II) through the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) program.

Other primary schools in the list are Mnazi Mmoja, Minazi Mirefu, Msimbazi Mseto, Karakata, Mogo, Air Wing,

Mzinga B, Mwanagati, Zimbili, Umoja, Yombo, Mwale, Bwawani, Unubini and Child Under the Sun which all totals over 20,744 pupils and 488 teachers.

But the beneficiaries also include public secondary schools, namely: Halisi, Mwanagati, Mnazi Mmoja and Majani ya Chai all with a combined total of 5,371 students and 151 teachers. The Mzimba Lions Club initiative has turned some of schools' surroundings in a conducive environment with lush gardens that help consume most of the carbon dioxide emitted by human activities.

Among the most transformed schools is Minazi Mirefu Primary School located at Ukonga-Banana in the commercial capital. The school used to face serious water scarcity but now, pupils can also be seen rushing to taps to drink clean water during break time.

Some of the pupils are also seen watering flowers and trees planted in lush gardens surrounding the school and thus not only helping in mitigating impacts of global warming but also making the learning environment conducive.

"We are truly grateful to Mzimba Lions Club who provided us with a permanent deep well that serves two schools, Minazi Mirefu, and our neighbours, Air Wing Primary School," said assistant Head-teacher, Mchumila Hamisi.

Hamisi said with a total of 3,028 pupils present who include 1,489 girls, the pupils' hygiene at the school has changed from worse due to lack of reliable water to the best ever thanks to flowing tap water.

Fatihuba Karata who is assistant Head-teacher at Air Wing Primary School, seconded Hamisi's observation by pointing out that despite having a well drilled by former Ukonga MP, Dr Milton Mahanga, the Mzimba Lions Club's project has served them because

the former MP's project is defunct.

"The challenge to access reliable water officially ended in 2004 after the advent of the project brought by Mzimba Lions Club and now no student is bringing a water gallon from home anymore," Karata said.

She said the school environment has continued to improve with the planting of trees and flowers which make up a lush garden. "Right now, all our toilets have enough water because we have two water dispensers serving younger pupils including those in elementary classes while the other is older ones," added Karata.

But the Lions Club project has added another milestone revolution at Karakata Primary School which has 1,258 students and 32 teachers.

Asha Duma who is assistant Head-teacher at the school said instead of planting normal trees for shield against sunshine, they decided to plant fruit trees and vegetables. "We were introduced to this project in 2013, but by 2016 we decided to change our thinking by planting fruit trees and now we are planting vegetables," said Duma whose school is also a beneficiary of Mzimba Lions Club project.

"By doing this we not only teach students about environmental conservation, but also impart them framing skills although our plot is small," she said.

A member of Mzimba Lions Club of Dar es Salaam, Tayab Mohammed said what they are doing to the people, especially students, is only for charity to help communities get basic needs such as water which even the UN has recognised as a basic necessity through SDG No. 6. "We have to be patriotic have a sense of commitment to serve our community, especially those in need such as pupils and students attending public schools as the government cannot do everything," he said.

Rwandan tin smelting firm certified as conflict-free

KIGALI

A Rwandan tin smelting plant, LuNa Smelter, has been certified as a conflict free smelter by the Responsible Minerals Assurance Process (RMAP).

The qualification is part of a programme, Responsible Minerals Initiative (RMI), which has been conducting assessment to validate smelters' company-level management processes for responsible mineral procurement.

Following the evaluation, LuNa Smelter was fully compliant to the requirements of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chain of Minerals as well as meets the demands of the mineral certification scheme of the

International Conference on the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR).

Radoslaw Miskiewicz, the Chairman of the Supervisory Board of LuNa Smelter said that the development was proof of the company's efforts to source responsibly while producing highest quality tin ingots.

"This is a sign that LuNa Smelter adopts best due diligence practices in order to operate in safe and responsible manner that respects the environment, employees, customers and the communities in which the company operates in," Miskiewicz said.

The government views the certification as a confirmation that Rwanda is a conflict free source of

minerals. Francis Gatate, the CEO of Rwanda Mines, Petroleum and Gas Board (RMB) said that over the years, Rwanda has always maintained that the country does not deal with conflict minerals.

"This comes as a confirmation to what we have always proven to the world: Rwanda is a conflict-free source of minerals. We have put in place different measures including deployment of tag managers at mining concessions to seal and record minerals produced in order to efficiently monitor and contain potential illegal dealing in minerals," said Gatate.

The development is also in line with the 7 year development blue-print,

National Strategy for Transformation which among other things seeks increase revenues, achieve sustainability in mining.

"This achievement is in line with the government's 7-year program 'National Strategy for Transformation' and contributes to the responsible, sustainable and environmentally friendly development of the mining sector," he said.

Rwanda is re-designing the mining sector in order to transform mining resources into key drivers of the country's growth during the National Strategy for Transformation.

The mining sector in Rwanda is going through a transition, as is the case with many African countries,

moving from its traditional nature of small-scale exploitation with limited links to the rest of the economy to being a major foreign currency earner.

Rwanda has a vision to become a regional mineral processing hub, adding value to minerals mined in Rwanda and the region before exporting them. The mining sector has been growing at an average rate of 20 per cent since 2006-2007 according to government statistics.

Mining and quarrying activities in Rwanda employ more than 40,000 people. The country targets to further increase minerals export revenues to \$800 million by 2020 and \$1.5 billion annually by 2024.

LuNa Smelter was established in

2018 by a European Industrial Group - Luma Holding in partnership with a Rwandan Investment Group - Ngali Holdings and was commissioned in 2019, the Smelter started producing high quality tin ingots.

The firm entered the local market on acquiring operations of Karuruma Tin Smelter, whose activities had stalled following the challenges on the part of the previous investor, Phoenix Metal Ltd.

Ngali Holdings, and Luma Holdings, a Polish firm, co-invested \$7 million (about Rwf6.3 billion) to revive the operations of the smelter. The facility is now able to process more than 300 tonnes of cassiterite per month, or around 12 tonnes a day.



A spaza shop in suburban Johannesburg.

South Africa's spaza shops: How regulatory avoidance harming informal sector workers

CAPE TOWN

Small informal retailers are a ubiquitous feature of any developing country's urban landscape. Known as spaza shops in South Africa, they are an important, even vital, component in the townships. Numbering over 100,000 across the nation, they make critical contributions to local food security, self-employment and community cohesion.

In the last decade, the sector has undergone extensive change. A new class of traders has emerged. They have often - but not always - been foreign. For this reason, this changing character of South Africa's spaza sector has become associated with chauvinistic and xenophobic portrayals of immigrant shopkeepers.

On the one hand, angry locals, often egged on by opportunist politicians, have accused foreign traders of destroying South African livelihoods. On the other hand, those questioning this xenophobia have tended to argue that the new class of traders simply represent 'better entrepreneurs' who are out-competing less dynamic traders.

But much more is going on than simply the replacement of locals by foreigners. Rather, the structure of the spaza sector itself is changing. To get to the bottom of changes taking place the Sustainable Livelihoods Foundation and PLAAS conducted business censuses and interviews with 1 100 township grocery retailers across all nine provinces of South Africa.

What we found should give politicians and policymakers pause for thought. Our findings suggest that South Africa's rule of law is in danger of becoming a casualty in an industry that has rapidly adapted in order to compete and survive.

Changing the retail landscape Operating from rural, peri-urban and urban residential townships, virtually all spazas we encountered were unregistered and worked exclusively in cash. That, indeed, is why they are classified as 'informal' businesses. But this classification masked important differences.

The shops we visited typically reflected one of two business types. On the one hand, about one-third were 'survivalist' owner-operators trading from their homes. These resembled the 'traditional' spaza shop. These businesses were informal because they had no choice. They were simply too

small, or the owners too poor, to formalise and thereby enter the legal framework.

The remaining two-thirds were also informal but were so by choice. They differed from their survivalist counterparts in that they were larger, operating from dedicated premises. They offered a wider range of stock, gave credit and had business ties with wholesalers. They also employed staff. The fieldwork revealed about 45% of the shopkeepers we encountered were in fact employees.

Rather than being owner operators they tended to work for those who owned the larger upstream wholesale business that supplied their outlets with stocks. Some of these upstream warehouses operated in networks with turnovers of hundreds of thousands of Rands per week. We also found extensive South African supermarket chains and shopping malls in the retail mix.

The rise of these larger vertically integrated spaza outlets and supermarkets has intensified business competition. Many smaller (mostly South African) independent businesses have exited the market. This new class of informal traders has brought about important social benefits. These include access to a wide variety of cheap consumer goods. But this has come at a cost - especially where the active avoidance regulation has become an explicit business strategy.

Exploitation The spaza employees we encountered predominantly worked in poor conditions. Foreign nationals were particularly vulnerable to exploitation. More than half of those we interviewed reported working more than 15 hours per day, seven-days-a-week. Some were earning as little as R400 (about US\$27 22) per month. Some shop assistants claimed to be working towards becoming shareholders in the business. But more than three-quarters of our sample reported being employees only. None had written employment contracts, and all worked for cash wages.

Half of the Cape Town employees we interviewed in a follow-on investigation (and many interviewed elsewhere) reported that employers held back their pay. In some cases, a portion of the wages was paid to the employee and the balance reportedly paid to their family elsewhere (commonly in their home country).

In Cape Town, over half the Ethiopian respondents claimed to be repaying financial debts to their bosses for travel expenses to South Africa. In almost all cases employers retained foreign employees' passports. Across the sample, 71% of spaza employees were required to sleep in the building, with nearly half-sleeping (illegally) in the shopfront.

