



## ENERGY



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# Hospitals now start filling gas cylinders

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has started installing machines for producing medical oxygen to be filled in cylinders in major referral hospitals across the country to address the high demand occasioned by the Covid-19 pandemic. To begin with, the government has already installed seven machines in seven major hospitals with a combined capacity to produce enough oxygen to fill 200 cylinders per day. The Director of Preventive Services, Dr Leonard Subi said in an interview yesterday

that the move is meant to address the oxygen shortage which has been reported in various hospitals.

The Bugando Zonal Referral Hospital said this week that it was in need of 500 cylinders, and it said yesterday that it had received 300 cylinders.

Bugando Hospital Acting Director Dr Fabian Massawe said the cylinders were delivered to the facility by the Medical Stores Department (MSD).

Dr Subi said the government is also

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Oxygen cylinders are offloaded at Bugando teaching and referral hospital in Mwanza city yesterday ready for use following a recent appeal for an urgent supply of more of the items, chiefly to help out patients with breathing problems. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



## Zuma loses bid for regaining freedom

DURBAN

FORMER South African president Jacob Zuma (pictured) yesterday lost in his latest bid to block his arrest, meaning he will remain in jail.

The Zuma legal team's hopes were dashed, failing to overturn his 15-month sentence for contempt of court which he began serving at mid-week after handing himself in to the police late on Wednesday.

But speaking yesterday, the High Court judge presiding over the attempt to stay his arrest said the application had been "dismissed with costs."

However, this is not the only attempt Zuma is making to overturn his sentence, handed to him by South Africa's constitutional court after he failed to attend an inquiry into corruption during his presidency. He denies any corruption, and has not cooperated with the legal

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# Crackdown over noise pollution begins today

By Correspondent Enock Charles

THE National Environment Management Council is today embarking on a crackdown on noise pollution which is increasingly becoming a menace in major cities and towns.

NEC Director General Dr Samwel Gwamaka told reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the onslaught targets entertainment joints such as bars, night clubs and function halls as well as places of worship located within residential areas.

In collaboration with law enforcement organs, NEC officials will go suburbs towards places notorious for deafening noise on the basis of complaints received



**You have to follow the law so that you do not disturb others. Contrary to that, whatever it is you are doing is illegal**

by the regulator, he said.

Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Mbeya, Dodoma and Tanga have the greater number of joints or complexes notorious for noise pollution, leading in complaints submitted by residents to NEMC, he stated.

Operators of entertainment joints and preachers all over the country are required to adhere to rules governing their businesses or services, to maintain acceptable sound levels that experts put at "40 decibels at night and 60 decibels during day time."

"If you come to a residential area and set up an entertainment joint or a place of worship; it means you have directly

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## NGOs council seeking State House audience

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE National Committee of Non-Governmental Organizations (NaCoNGO) has asked for an audience with President Samia Suluhu Hassan to discuss issues affecting their activities so that they can effectively contribute in the development of the country.

Addressing reporters here yesterday, NaCoNGO new chairperson Lilian Badi (pictured) said they want to meet the president and advise on how best they can



work together for the benefit of Tanzanians. "We are committed to working closely with the government and the development partners to attain various development strategies and targets," she said.

Badi spoke after winning the seat in an election that took place here on Thursday following recent government directive that the society's polls take place within 30 days.

Other elected officials are Revocatus Sono who won the post of secretary general and John Kiteve, who becomes the treasurer.

Announcing the election results, interim chairperson Flaviana Charles said the poll was peaceful and open as was expected, noting that 30 people were elected in the new council's leadership.

"We are glad that we have got a new

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President Samia Suluhu Hassan has an audience with United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) deputy executive director Joyce Msuya (L) at Chamwino State House in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: State House

## Hospitals now start filling gas cylinders

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working to ensure oxygen is available in all the facilities that need the life-saving produce on time.