These conditions clearly violate the country's labour laws, which stipulated at the time that retail workers must earn at least R3,701 per month for a 45-hour work week. The law stipulates 12 hours of rest in each 24-hour period, or 36 consecutive rest hours per week, including Sundays, unless agreed in writing.

Further, the working conditions we encountered trigger the great majority of the working conditions identified by the UK Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority as warning flags that people might be working as bonded labour. If our sample is anything to go by, there may be many thousands of shopkeeper employees who toil behind the sales counter under these circumstances.

Bypassing laws The exploitative nature of employment in the spaza sector directly results from the embrace of informality by operators that are large enough to conform to the rules of the formal sector. We categorise this form of entrepreneurship as 'informal'. This is a new form of informality where an otherwise legitimate activity (retailing groceries) relies on labour and retailing practices that evade regulatory oversight. These practices break the law.

Informal strategies for spaza competitiveness capitalise on the concessions accorded to survivalist enterprises. These include municipal allowances for home-based businesses in townships. But these businesses then bypass other important forms of regulation including labour laws. This brings negative implications for inclusive growth, fair work, and rule-of-law.

An increasing number of politicians have simplified this development. They have done so by stoking social tensions by scapegoating these foreign-national spaza shop workers. As our research shows, these workers are themselves deeply vulnerable. They are operating at the coalface of xenophobic hatred and crime.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

WORLD

More countries confirm 1st COVID-19 cases as govts boost containment efforts

BEIJING

ARMENIA, the Dominican Republic, and the Czech Republic joined the list of countries reporting their first cases of COVID-19 on Sunday, while the worst-hit countries have been strengthening their efforts in the fight against the epidemic.

The first confirmed case in the Dominican Republic is a 62-year-old tourist from Italy, now in a stable condition in a military hospital, the country's health authority said.

The Czech Republic reported the first three confirmed cases, two of which are in Prague's Na Bulovce Hospital, and the third is in Masaryk Hospital in Usti nad Labem.

The two men and a woman have all traveled to Italy recently, said Health Minister Adam Vojtech. The first confirmed case in Armenia is a male Armenian citizen, who returned on Friday on a repatriation flight from Iran and on Sunday tested positive for COVID-19. As a precautionary measure, 30 others are to be quarantined, according to Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

Many countries facing new confirmed cases have been stepping up their efforts against the disease. In the United Kingdom, local government on Sunday reported the first confirmed case in Scotland, bringing the total

number across the UK to 36.

The patient, who recently returned from northern Italy, is being treated in isolation, and clinicians have begun contact tracing. In light of the situation, the British government has arranged a meeting of its emergency committee, to be chaired by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson on Monday.

The U.S. state of New York confirmed its first case on Sunday, a woman in her late 30s who contracted the virus while traveling in Iran. Meanwhile, Washington State reported its second coronavirus death on Sunday evening, one day after it declared a state of emergency after the first death caused by the disease in the United States was reported in the state.

More cases of COVID-19 of unknown origin have been reported in western U.S. states, triggering concern about local person-to-person spread of the infectious disease. Oregon reported a confirmed case of a patient with no travel history nor close contact with infected individuals. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has warned the public of an inevitable outbreak of coronavirus within the country. The Irish Health Department said Sunday that a secondary school in the east of Ireland will be closed for 14 days, after links with the first confirmed COVID-19 case in the country



Cured COVID-19 patients leave the "Wuhan Livingroom" makeshift hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, March 1, 2020. The hospital discharged 132 cured COVID-19 patients on Sunday, the highest number in a day by far. (Xinhua)

were discovered. Meanwhile, the governments of some of the worst-hit countries have rolled out extra measures to contain a further spread of the disease.

South Korea confirmed 476 more cases on Monday, taking the total number of infections to 4,212 and the death toll to at least 22.

With virus infections soaring over the past two weeks, the country has raised its four-tier virus alert to the highest level, and designated Daegu and its neighboring county in the south Cheongdo as "special care" zones. Daegu, about 300 km southeast of the capital Seoul, is the epicenter of the viral spread in the country.

The Daegu outbreak has been closely connected with the homegrown religious sect Sincheonji, with 2,113 infections linked to the group as of Sunday morning. South Korean President Moon Jae-in vowed Sunday to overcome the outbreak through national unity at home and in cooperation with neighboring countries such as the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, China, Japan, and nearby Southeast Asian nations.

Japan has reported more than 900 domestic cases of infection as of Friday, with over 700 related to the Diamond Princess, a cruise ship previously quarantined near Tokyo.

The government has said that the coming two-week period is crucial to containing the spread of the virus. Many large public events have been

canceled, as per the government's requirements, while popular theme parks such as Tokyo Disneyland and Universal Studios Japan have been temporarily shut.

The government has also asked all elementary, junior-high and high schools to temporarily close beginning March 2 for around a month. Hokkaido has declared a state of emergency in the northernmost prefecture, where at least 66 infections have been confirmed as of Friday.

Iran's Ministry of Health and Medical Education said Sunday that the outbreak has affected 987 people and killed 54 in the country. In the central Yazd city, the construction of a hospital for the exclusive use of treating COVID-19 patients kicked off on Sunday morning, and is expected to be finished within days.

Meanwhile, people showing symptoms have been barred from leaving the city of Qom, where the country's first two cases were reported, while educational centers have been shut down in cities and provinces seriously hit by the virus. Iran's parliament also said on Friday it would stop working temporarily.

Italy on Sunday reported a total of 1,577 confirmed cases and a death toll of 34. A total of 15 regions and one autonomous province have seen infections, with most of those infected in the northern part of the country, including Lombardy, Emilia-Romagna, and Veneto. **Xinhua**

US-Taliban deal provides hope for ending war in Afghanistan but uncertainty remains

WASHINGTON

THE United States signed the long-awaited pact in the Qatari capital city of Doha, calling for a gradual withdrawal of the U.S. troops if the Taliban negotiates with the Afghan government and cuts ties with terrorist groups.



Though the agreement provides hope for the United States to end its almost two-decade war as well as lasting peace in the conflict-stricken country, thorny issues still remain, said experts.

OPENING THE DOOR

Representatives of the United States and the Taliban signed the long-awaited pact in the Qatari capital city of Doha, calling for a gradual withdrawal of the U.S. troops if the Taliban negotiates with the Afghan government and cuts ties with terrorist groups.

According to a joint statement released by the U.S. and Afghan governments on Saturday ahead of the signing, the United States is going to reduce its troops in Afghanistan from about 13,000 to 8,600 within 135 days after signing the agreement.

Further withdrawal will depend on Taliban's meeting of conditions related to counter-terrorism, the statement added. Speaking at a press conference in the Afghan capital of Kabul on Saturday, Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani expressed confidence that the country will "have a national consensus on peace."

"We have the political will and the capacity to make peace because of the resilience of our society, the dynamism of our economy and the capability of our state. Afghanistan is a sovereign state. It is an independent country," he said. The pact came after over one year's on-and-off negotiations between the two sides and a "seven-day reduction of violence" across Afghanistan.

"The agreement is Washington's best hope of ending the longest American war," noted Carter Malkasian, who served as senior adviser to U.S. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 2015 to 2019.

"The United States has missed too many opportunities over the course of its long Afghan war. It need not do so again," Malkasian added.

According to the deal, the United States is going to reduce its troops to 8,600 in Afghanistan within 135 days, and will, together with its NATO allies, completely pull out the remaining troops in the following 14 months if the Taliban sticks to its commitments.

Besides, the pact also sets the stage for intra-Afghan talks which are expected to begin in early March.

The value of the agreement lies in "opening the door to an Afghan peace process," said Laurel Miller, director of the Asia Program at the think tank International Crisis Group.

NOT A "PEACE DEAL" ITSELF

Experts also cautioned that it is a step toward negotiations but not a "peace agreement" itself.

Important though it is, the agreement is not actually a peace deal, said Miller. "It is a chance to get one," she added.

"The agreement will break the logjam of the Taliban's longstanding unwillingness to sit in talks with the Afghan government and other Afghan power brokers without first achieving an American commitment to withdraw forces," she noted. The deal itself would neither end the war nor bring all American troops home, wrote John Allen, president of the Brookings Institute, in an article published at the think tank's website. **Xinhua**

Kremlin hopes Russian media outlets will experience no restrictions in Turkey

MOSCOW

THE Kremlin hopes that the Russian media outlets in Turkey will not face situations similar to what Sputnik journalists experienced, Russian Presidential Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said yesterday.

The Kremlin spokesman added that Russia's Foreign Ministry had already expressed "deep concern over such actions against media representatives."

"We, of course, hope that media representatives, all the more so, those who are working for the Russian media, such as Sputnik, will not experience any restrictions and will not face situations similar to what occurred the other day," the Kremlin spokesman commented on the detention of Sputnik Turkey employees on March 1. **Agencies**

Mired in stalemate, Israel holds another election on Netanyahu's future

JERUSALEM

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu sought re-election yesterday under the weight of an imminent corruption trial, with the country's third ballot in less than a year predicted to end in another deadlock.

The election follows inconclusive votes in April and September that dimmed an aura of political invincibility enjoyed by Israel's longest-serving prime minister, who has denied any wrongdoing in the three graft cases against him. Opinion polls show neither Net-

anyahu's right-wing Likud nor the centrist Blue and White party of his main challenger, former armed forces chief Benny Gantz, securing enough votes on their own, or with coalition allies, for a governing majority in parliament.

Polls opened at 7 a.m. (0500 GMT). Israelis have until 10 p.m. (2000 GMT) to cast their vote, at which point media outlets can publish the first exit polls and signal whether the deadlock was broken.

More stalemate could push Israel, where a 2020 budget is still pending, further into economic



limbo.

Turnout figures will be watched closely, particularly given the concern over the global coronavirus

outbreak and accusations of malicious rumors about contamination in areas seen as strongholds for particular parties.

Voters under home-quarantine, such as those who have recently traveled back to Israel from coronavirus hot spots, can attend special polling stations if they wear a surgical masks and show no sign of the disease.

Israel's economy has weathered the political turmoil, with growth strong and the labor market tight.

But the longer the stalemate continues, the heavier the toll, including the lack of new money for

health, education, welfare or infrastructure projects until an annual budget is approved by parliament.

Netanyahu's battle to win an unprecedented fifth term has become more complicated since the previous election, having been indicted on charges of bribery, breach of trust and fraud over allegations he granted state favors worth hundreds of millions of dollars to Israeli media barons in return for gifts and favorable coverage.

Netanyahu is due to go on trial on March 17, when post-election coalition wheeling and dealing is likely to be in full swing.

Putin ready to talk over New START's future with Trump

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin said he would be prepared to hold discussions with US President Donald Trump on the future of the Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START).

Moreover, refusing to prolong the agreement would be a mistake, he told TASS in an interview for the

project entitled "20 Questions with Vladimir Putin".

"I can talk about that with him. I do not mind, I'm well-versed on this issue, I can discuss it with anyone," Putin said, adding that he was up-to-date on the topic and ready to discuss it with anyone.

"The New START treaty should be extended," he said.

Asked why the US was reluctant to agree to the treaty's prolonga-

tion, Putin said that it might have been due to the way Washington interpreted security and ways of maintaining it.

Earlier, Putin invited the United States to prolong the agreement without any preconditions. There has been no reply from Washington to this day.

New START

Moscow and Washington signed

the Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms in 2010.

Under its terms, either country must reduce its strategic offensive arms in such a way that at the end of the seventh year following its entry into force and later on their overall amounts should not exceed 700 units of deployed inter-continental ballistic missiles (ICBMs), submarine-launched ballistic missiles

(SLBMs) and heavy bombers, 1,550 warheads and 800 operational and non-operational missile launchers and strategic bombers.

The treaty was concluded for a period of ten years (until February 5, 2021). It can be replaced by a follow-up agreement before the deadline expires, or prolonged for no more than five years (until 2026) by mutual consent. **Agencies**

To cope with global challenges with multilateralism, cooperation

THE sudden outbreak of the novel coronavirus pneumonia is a reminder for the world that we are living in a time when traditional security intertwines with non-traditional security and when regional and global issues interconvert. The human beings are seeing increasing interdependence and their destinies are gradually becoming one.

The Munich Security Conference held from Feb. 14 to 16 also indicated such point as the meeting paid close attention to global public health security and the novel coronavirus epidemic.

At the conference, China introduced its concerted efforts and achievements in combating the epidemic, and received wide praise from the attendants. World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also recognized the encouraging

steps China has taken to contain the outbreak at its source, and once again called for solidarity from the international society.

In this silent "war" where no bullet is used, the entire world has become a whole and a community with a shared future.

China's most comprehensive, strict and thorough measures to combat the epidemic represent the largest contribution to global epidemic prevention and control. Thanks to the country's speed and efficiency which play a vital role in the battle against the virus, and its active engagement in global cooperation, the confirmed cases outside the country only account for less than 1 percent of the total.

"I have given credit where it's due, and I will continue to do that," Tedros'

remarks echo the common aspiration of the international society, as China, which is combating the virus on the frontline, totally deserves such compliments.

By supporting China, global countries are supporting their own and the epidemic prevention and control of the world.

China is not lonely, because people across the world are standing closely with the Chinese people in the hardest days of the battle. Leaders from more than 160 countries and international organizations sent messages of sympathy to China to express strong support for the country, and people from many countries also took active actions to donate money and materials to encourage China.

An Indonesian policeman recently

sang the song "Jiayou, Wuhan" (Stay strong, Wuhan) on social media to show love; children from a primary school in Northern Ireland joined together to perform a Chinese song, Let the World be Full of Love, for people in China suffering from the coronavirus outbreak; and Sri Lankans prayed for China's victory against the novel coronavirus epidemic. To show the power of solidarity in the epidemic is the choice made by the people across the world.

A profound lesson has been taught by the epidemic to the world. At the Munich Security Conference, the debate over "Westlessness," which refers to the loss of common standing of what it means to be part of the West, reflected insufficient sense of security.

The world should figure out what security is and how it can be achieved.

Common, comprehensive, cooperative and sustained security is what the world needs, as no country in this planet is able to avoid global challenges or deal with them alone.

Countries must stop dividing the world into the east and the west, fill the economic gap between the north and the south, take the planet on which human beings rely as a community with shared lives, and perceive the international society as a family, so as to build a community with a shared future for mankind.

Only by joining hands and working together can the world overcome the global public health challenge. It is a moment that demonstrates the power of multilateralism and international cooperation.

The Group of 77 and the United Na-

tions voiced support for China's efforts to combat the epidemic, followed by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the BRICS countries, ASEAN and the African Union.

Fifteen members of the Economic Community of West African States convened an emergency meeting of health ministers to coordinate efforts and cope with the novel coronavirus outbreak.

A special China-ASEAN foreign ministers' meeting on the novel coronavirus pneumonia outbreak will also be held in Laos, which marks another important meeting between China and ASEAN on public health cooperation after the special leaders meeting on the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak they held in 2003. **People's Daily**

'Moment of truth': Buttigieg drops out of Democratic race two days before Super Tuesday

WASHINGTON

PETE Buttigieg dropped out of the race for the Democratic presidential nomination on Sunday, saying he no longer saw a chance of winning, the day after fellow moderate Joe Biden won a big victory in South Carolina. The move shook up the Democratic contest to pick a candidate to take on Republican President Donald Trump in November's election and came two days before the 14-state Super Tuesday nominating contests that will offer the biggest electoral prize so far. Buttigieg (pictured), a 38-year-old former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, who gained early momentum after he narrowly won the Iowa caucuses last month and finished a close second in New Hampshire, had sought to unite Democrats, independents and moderate Republican voters. But he finished a distant third in Nevada and fourth in South Carolina. "Today is a moment of truth ... the

truth is that the path has narrowed to a close for our candidacy if not for our cause," Buttigieg told supporters in South Bend on Sunday night. "Our goal has always been to unify Americans to help defeat Donald Trump and to win the era for our values." His departure leaves six contenders in the Democratic presidential race, which once had more than 20 candidates. An adviser told Reuters that Buttigieg was dropping out to avoid heightening the odds of front-runner Bernie Sanders, a senator from Vermont and self-described democratic socialist. "Pete was not going to play the role of spoiler," said the adviser, who spoke on condition of anonymity. "Could he have went through Super Tuesday and beyond? Sure. But this was not a vanity exercise." Buttigieg and Biden attempted to talk by telephone on Sunday but did not connect, according to a Buttigieg adviser.



Billionaire environmentalist Tom Steyer abandoned his bid after finishing third in South Carolina on Saturday. Earlier on Sunday, Democratic candidates commemorated the anniversary of a landmark civil rights march in Alabama in 1965. Some worshippers at the African-

American church in Selma, Alabama, where the event was held, turned their backs on moderate presidential contender Michael Bloomberg, who will first appear on ballots on Tuesday after skipping the first four contests. Bloomberg, a former New York mayor, received a chilly reception at the historic Brown Chapel AME Church in Selma after the pastor, the Rev. Leodis Strong, told the gathering the billionaire businessman initially had turned down the invitation to speak. "I was hurt, I was disappointed," Strong said as Bloomberg looked on stonily. "I think it's important that he came, and it shows a willingness on his part to change." About 10 people in the small church with a couple hundred in attendance stood up and turned their backs on Bloomberg as he spoke about racial inequality. Biden and Bloomberg are trying to present themselves as the

party's best choice to take on Trump, saying Sanders is too far to the left to win the general election. **'JUST AN INSULT'** Black voters are a key Democratic constituency, and Bloomberg has been criticized for supporting the use of a policing practice called stop and frisk in New York City that encouraged police to stop and search pedestrians and disproportionately affected blacks and Latinos. "It's just an insult for him to come here. It's the disrespect for the legacy of this place," Lisa Brown, who traveled to Selma from Los Angeles, told Reuters after turning her back to Bloomberg. She said the idea to protest Bloomberg's remarks had circulated but that she stood as an individual, not an organized group. The quiet protest suggests Bloomberg faces an uphill climb with some African-American voters, who carried Biden to a resounding victory in South Carolina. **Agencies**

Australian treasurer accused of racism towards Hindus

CANBERRA

AUSTRALIA'S Treasurer Josh Frydenberg has been accused of making "racist" comments about Hinduism in the parliament. Frydenberg made several references to Hinduism and other Indian religions in Parliament on Thursday while responding to the Opposition Labor Party's proposal to pursue a "wellbeing budget." "They (Labor) are inspired by their spiritual leader, the member for Rankin," he said, referring to Labor's treasury spokesperson Jim Chalmers. "I was thinking yesterday, as the member for Rankin was coming into the chamber fresh from his Ashram deep in the mountains of the Himalayas barefoot in the chamber, robes flowing, incense burning, beads in one hand, wellbeing budget in the other, I thought to myself: 'What yoga position the member for Rankin would assume ... to deliver the first wellbeing budget?'"