"Due to the increase in demand for medical oxygen, the government is taking action by installing other gas production machines in 25 referral hospitals," he said, noting however that he expects the public to adhere to precautions such as wearing masks and sanitising to curb the spread of the pandemic.

If people adhere to precaution as directed by medical experts this would reduce the high medical oxygen demand currently facing the country's hospitals, he stated.

The move by the government comes a few days after Lake Zone referral hospital appealed for oxygen donations after recording an unprecedented increase in new cases of Covid-19.

The hospital said it needs 500 oxygen cylinders on a daily basis

to cater for the rising number of patients with breathing complications.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan said recently that the third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic is prevalent in Tanzanian major cities, reiterating the call for people to take precautions recommended by experts.

At a rally in Kibaigwa in Dodoma Region on transit to Morogoro early this week, the president said the third wave of the coronavirus pandemic was in the country, and "there is no need to hide it."

Already there are patients in Arusha, Mwanza, Dar es Salaam and Dodoma, she stated, noting that clerics need to join in government efforts in curbing the spread of Covid-19 by reminding their followers to take precautions.

Clerics must mobilize prayers in churches and mosques for Almighty God to rescue the nation from the pandemic, she added.

## Man sues govt over high hospital bill

KAMPALA

A Ugandan man has sued the government and Health minister Jane Ruth Aceng after he was left with a high hospital bill when his mother died from COVID-19 complications.

According to the suit before the Lira High Court, Toffa Tamale says his mother, Tereza Namugenyi, was admitted to Paramount Hospital in Kampala after she suffered a heart attack.

"We were later told by the medical personnel that my mother was also suffering from COVID-19 and for that reason, she was admitted to the Intensive Care Unit," he states in his affidavit.

"My mother was later on discontinued from oxygen in favour of an Asian patient who, according to the doctors, was more critically ill than her. After three days off oxygen, my mother's condition worsened and she eventually died."

Toffa says the hospital's management demanded Ush31

million (about Ksh944,000) before his mother's body could be released for burial.

"This amount was exorbitant and excessively high and as a family, we could not afford it. Bearing in mind the circumstances under which my mother died, it was not only unfair but also unreasonable for the hospital to demand such an exorbitant amount," he states in court documents.

"Despite various demands to the management of Paramount Hospital, they deliberately refused to release my late mother's body. Instead, they used it as bait to compel us to pay the excessive hospital bill," he adds.

Tamale now wants the court to declare that Aceng and the Ugandan government have failed to standardise levies, rates and pricing of medical services provided by health facilities, arguing that this threatens and violates patients' rights.

He also wants the court to issue an order compelling the State

to formulate and introduce fair and affordable payment ceilings for medical services provided by private health facilities, and that the same be published in places accessible to the general public.

The petitioner, who has listed the Attorney General as a respondent, also wants the government to restrain private hospitals from holding dead bodies over unpaid bills.

However, the Lira High Court in northern Uganda has forwarded the case file to a Kampala court.

"The above case was registered at Lira High Court yesterday (Wednesday), however, the resident judge has directed me to transfer it to your office for onward transmission to High Court Civil Division as per the directive of the Principal Judge for quick management," Geneva Natukunda, the deputy registrar at Lira High Court, said in a letter to her counterpart at the High Court in Kampala.

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leadership to steer NaCoNGO to another level and we wish them all the best in their new tasks," she said.

Speaking briefly after being elected, new chairperson Lilian Badi promised to work closely with the new team and council members in general to bring the changes desired.

She thanked the outgoing leaders and the interim committee that saw the elections for the good work she said is worth emulating. "We will ensure that NaCoNGO works for the benefit of the public and helps bring about development," she said.

Early last month, Health minister Dr. Dorothy Gwajima formed a transitional committee of 10 members, involving leaders from national and international NGOs

for the purpose of overseeing the election of leaders of the new NaCoNGO.

The main task of the interim committee was to oversee, among other things, the schedule for the election and how the exercise would be conducted. The council comprises of 30 members, 26 from Mainland regions while four represent special groups including international organizations, people with disabilities, children and youth.