In a statement issued on Saturday night, the Hindu Council of Australia described the comments as "brazen, racist and Hindu-phobic," calling for an apology. "The comments made by Mr Frydenberg are derisive and very offensive to the Hindu community," the statement said. It also criticized Prime Minister Scott Morrison and other senior members of the government for laughing at Frydenberg's statement. "What is more unsettling to the Hindu community is that the floor of the house, the shrine of democracy, was used as the stage to disrespect the Hindu community," the council said. "This behavior shows a lack of respect to the Hindu community and undermines deep faith in multiculturalism that we all, as Australians, are so proud about." **Agencies**

Iraqi prime minister candidate Allawi quits as vacuum looms

BAGHDAD

IRAQI Prime Minister-designate Mohammed Allawi withdrew his candidacy for the post on Sunday, accusing political parties of obstructing him, deepening a domestic crisis and threatening an unprecedented power vacuum. His move came hours after parliament failed for the second time in a week to approve his cabinet amid political infighting in the oil producer, where mass protests and deadlock between lawmakers are delaying Iraq's recovery from years of war. Allawi's appointment was meant to ease a crisis as the Shi'ite-led country faces a mass protest movement that broke

out in October and brought down Prime Minister Adel Abdul Mahdi. President Barham Salih will begin consultations to choose a new candidate for a prime minister within 15 days, the state news agency said. But Iraq could end up without a prime minister in the meantime if Abdul Mahdi, who stayed on in a caretaker capacity, also quits on Monday. He issued a statement late on Sunday denying social media reports that he wanted to stay on, saying he would announce his intentions on Monday, which would have been the last day for Allawi (pictured) to get his proposed Cabinet approved by parliament. Salih appointed Allawi after



squabbling lawmakers from rival parties failed for two months to decide on a successor to Abdul Mahdi, who resigned in November during mass unrest. Allawi had one month to form a government that was meant to organise early elections. "I tried by all possible means to save Iraq from drifting to the unknown and to solve the cur-

rent crisis, but during negotiations I faced many matters," Allawi said in a statement, accusing politicians he did not identify of not being serious about reforms. Highlighting volatile security, two blasts could be heard in central Baghdad early on Monday morning, with two Katyusha rockets hitting the heavily fortified Green Zone, which houses

government buildings and embassies, security sources said. One missile landed near the US Embassy but caused no casualties, the sources said. The protests, which initially demanded jobs and services, quickly turned into calls for the removal of Iraq's entire ruling elite. Protesters had opposed Allawi because they view him as part of the system they want to bring down. Security forces and powerful militia groups have fatally shot hundreds of mostly unarmed demonstrators. Around 500 people have been killed in unrest since October, most of them protesters, according to a Reuters tally from medics and police. On Sunday, security forces

killed one person and wounded 24 at an anti-government protest in Baghdad, a police source said. Government officials say Allawi's Cabinet selection was heavily influenced by renegade Shi'ite cleric Moqtada al-Sadr, who has gained from the general chaos in Iraq after the United States killed a senior Iranian commander in Baghdad in January. Sadr said in a statement he supported Allawi for his decision to withdraw his candidacy and criticized the parties who obstructed him. Sunni and Kurdish political groups that stood to lose portfolios in a Cabinet of ostensible independents have vehemently opposed Allawi's choices. **Agencies**

Chinese hospitals discharge over 10,000 recovered patients of coronavirus infection

A TOTAL of 10,844 patients infected with the novel coronavirus had been discharged from hospitals after recovery by the end of Feb. 16, the Joint Prevention and Control Mechanism of China's State Council announced at a press conference on Monday. There were 7,264 suspected cases and 57,934 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection in 31 provincial-level regions and the Xinjiang Production and Construction Corps as of Feb. 16, and 10,644 remained in severe and critical condition, according to statistics from National Health Commission (NHC). China had received reports of a total of 70,548 confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection and 1,770 deaths by the end of Feb. 16, the health authority added. The number of the daily new confirmed cases outside Hubei province has been dropping for 13 consecutive days as of Feb. 16, and the number of the newly reported deaths also remained low. On Feb. 16, a total of 115 new confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection were reported in China outside Hubei. So far, 29 provincial-level regions and armed forces in China have dispatched more than



Cured COVID-19 patients are seen at the "Wuhan Livingroom" makeshift hospital in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, on Sunday. The hospital discharged 132 cured COVID-19 patients on Sunday, the highest number in a day by far. (Xinhua)

30,000 medical staff to assist in the fight against the epidemic in the epicenter Wuhan, capital of Hubei province, introduced Guo Yanhong, an official with the NHC at the press conference. About 11,000 specialists for intensive care have been sent to Wuhan as the city sees a large

number of patients in severe and critical conditions, and the number makes up to approximately 10 percent of the country's total number of intensive care medics, Guo noted. Three top-level medical groups led by Chinese academicians, namely Zhong Nanshan, Li Lan-

juan and Wang Chen, have also joined the fight at the frontline to explore new therapeutic schemes and technologies, Guo said. Besides, a total of 22 national emergency medical rescue teams and three mobile P3 laboratories had gathered in the hard-hit city, the NHC official said. More than 630 traditional Chinese medicine hospitals in 28 provinces have sent over 3,100 medical staff to assist Hubei with the fight against the novel coronavirus. Traditional Chinese medicine has so far been applied to treat 60,107 patients of novel coronavirus infection, or 85.2 percent of the country's confirmed cases. In areas outside Hubei, 87 percent of the patients who received traditional Chinese medicine treatment have been discharged from hospitals or seen improved conditions. The average time from the onset of symptoms of the novel coronavirus to diagnosis has been shortened to 4.95 days in China, which has proven that early and timely treatment is an effective way to improve the recovery rate, Guo said. **People's Daily**

UK to drive hard bargain with US in post-Brexit trade talks - PM

LONDON

BRITAIN and the United States are set to begin transatlantic trade talks, the Department for International Trade (DIT) announced yesterday. The British government published its negotiating objectives for the post-Brexit free trade agreement with its largest bilateral trading partner, saying it would deliver a 3.4-billion-pound (US\$4.36-billion) boost to the British economy. Manufacturers of ceramics, cars, food and drink, and professional services including architects and lawyers are among the British industries expected to be the biggest winners from tariff-free access to the US market, said the DIT. "We're going to drive a hard bargain to boost British industry. Trading Scottish smoked salmon for Stetson hats, we will deliver lower prices and more choices for our shoppers. Most importantly, this transatlantic trade deal will reflect the unique closeness of our two great nations," said Prime Minister Boris Johnson. The trade talks will alternate between Britain and the United States.



The DIT said the agreement will deliver for the whole of Britain, with Scotland and the northeast and midlands regions of England forecast to benefit most from removing barriers to trade with the United States. A British government analysis published Monday shows the British economy will benefit from a 3.4-billion-pound boost, with the new trade deal increasing transatlantic trade flows by 15.3 billion pounds (US\$19.58 billion). "The negotiating objectives set out that any future agreement must protect our NHS (National Health Service) and uphold our high standards on food safety and animal welfare. The agreement will also

include a chapter on digital trade, to maximize opportunities for businesses to trade digitally across the Atlantic," said the DIT. On the British side, talks will be overseen by Crawford Falconer, the DIT's chief trade negotiation adviser. Falconer was New Zealand's former chief negotiator and ambassador to the World Trade Organization (WTO). The British government will shortly set out negotiating objectives for Australia, Japan and New Zealand, with the aim of having 80 percent of total British external trade covered by free trade agreements by 2022, the DIT said. "Striking ambitious free trade agreements with our partners around the world is one of the key opportunities of Britain becoming an independent trading nation once again," said International Trade Secretary Liz Truss. "This deal with our biggest single trading partner will cut red tape for our small businesses, cut tariffs for our great products from dairy to cars and increase growth in all four nations," Truss added. **Xinhua**

Free deliveries may answer Africa's online commerce challenge

By Bloomberg

IN the three years since becoming an agent for mobile e-commerce company Copia Global Inc, Samuel Kihara has boosted revenue at his general store fivefold, opened a second shop, bought land and a truck and moved his children to private school. "The commissions I earn as a Copia agent have been my working capital," Kihara, 48, said as he stood in green overalls at his small shop in Kawaida, a village 23km north of Kenya's capital, Nairobi. "All this has been possible due to money from the business." Copia takes mobile-phone orders for goods ranging from kitchen appliances to tinned food and delivers them to remote parts

of Kenya within about two days at no extra cost. That's when Kihara and about 6,000 other agents in the country come in. They own businesses such as a shop or hairdresser that Copia can use as a central delivery point - and earn a commission on every order. Copia's slogan, Maisha Rahisi, means 'simple life' in Swahili. The company, founded in 2013 by American social entrepreneurs Tracey Turner and Jonathan Lewis, is still making a loss. But its sales are growing at a rate of 15% a month in Kenya, a country whose citizens have been quick to take up mobile e-commerce services ranging from money transfers to digital-loans. "The model solves a number of

issues in terms of merchandising that exist in rural areas on the continent," said Future Advisory founder Herman Singh, a former executive at wireless giant MTN Group Ltd and one-time board member of Africa's biggest e-commerce business, Jumia Technologies AG. "The challenge is doing this at a profit. The models don't compute unless you have huge scale on your side." **750 million** While Copia currently serves just over a fifth of Kenya's rural population, Tim Steel, its chief executive officer, has bigger ambitions. His target market is Africa's 750-million middle and low income consumers, who spend

US\$680 billion a year. Within 18 months Steel expects to have 18,000 agents, he said, and to have begun expanding into Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania. He expects the company to turn a profit within two years, though he declined to give financial details. "We are able to deliver a package at one-sixth of the price than any other best in class e-commerce business in the world," Steel said. We aggregate "multiple orders, rather than having a one-on-one delivery system that prices a lot of customers out." That may give Copia an advantage over rival Africa-focused online retailers such as Jumia, which has been dubbed the continent's version of Amazon. Founded by

two Frenchmen in 2012, Jumia listed in the US last year to great fanfare but is also yet to turn a profit, and the stock has slumped 71 percent since the initial public offering. It operates in 11 African countries from Morocco to Nigeria and Kenya. Malaicha.com, which allows groceries purchased in South Africa to be collected in Zimbabwe at a small number of collection points, operates a similar system to Copia, albeit on a much smaller scale. "The biggest problem of Africa is always the logistics," said Christophe Meunier, a partner at telecommunications advisory firm Delta Partners. "It is likely to take time and financial resources

to be able to build those routes that are under-served and not well established at scale." Copia will need to access more finance if it is to proceed with its plans and is hopeful it can raise funding in the early part of 2021, though it isn't yet considering a listing. "We will need further investment," Steel said. **Royal help** Copia raised US\$26 million last year in a funding round led by LGT Lightstone, an impact investment company owned by Liechtenstein's royal family. The company is currently owned by between 30 and 40 investors including LGT and DOB Equity,

a fund based in the Netherlands, said Steel. "It is providing middle and low-income African consumers with access to quality goods at low prices," LGT said in a response to questions. "Copia is leap-fogging retail." So far it has been well received by Kenyan customers. "The savings are great, we are happy," said John Kamau, a 55-year-old who drives a motorized rickshaw taxi in Githurai 45, on the outskirts of Nairobi. He uses Copia to send his mother feed for her dairy cows 140 kilometers away, saving her a journey of as much as six hours to the closest outlet. "She is happy." **Agencies**



Vodacom Tanzania PLC Head of Sales for Coast Region and Dar es Salaam Zone, George Venant (L), hands over a 1m/- dummy cheque to KMC FC forward, Sadallah Lipangile, after a Vodacom Premier League match pitting KMC FC against Simba, which took place in Dar es Salaam on Sunday, with Simba winning 2-0. Lipangile received 1m/- in cash prize from the firm after he was voted as the clash's best player. Looking on (C) is Vodacom team leader, Felician Benedict. PHOTO: VODACOM TANZANIA

Haji Manara spits fire at Simba SC branch launch in Meru

BY CORRESPONDENT MARC NKWAME - ARUSHA

IT was mirth and noise when Simba Sports Club's information officer, Haji Manara, hit Arumeru in Arusha last weekend.

Manara made scene in the Eastern part of Arumeru District, where he inaugurated a new branch for his team at the Usa-River Township over the weekend.

Hundreds of Simba SC supporters flocked the inauguration event held in the Engaresero Ward of Usa-River, in Arumeru where Manara boasted to be the only popular spokesperson of 'any team' in both the country and Africa as whole.

The Simba mouthpiece added that the football club was 'people oriented' and also 'much respected' in the country.

"Simba means 'Lion' and when the king of the jungle roars, who dare stand up against it? This is a club made up of strong people, those who are never afraid, thus let no person try to intimidate you," Manara who was on tour of Arusha and Kilimanjaro recently maintained.

Apparently the current Arumeru District Commissioner, Jerry Muro, was previously the

information officer for Simba rivals, Young Africans SC (Yanga).

In addition to opening Simba Sports Club branch at Usa-River, in Meru, Manara also used the opportunity to supply books for religious studies in all schools within Arumeru.

"The books will both be for Islam and Christendom teachers and pupils or students in the vast District," he disclosed.

The books, he disclosed, will be supplied in all primary and secondary schools of Meru, as well as churches and Madrasas around the precinct.

He explained that, a well-placed Catholic bishop will assist him in this endeavour.

Chairman of the newly launched Simba Sports Club branch at Usa-River, Humphrey Msuya, said the Ngaresero branch has nearly 75 members, for starters.

He pointed out it will soon grow to become one of the largest yet.

"We are now encouraging more members to enlist and buy cards and soon the branch will become really busy with series of activities both in sports and community development," Msuya stated.

Sports meet tourism as Japan junior soccer club lands in Manyara

BY CORRESPONDENT MARC NKWAME, ARUSHA

A DELEGATION of Japanese soccer players, members of the Wakatake Football Club, spent an entire week in Arusha, sampling the Northern Zone's tourist attractions and climaxing the whole thing with a football extravaganza in the city.

The Wakatake Football Club delegation visited, among other places, the Ngorongoro Conservation Area and Lake Manyara National Park, before locking horns with Future Stars Sports Academy of Arusha for a friendly soccer match which was staged at the Tanganyika Game Trackers (TGT) grounds on the lower side of Ngaramtoni, in the outskirts of the Arusha city.

Dubbed the 'Wakatake Future Stars Academy Cup,' the event featured the U-11 and U-20 players and, as far as the Director of Future Stars is concerned, that was one of the lined up strategies to give their youth more exposure through facing foreign teams in soccer competitions.

"We are in fact intending to invite the Japan youth team to return here next December to participate in the 2020 instalment of East African Youth Football (Chipkizi Cup) tournament

scheduled for the end of this year in the city," Alfred Itaeli, the FSA Director said.

The 'Wakatake Future Stars Academy Cup,' event, involved seven local clubs as well as the visiting Japanese squad totaling eight. The teams include, Jaffery Academy, Bishop Durning, Saint Patrick Academy, UWC (Former ISM), New Vision, Olasiti Youth and the Future Stars team.

During the football episode, Bishop Durning team thrashed the Wakatake team 2-0 in the U-20 group finals, while the Saint Patrick team managed to Beat Future Stars 4-0 in the U-11 group slotting.

The Director of Wakatake Sports Academy, Takeshi Inawaka, described their Tanzania experience as spellbinding.

"We have sampled the local culture, tourist sites as well as getting the opportunity to play against local youth teams," he said.

According to Takeshi Inawaka, they have accepted the Future Stars invitation and plan to come to Arusha next December and play during the 'Chipkizi Cup 2020'.

"We intend to ship here, two or three youth soccer teams for the event," the Japanese team leader said.

Mainland Premier League talking points

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL MWEBE

BIG guns Yanga and Azam FC dug out important three-points, while Namungo FC won again and the Biashara United ship kept foraging onwards.

These and a couple more talking points in another thrilling match day weekend in the Vodacom Premier League 2019/20 campaign.

Azam FC grinds out win
Andrew Simchimba's late winner saw Azam FC come away with a win over JKT Tanzania to maintain their hold on second place.

It is safe to say that nobody expects Azam FC to win the league given the gap and inconsistent form but they are mathematically still in it.

Mwadui FC makes it two on the trot

Mwadui FC managed to win their second game in succession for the first time this season with a 2-0 victory over Coastal Union. Goals from Raphael Aloba and Musa Nampaka gave them three valuable points.

The Shinyanga-based side were coming off an impressive win over fellow Lake Zone club, Mbao FC, that are currently struggling in lower positions. The win pushed Mwadui FC out of the automatic relegation zone.

Mtibwa Sugar get a much needed win

Mtibwa Sugar finally had something to celebrate when they came away with a 2-0 win against Ndanda FC on Saturday evening. They jumped one point ahead of the relegation spots.

It was a relief for Mtibwa Sugar head coach Zuberi Katwila who had seen his team endure a nightmare run of nine matches without a win after winning the 2020 Mapinduzi Cup in Zanzibar.

Ditram Nchimbi hits top gear
With David Molinga and Patrick Sibomana's absence dominating the pre-match discussion for Yanga on Saturday, head coach Luc Eymael's decision to field Nchimbi as a central striker paid



Yanga defender, Lamine Moro (R), challenges Prisons' striker, Paul Peter, during a Vodacom Premier League duel, which was held at National Stadium in Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TFF

handsomely.

Nchimbi did what was asked of him by grabbing a brace to push his season's goal tally to five.

Biashara United continues to climb

When Kenyan coach Francis Baraza arrived to replace Amri Said in November, he inherited a club that was deep in the relegation zone having picked up only eight points from 10 league games prior to the gaffer being appointed.

The Musoma club were 17th in the table when Baaza took over, but, just short of three months later, they sit ninth after Saturday's 1-0 win over Mbeya City FC, only four points behind fifth-placed Polisi Tanzania.

They have won seven successive home matches turning Karume Stadium into a slaughter-

house. A solid defense means they have only lost two away matches while picking valuable draws to accumulate points.

Kagera Sugar look weary

Head coach Mecky Mexime has assembled a side that is a joy to watch. His Kagera Sugar side is well structured and organized. However, Saturday's 1-1 draw at Kaitaba left them with one win in their last six matches.

Their squad is small and they recently have been showing signs of tiredness. Kelvin Sabato Kongwe has been a great addition in the striking department, however apart from him the squad largely picks itself.

They have lost ground to Polisi Tanzania, Coastal Union and Namungo FC in the race for top four. It would be a great shame if their season was to unravel due to fa-

tigue.

Tight relegation battle

It was a tough weekend for the bottom four teams in the league. Two of them lost their games. The 19th and 15th places are separated by a mere five points.