Elections at the district level were peaceful and successful, with a few hitches noted and solved on time, she affirmed, saying that the polls on June 26 in 130 districts saw a big turnout among those interested in leadership.

"The elections went as planned and the big number of contesters is

a clear sign of proper planning and freedom in the whole process," the polls overseer declared, elaborating that three people were elected in every district.

On average out of five people in every district that showed in interest by picking election forms, at least four, equivalent to 80 percent returned them. The election took place at the same time in all regions except Kigoma where after mutual agreement among all parties concerned, the exercise was conducted a day earlier.

Several challenges were experienced in Ruvuma region whose districts are to conduct their poll exercises this week. At the same time, some districts did not conduct the exercise as no one showed interest in vying for representative posts, she added.

## Crackdown over noise pollution begins today

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encroached on the freedoms of people living in the area," he said.

"You have to follow the law so that you do not disturb others. Contrary to that, whatever it is you are doing is illegal," he declared.

Noise pollution affects millions of people on a daily basis in Tanzania, he stated, affirming that exposure to loud noise can also cause high blood pressure, heart diseases, sleep disorders and stress.

The most common health problem it causes is noise induced hearing loss which affects people of all age groups - but children and the elderly are the most vulnerable, he further noted.

"Statistics show that the number of people with hearing loss is increasing in Tanzania and noise pollution is cited as one of the contributing factors. You can call someone near you but they do not respond, such people are so many," he elaborated.

"The levels of stress are also high; some suffer unexplainable headaches and yet others age faster. Some die prematurely just because

of extreme noise," he pointed out.

The director appealed to residents and local government officials to cooperate with NEMC inspectors to control the problem, advising that anyone hearing uncomfortable noise in their residential area call toll free numbers 0800110115, 0800110117 and 0800110116 to report the matter.

Last month the government announced that it would start taking legal action against sound polluters with penalty including six months imprisonment and a ban on businesses or activity that causes noise pollution.

The move is among strategies reached by eight ministers grouped around the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) to control silent but dangerous impacts of noise pollution countrywide.

*"The levels of stress are also high; some suffer unexplainable headaches and yet others age faster. Some die prematurely just because of extreme noise"*



Home Affairs minister George Simbachawene (L) receives a gift from the Turkish Ambassador to Tanzania, Dr Mehmet Gulluoglu, shortly after talks on co-operation between the two countries held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo courtesy of Home Affairs ministry

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process.

According to the BBC, the case is expected back in the constitutional court on Monday, when judges will consider whether to rescind or reduce the sentence.

Currently Zuma, who still has a large base of support in South Africa, will be eligible for parole in just under four months, officials said.

## Zuma loses bid for regaining freedom

Zuma enters books of history as the first former president of South Africa to be sent to jail.

His life as a free man - who enjoyed the perks of a former president - ended just before midnight on Wednesday, when in a dramatic scene he was escorted by

a convoy of vehicles from his home in rural Nkandla to a prison in the small town of Estcourt.

His son, Edward Zuma, had warned that there would be "blood on the floor" if he was arrested, but in the end there was none.

The 79-year-old surrendered,

knowing that he could not resist the might of the state, leaving behind his son who had earlier stood by the gate of their home with a stick.

He was imprisoned for 10 years in 1963 for fighting the racist system of apartheid in South Africa, then went into exile in 1975 to become the

spymaster of the African National Congress (ANC), before returning to South Africa triumphantly in 1990, and rising to the presidency in 2009, though by then his reputation had been stained by a deluge of corruption allegations.

He had also been charged with

raping a family friend, but was acquitted in 2006 in a trial that deeply polarised the ANC, the former liberation movement which became the governing party in 1994 and of which Zuma has been a member since the age of 17.

Now, he has been imprisoned for being in contempt of a court made up of South Africa's most senior judges - those who are the guardians of the democracy he fought for most of his life.