Ndanda FC (15th) went 2-0 down to Mtibwa Sugar. Mbao FC (18th) lost 2-0 to Mwadui FC. Mbeya City FC (16th) lost 1-0 against Biashara United.

The race of who is getting boot-ed out of the league is even tighter. With 13 matches to go all six teams have their fate in their own hands but Singida United look like they will need a miracle to avoid the drop.

Singida United are nine points off their fellow relegation candidates, the fact that they have won only two matches means they are very unlikely to bridge that gap.



Absa Bank Tanzania's Head of Marketing and Corporate Relations, Aron Luhanga (L), congratulates one of the marathoners sponsored by the bank to compete in 42km race of the Kilimanjaro Marathon 2020 held in Moshi on Sunday. Absa Tanzania sponsored drinks and refreshment for runners. PHOTO: ABSA TANZANIA

Absa Tanzania pledges more support in sports

BY GUARDIAN REPORTER

ABSAs Bank Tanzania has promised to keep on supporting different sports events in the country after the bank's successful sponsorship of this year's Kilimanjaro Marathon held in Moshi, Kilimanjaro on Sunday.

Speaking during the event in Moshi, Head of Marketing and Corporate Relations for Absa Bank

Tanzania, Aron Luhanga said, it is known by many that Absa Group is the main sponsor of the English Premier League (EPL).

The bank, according to him, as well sponsors South Africa's Premier Soccer League, hence there was nothing to stop them widen their sponsorship in Tanzania for more sports apart from athletics.

"We believe in 'africanacity' on assisting either people or our cus-

tomers to achieve their targets. By sponsoring Kilimanjaro Marathon we believe that we assist athletics to achieve their dreams," he disclosed.

"This is our second time to sponsor Kili Marathon and we are very happy to be part of Kili Marathon's success as sports stakeholders in Tanzania," he added.

"We call on people to participate in sports and exercise for the bet-

terment of their health, we also urge them to join Absa Bank Tanzania to get better financial services as we have improved our services after changing our name."

Absa Tanzania not only sponsored drinks and refreshment center, but also sent some of the bank's staff and customers to participate in the world famous Kilimanjaro Marathon.

Pique: This Real 'one of the worst' I've faced

MADRID

GERARD Pique claims the current Real Madrid side is one of the worst he has faced at the Santiago Bernabeu despite being part of a Barcelona team that fell to a 2-0 defeat in Sunday's Clasico.

Barca missed several first-half chances before second-half strikes from Vinicius Junior and substitute Mariano Diaz sealed a win which took Madrid back above the Catalans at the top of the table.

"We are upset," Pique told reporters. "We thought we could get a good result here because Madrid came into the game in bad shape. It was one of the worst Madrid sides I've faced at the Bernabeu in the first half."

"I don't say that as a criticism of them. We all have problems -- we aren't doing that well, either. But we missed an opportunity. We had control of the game and if we take advantage of a couple of our chances it leaves them with a mountain to claim."

Barca will look back at the openings spurned by Antoine Griezmann, Arthur Melo and Lionel Messi in the first 45 minutes. Griezmann fired over when well-placed and Arthur and Messi were both foiled by goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois.

Madrid, who were beaten by Manchester City in the Champions League in midweek, had failed to win any of their last three home games in all competitions.

A victory for Barca would have extended their lead at La Liga's summit to five points. Instead, they end the weekend one point behind their Clasico rivals, although with 12 games still to go Pique points out everything is still to play for.

"We missed a chance to hurt them," he added. "We have to play better than in the second half. We lost balls and they grew in confidence and pinned us back. It feels like a missed opportunity, especially in the first half. We could have killed the game off."

"This result strengthens them, obviously. It's a morale boost. It knocks us but we're not sunk. We can still win La Liga if we do things well until the end of the season. We have to improve on our second-half display but there is still a long way to go."

Madrid defender Sergio Ramos laughed off Pique's comments, saying he would happily sacrifice performances for results against Barcelona.

"I would take playing as badly in the first half as he thinks we played if it meant winning every Clasico," he told reporters, resisting the urge to make similarly disparaging comments about Barca.

"Not at all," Ramos said when asked if this was one of the worst Barca sides in recent years. "I didn't think they were bad. I respect the way they play."

Following back-to-back defeats against City and Levante, Madrid coach Zinedine Zidane was happy to get back to winning ways as Los Blancos look to prevent the Blaugrana winning a third straight La Liga title.

"I think we deserved the win for everything we did, defensively and offensively" the Frenchman said in a news conference.

"The first half was even. Our high press wasn't perfect but in the second half it was much better. They're three important points because it's been a difficult week."

(Agencies)

Man City beat Villa to win third Carabao Cup in a row

LONDON

MANCHESTER City edged past Aston Villa to claim their third consecutive Carabao Cup with a 2-1 victory at Wembley on Sunday.

Sergio Aguero and Rodri scored in the first half to earn Pep Guardiola's side the first domestic trophy of the season.

Mbwana Samatta grabbed a goal back for Villa but they failed to complete the comeback in their first Wembley cup final since 2015.

Aguero opened the scoring after 19 minutes when he finished off Phil Foden's headed assist from close range.

Rodri made it 2-0 when he headed home from a corner but there was controversy because Villa should have been awarded a goal kick as the ball went off Ilkay Gundogan.

City dominated possession but Villa got back into the game just before the break when John Stones slipped

under pressure and Anwar El-Ghazi delivered a fine cross for Samatta to head home.

Foden almost scored City's third early in the second half but his shot went narrowly wide.

In the last three minutes, Villa came close to scoring an equaliser but Claudio Bravo tipped Bjorn Engels' header onto the post.

City became the first side to win the competition three seasons in a row since Liverpool claimed four straight titles from 1981 to 1984.

"Three times in a row is a big success. It's the consistency, incredible," Guardiola said.

"It was awesome. We struggled in the first minutes and the last ones. They had two clear chances in the first minutes but we played really well, especially in the second half."

"Big success, our second title of the season with the Community Shield, it's so nice."

(Agencies)

De Gea is the world's best despite error - Ole

LIVERPOOL

MANCHESTER United manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer has defended goalkeeper David De Gea after his howler against Everton, branding the Spaniard "the best in the world."

De Gea's clearance cannoned in off Dominic Calvert-Lewin to give Everton an early lead before Bruno Fernandes equalised to earn United a 1-1 draw at Goodison Park on Sunday.

De Gea redeemed himself with a wonderful save to deny Gylfi Sigurdsson in the final minutes but has now made seven errors leading directly to a goal since the start of last season -- the joint-most with Martin Dubravka and Bernd Leno.

"David has shown here his reaction, the way he made amends and saved Sigurdsson's shot at the end," Solskjaer said.

"David is, for me, the best goalkeeper in the world. He went through a difficult patch last season but he has been very, very good this season."

"I can't remember any goals this season apart from the Watford one. I trust

David 100%."

De Gea, who signed a new long-term contract in September, is under pressure from No. 2 Sergio Romero, who kept a clean sheet against Club Brugge on Thursday, and Dean Henderson, who is impressing on loan at Sheffield United.

Henderson is also under contract with United and has put himself in position to be named in the England squad for this summer's European Championship.

Sources have told ESPN that Chelsea and Paris Saint-Germain are interested in signing Henderson this summer.

"We want the best possible squad for Man United and Dean is our player," Solskjaer added.

"He is doing really well at the moment and the day he comes back he is fighting to play, but we want a squad that is full of quality and competition. If you want to survive at the top you need to bounce off competition right, left and centre."

(Agencies)

Football now grinds to a halt as Bundesliga banner insults escalate

BERLIN

GAMES across Germany were interrupted and delayed over the weekend due to offensive banners, highlighting a growing rift between the game's governing body and the sport's passionate ultras.

Stadium announcers in Dortmund and Berlin threatened calling the games off unless the banners were removed, while Bayern Munich's match at Hoffenheim finished in farcical scenes as the players from both sides kicked the ball to each other to wind the final 10 minutes off the clock.

The interruptions are broadly symbolic of a fierce debate in German football between fans of traditional clubs and those of newer teams who have been bankrolled by investors and private owners.

The protests have targeted the German Football Association (DFB) and its decision to hand down a two-year ban to Dortmund fans from travelling to the club's games against Hoffenheim, after the Dortmund fans held up offensive banners.

The move has however only served to call fans into action over what they see as "collective punishment". The fans won support from Cologne captain Jonas Hector after Saturday's victory over Schalke, as he asked why should "20,000 people who have supported us for the entire 90 minutes be punished for the actions of a few?"

Much of the rancour has been directed at Hoffenheim benefactor Dietmar Hopp, who has been widely criticised by fans after circumventing the league's fan-ownership laws in order to invest more than 350 million euros (\$387 million) into the village club, bringing it into the first division in the process.

Offensive banners critical of Hopp have found their way into the stands



Hoffenheim's billionaire investor Dietmar Hopp (C) was the target of an offensive banner unfurled by Bayern Munich fans (AFP Photo)

in several fan blocks in recent weeks, including depictions of Hopp's face in crosshairs while also calling him a "son of a bitch".

- 'No excuses' - Bayern Munich chairman Karl-Heinz Rummenigge stood side-by-side with Hopp during Saturday's fixture, shaking his head and pleading with his side's fans to remove the banners.

After the game, Rummenigge said he was "deeply ashamed" of the fans. "I apologised to him (Hopp), but there are no excuses for what the fans did."

Hopp himself said on Sunday that he had "no interest in dealing with people who have insulted me mas-

sively for years and want no consensus at all".

While he thanked the players on Saturday for taking a stand, he said similar stances needed to be taken against anyone "sewing the seeds of hate".

"Insults against everyone are to be condemned, no matter where and in what form. All racist and homophobic insults must be punished with all consequences."

There are however some in German football who feel that interrupting and even abandoning matches is not the right cause of action as it will only serve to rile up supporters.

Union Berlin boss Oliver Ruhnert,

whose side's home match against Wolfsburg on Sunday was delayed for more than 10 minutes due to banners targeting Hopp, said he wanted to avoid a situation "where I have to interrupt each and every game soon. I see that quite critically."

While saying that banners such as those targeting Hopp were a "no go", he believes the DFB need to act in a less antagonistic fashion and prioritise opening up a dialogue with supporters.

"The fans have a right to objectively criticise. It is always about being in conversation with one another and communicating."

AFP

Vinicius isn't perfect, but he's turned the title race in Real Madrid's favour

BY GRAHAM HUNTER, ESPN SPAIN WRITER

HIS goal wasn't a thing of beauty, he's a work in progress, and I'm not trying to sell you the idea that Vinicius Junior is about to threaten the Ballon d'Or podium. But let's not beat around the bush: We are watching a brave, technically talented, uplifting young mustang of a footballer who has just turned the La Liga title race firmly back in Real Madrid's favour. This Clasico has also been the scene of further proof that the one-on-one tutorials Zinedine Zidane has been offering his star pupil, on the quiet, isolated fields of Valdebebas out by Madrid's Barajas airport, are in the process of giving Vinicius wings.

There's a terrible predilection among many fans, too many in the media and some ex-professionals to take the easy route when analysing a footballer. The temptation, because it's easier and probably makes more headline-grabbing statements, is to criticise, to spotlight things a guy can't do, does badly or that are frustrating.

It's a growing trend. The more information there is bounding around, the more that people judge on measurables that don't reflect the real, chaotic, "who dares wins" nature of high-tension, high-stakes football. So it's facile, and like consuming meaningless carbs from comfort food, when people stick to the boring refrain: "But look what Vinicius does close to goal" or "He's still too erratic in the final third."

That he scored the match-breaking, title-turning goal here isn't the sole point -- not by any means. Vinicius' deflected winning goal now makes it a hat trick of the most recent vital matches at Madrid's stadium he has impacted.

Let your mind trot back to the Madrid derbi in February. Zidane got it wrong in the first half, changed up during the break and brought on two wide players. Vinicius played terrifically, used his left wing beat to flick a tremendous pass for Ferland Mendy to burst into the Atletico penalty area and serve up the winner for Karim Benzema. Then, in midweek, although Los Blancos lost to Manchester City, it was Vinicius who served up Madrid's opener to Isco for the 1-0 goal.

OK, they didn't win, but that's not the fault of this young Brazilian buck.

I'm ignoring his goal that broke the Champions League tie in Bruges because it was away from home and late last year, but believe me when I tell you we're watching the maturing of a special talent. However, it's the industrial rubber nature of his confidence that I like. Or perhaps let's make that his unshakable belief in himself, no matter how many times he doesn't pull off a move, how many times the media pigeonhole him as incapable of bringing home the bacon or how many times the stadium groans rather than roars.

If a kid is born with talent, technical ability and speed, they are huge advantages. But if he's incapable of withstanding pressure, permanently susceptible to catching a cold and staying home every time the weather is against him, then those talents are wasted. Vinicius is, without doubt, full of bounce-back ability. He tries to take his man on and if it doesn't work, he's not thrown. He doesn't shrivel as so many footballers, even when they are older or more experienced, do.

It's not about personal failure, it's about how you respond when you feel that the world is against you, when you feel that your teammates are doubting you, when you begin to think. Take, for example, Junior Firpo, Barcelona's left-back who Quique Setien dropped

because the kid is filled with fear of getting it wrong instead of risking getting it right. When that mindset takes hold, that's when you're in trouble.

Vinicius broke open the game Sunday, and even if Marc-Andre ter Stegen was beaten because Gerard Pique deflected the young Brazilian's shot at goal, he made his own luck.

To my mind it was what happened next that made this extra special for the 19-year-old. Sequentially, he set about making sure that Barcelona didn't have a way back into this match. From the 79th minute until the end, he darted back and robbed the ball off Arthur when his fellow Brazilian was imperiously standing over the ball planning his next move; Vinicius nipped in and burgled possession before the Barcelona midfielder was even conscious he'd left his back door open. A minute or so later, it was Nelson Semedo who was out-paced and out-tussled for the ball.

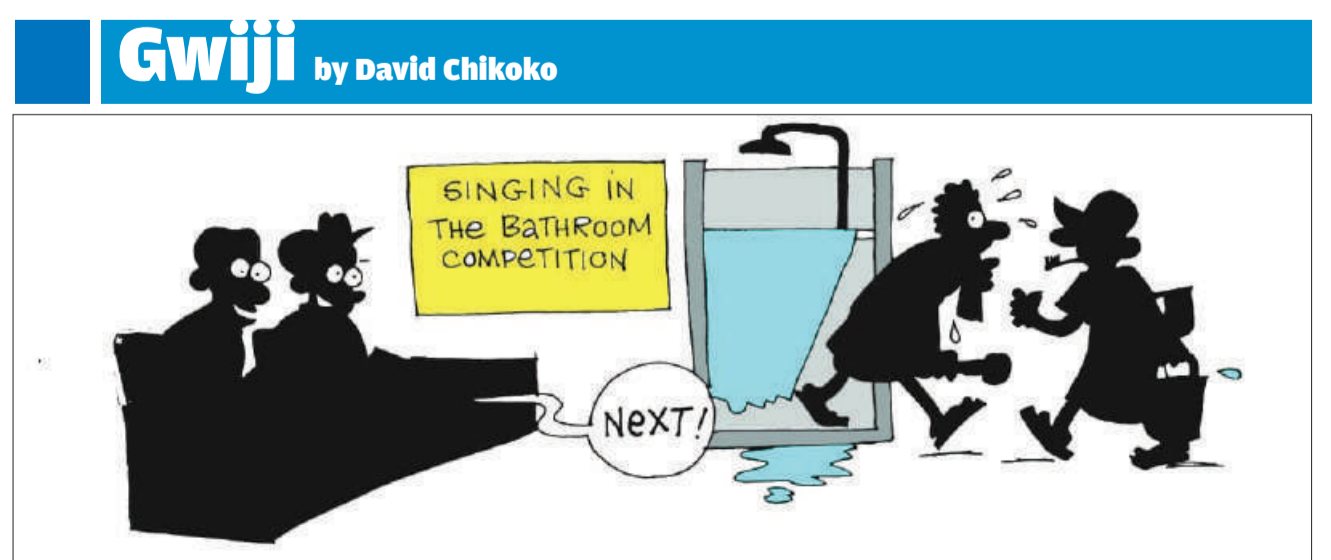
Vinicius was up for everything but, importantly, he was contributing in precisely the area Madrid most needed: denying Barcelona any time or space to create or believe.

When Vinicius is spoken about, the debate is monochromatic, mostly because a lot of football analysis and debate today is sheep-like. Someone will point out, reasonably enough, that given Vinicius's propensity to create space on the left, to bring the ball out of the air

with a simple, confident touch of thigh, chest or right foot, his end product isn't like a metronome.

What's rarely spoken about is his willingness to drop back, to press, to defend, to rob, to work until he's exhausted. Winger's don't generally do that, but Vinicius isn't generally lauded for what he does like, for example, away at Getafe earlier this year when the 0-3 goal came from his willingness to drop back to the corner flag and help Mendy clear to Gareth Bale who set up Federico Valverde who gave the goal to Luka Modric. Vinicius was at the heart of the counter-attack.

Well, here, on Sunday in the rain with Barcelona vainly trying to claw a way back into the Clasico, Vinicius' next move was to rob the slow and unsure players on the edge of their box and break through such that Ter Stegen had to make a one-v-one diving save to prevent a second goal. But because Mariano Diaz's goal -- scored by a guy who grew up nearer the Camp Nou than most of Barcelona's current squad -- made it 2-0, it'll be lost on most analysts and most fans that it was Vinicius, with six minutes left, in his own corner area, on Madrid's right, who robbed Semedo when the Portuguese was trying to mount a point-saving attack. Vinicius had tracked back, made a nuisance of himself and cleared the ball to Toni Kroos.



SPORT

Football now grinds to a halt as Bundesliga banner insults escalate

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

OBFT keen on early preps for Olympic Qualifiers

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THE Open Boxing Federation of Tanzania (OBFT) has said it plans to have early preparations for two domestic boxers who will compete in 2020 Olympics' qualifiers, which will take place in France in May.

The federation's secretary general Luke-lo Wililo issued the statement after four domestic boxers, who competed in Olympic qualifiers in Senegal, had returned home on Sunday.

Tanzania was represented by four boxers namely Yusufu Changarawe, Haruna Swanga, Boniface Mligwa and Alex Isendi.

The Senegal event, which also serves as African Boxing Championship, was used as qualifiers for the 2020 Olympics, which will take place in Tokyo.

Wililo said although no domestic boxer qualified for the Tokyo Olympics, there are hopes that two boxers, Changarawe and Isendi, will attend the France qualifiers.

The official said the two were given the opportunity due to their performance in Senegal as they both reached the quarter-finals.

"All of the four boxers arrived in the country safely, we have given them one week of rest then they will start the preparations for the France qualifiers," he disclosed.

"The France qualifiers is the last qualifying event. We want our boxers to have good

preparations, I'm confident that with good preparations they can earn qualification for Tokyo Olympics," he said.

He also disclosed that OBFT will have discussions with the government, Tanzania Olympic Committee (TOC) and others so that they beef up the technical panel of the national team.

"Up to now the technical panel of our team which is headed by David Yomba Yomba is doing a good and commendable job, but I think we need to beef up the squad for the France event, I will disclose much once I meet with the head coach and other stakeholders," he said.

The Senegal event brought together 221 boxers from 39 African countries, with 33 boxers earning qualification for Tokyo Olympics.

Commenting on the team's performance, Wililo hailed the boxers for giving out their best, but said failing to qualify does not mean the local boxers are incompetent.

He attributed the poor performance of the boxers to lack of experience and opportunity to take part in bouts on regular basis.

"The Senegal championships has exposed some of the technical hitches that our boxers face on the international stage, our boxers performed well only that they were facing equally best boxers, I think it is time now we prepare our boxers well and arrange more trials for them, this will help them gain more experience," he disclosed.

McKenzie suggests minor change to Iqbal's game

SYLHET

NEIL McKenzie, Bangladesh's batting coach, has said that Tamim Iqbal's game is in need of a slight adjustment. The left-hander has not given any hint of being out of form after returning from his short hiatus from international cricket, but his anchor role has, in some quarters, been misinterpreted.

In the first ODI against Zimbabwe, for example, Iqbal took 43 balls to make just 24 runs. While that suggests he is slowing down at the crease, in the end, Bangladesh got to a total of 321 for 6 which proved plenty more than enough. McKenzie, who has worked closely with all of Bangladesh's frontline batsmen in the last two years, stressed that Iqbal is an important cog in laying the platform for a big total, but perhaps needed to hit a couple of more boundaries in the Powerplay to give himself a better strike-rate.

"Tamim knows what he needs to do," McKenzie said. "It is boiled down to the specifics. We feel he needs two more boundaries in the Powerplay. Where he is going to get it, and what he is going to do, is his approach. No one is going to bat for Tamim, he will bat for himself. I don't see it as batting too slow or quickly.

"We know how important he is for the platform. He plays good shots to quality bowling. We probably just want an extra shot or two in the Powerplay. He has that covered; we know what he can do. We saw in the BPL last year, when he got that big hundred."

McKenzie said that Iqbal is well aware of his role in the team, and doesn't need any guidance on how to construct an innings. "He knows his gameplans. We are not school masters here. We don't tell anybody what to learn or what to do. We give opinions, thoughts and technical advice, and then it is upto the player to implement it into his game. We are not talking about a young guy. We are talking

about a senior man. Believe me, he knows it before you guys or any of us do that he has made a mistake.

"Tamim puts a lot of pressure on himself. He values his wicket a lot. It is what has made him successful. Maybe it is about trying to loosen him up for one or two balls. If he can get one or two more boundaries, all you guys will get off his back."

McKenzie was also pleased with how Liton Das understood that he needed to curb his shot-making in order to bat longer periods. "We didn't tell him to play less shots. We have given him ideas of how we want the team to play. We don't want to take away his natural instinct as a player. It is heartening for me to think that he has gone away and thought, 'you know what, I have to match up risk versus reward. I keep getting out for twenties and thirties, I have to put that shot away.'

"You saw yesterday how many times he kept the ball on the ground, and he got a hundred. It is good for Liton."

McKenzie dispelled the idea that Bangladesh are having it too easy against Zimbabwe, and won't be tested against this bowling attack. He said that kind of complacency is what he wants the Bangladesh players to avoid at all costs.

"You have to be hungry. You have to look for the badge or country you are playing for. Whether it is Zimbabwe or Australia, it is international cricket. These guys are hungry to do well for Bangladesh. You can only play against the opponent in front of you. There's no opponent you can take lightly," he said.

"I think as soon as you are talking in that attitude, we don't want that in Bangladesh cricket. Whether we are facing Australians, South Africans, Zimbabweans or the Afghans, you are playing for Bangladesh, representing millions and millions of people."

AGENCIES

Yanga look to build momentum in Premier League ahead of Dar Derby

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

YOUNG Africans SC (Yanga) will be looking to build momentum in the Vodacom Premier League when they host Mwanza's Mbao FC at Uhuru Stadium in Dar es Salaam today evening.

Luc Eymael's charges will also go into this contest in a good frame of mind as they beat Alliance FC 2-0 at National Stadium in the city on Saturday.

Both goals were scored by striker Ditram Nchimbi, the first time he has hit the back of the net after his December signing from Polisi Tanzania.

On Wednesday Yanga advanced to the quarter-finals of this season's Azam Sports Federation Cup, thanks to a 1-0 victory over Gwambina FC.

The two successive victories should see Yanga brim with confidence as they take on a struggling Mbao FC side four days before facing traditional rivals Simba.

Yanga, the 2016/17 Premier League winners, have fallen slightly by the wayside in this season's title race in recent times with four consecutive draws having hampered their progress.

They are fourth in the league table, two points behind Namungo FC but the former have one game in hand.



Yanga winger, Bernard Morrison (C), attempts to shoot past Lipuli FC defender when the two outfits locked horns in a Vodacom Premier League clash, which took place at National Stadium Dar es Salaam recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

Victory should see Yanga put pressure on both Namungo FC and second-placed Azam FC in what is turning into a top three race. Mbao, meanwhile, will be desperate to return to the winning trail, having recorded just one league win in 2020.

Their recent form is undoubtedly a major cause for concern, with coach Abdulmutik Haji Mapeza's men recording nine defeats and two draws in their last 12 matches.

The Mwanza-based out-

fit's lone victory came on February 18 when they beat bottom of the table squad, Singida United, 3-1 at the former's venue, CCM Kirumba Stadium.

Mbao FC come into the clash with Yanga having lost 2-0 to Ruvo Shooting last weekend.

Mbao are placed 18th in the league, five points from safety and desperately need to start collecting points before the gap between them and the teams in the play off spots becomes impossible to

bridge.

In head-to-head stats, Yanga and Mbao FC have met in seven league matches since 2016/17.

Yanga have claimed five wins compared to two for Mbao FC, while there have been no stalemate.

The Jangwani Street giants have won all of their home matches against Mbao FC.

VPL midweek matches: Tuesday: Yanga v Mbao FC (Uhuru Stadium, Dar es Salaam)

Wednesday: Singida Unit-

ed vs Coastal Union (Liti Stadium, Singida), Mwadui FC vs Polisi Tanzania (Kambarage Stadium, Shinyanga), Biashara Utd vs Prisons (Karume Stadium, Mara), Ruvo

Shooting vs Alliance FC (Mabatini venue, Coast Region), Mtibwa Sugar vs Namungo FC (Gairo Stadium, Morogoro), Lipuli FC vs Ndanda FC (Samora Stadium, Iringa), KMC FC vs JKT Tanzania (Uhuru, Dar es Salaam), Azam FC vs Simba (National Stadium, Dar es Salaam)



Bongo Flava artiste, Omari Ally Mwangi alias 'Mario', performs at an event dubbed 'Kill Dome', which took place at Hugo Hotel Garden in Moshi, Kilimanjaro last weekend. The Kill Dome was organized by Tanzania Breweries Limited (TBL) through the firm's Kilimanjaro Premium Lager brand and was held for three days in a row gearing towards spicing up the just ended Kilimanjaro Marathon. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TBL

Yanga coach heaps praises on keeper

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

Young Africans SC (Yanga) head coach Luc Eymael has praised his keeper, Metacha Mnata, for his outstanding performance during a Vodacom Premier League clash with Alliance FC, which took place at National Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Saturday.

Yanga cruised to 2-0 victory over their opponents, with forward Ditram Nchimbi posting a brace for the hosts.

The Yanga coach (pictured), nevertheless, disclosed that he will not use the keeper in the team's league encounter with Mbao FC, which will take place in the city today.

He pointed out he wants to give the keeper time to rest before the league clash with traditional rivals, the Simba SC, slated for the coming weekend.

"We played well, now our focus is on our next game against Mbao FC on Tuesday (today), I'm happy that

my players played according to instructions," he pointed out after the clash with Alliance FC.

"We created a lot of scoring chances but we did not make use of them, we will work on the weakness."

"Our keeper Metacha Mnata was outstanding in today's match, I will give him time to rest."

The Yanga gaffer also said his charges are ready for this evening's Vodacom Premier League encounter with Mbao FC at the National Stadium.

After overcoming Alliance FC 2-0 on Saturday, Yanga that have played 23 games are placed fourth in the 20-team league table with 44 points.

Coach Eymael said he expects another high intensity encounter with Mbao FC.

"The team is looking good, the players are ready to play, but the games have been intensive throughout, I know the game on Tuesday will be difficult, but we are ready for them," he said.



The coach said he will work of the shortfalls which he observed in his team during their game against Alliance FC.

Mbao who are coming from a 2-0 defeat in the hands of Ruvo Shooting said they are prepared for today's game.

The Mwanza outfit's head coach, Abdulmutik Haji, said they have left no stone unturned in their bid to get the much needed victory.

He conceded that it will not be easy facing Yanga in Dar es Salaam but warned the hosts they should not expect an easy ride.

"It's another difficult match. Yanga always give us headache, but we are equal to the task, we need to win so that we can be safe on the league standing, this is an important game for us as we are fighting to be safe in the league, we can't afford to drop points," he said.

Mbao are placed 18th and have 22 points from 25 games played.