Dodoma city residents air grievances related to land ownership and use to members of a team detailed by Dodoma regional commissioner Anthony Mtaka earlier this week to seek an amicable end to the respective disputes. More than 500 people have been appearing at the sessions daily. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

By Guardian Reporter

## 'Satellite city development will include two-lane way'

THE on-going improvement of the government satellite city located at Mtumba area in the country's capital—Dodoma is meant to ensure provision of quality services to Tanzanians visiting the area, some 30 kilometres from city centre.

This was said recently by the Secretary of the National Committee for Coordinating the Government Plan to shift to Dodoma Meshack Bandawe while inspecting the progress implementation of various infrastructure projects including tarmac roads, tree planting, installation of electricity and fire fighting equipment.

Bandawe noted that the satellite city will also include construction of a two-lane road of 22.4km and a one-way road of 28.8km, with the construction of infrastructures of water, gas, telecommunications, supermarkets as well as train services.

"The government city at Mtumba would be one of its kind due to installed infrastructures. All the roads would have traffic

lights. It would be an attractive city," he said.

The construction of the road, which commenced on February 01, 2020, is expected to be completed on July 31, 2021, at 89.232bn/- where 11.2km will be four lanes and 28.8km will be two lanes.

He said the work has reached 70 percent with contractors continuing with the remained job. He said the contractor has promised

to complete the job with schedule.

The city also includes construction 41 houses for civil servants working at the Chamwino State House.

Shifting the government capital from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma was part of President Magufuli's pledges during the 2015 presidential campaign. Dodoma was declared the capital city of Tanzania in 1974.

## Plan underway to build bridge over Malagarasi River

By Guardian Correspondent

THE government is planning to construct a permanent bridge at the Malagarasi River which connects Ilagala and Kaleje villages in Kigoma Region to address the long transport problem facing the residents.

Deputy Minister for Works and Transport Eng Godfrey Kasekenya made the statement when speaking to residents in Uvinza, Kigoma Region.

He said that the government recognises the hurdles facing the residents and travellers due to lack of a stable bridge at the river, so it will address the challenge within this fiscal year.

"We have seen it better to set aside a budget in this fiscal year to start addressing this transport challenge facing villagers around Malagarasi River. We will conduct a feasibility study to come up with a best and quality bridge," he explained.

Kasekenya further instructed the acting manager of the MV Malagarasi ferry at the river to extend transportation services delivery time especially during the dry season, from 6am to 21hrs during night so as to provide relief and convenience to users while waiting for construction of the bridge to begin.

Similarly, the deputy minister directed the executive director of the Tanzania Electrical and Electronics Services Agency (TEMESA) Eng Japhet Maselle to pay salary arrears for four months to workers of MM Security Company within this month which has been conducting security services at the ferry.

In his three-day official tour in Kigoma, Kasekenya also inspected the 231.29km Simbo- Ilagala- Kalya road pledging that the construction of the bridge will go along with the rehabilitation of the road so as to allow farmers to transport their produce smoothly.

Tanzania Roads Agency (TANROADS) manager in Kigoma Eng Narcis Choma said a comprehensive feasibility study and designing will be conducted early in this fiscal year and the agency is now in the process to announce a tender so as to get an engineering consultant.

Eng Halfan Juma, acting manager of the MV Malagarasi commended the government's plan saying that once constructed, the bridge will open various opportunities and stimulate economic development in the Region.

Ningejua Juma, Kajeje village resident also hailed the government's plan to construct the bridge at the Malagarasi River saying that this sounds as a big relief to the residents in the area who have been struggling for years to cross the bridge thus affecting their economic and social development.

"The transport challenge has affected several sectors here, farmers, traders as well as pregnant women who some of them lost their lives due to lack of stable transport to take them to hospitals," she said.

*"We have seen it better to set aside a budget in this fiscal year to start addressing this transport challenge facing villagers around Malagarasi River..."*

## Deputy minister hails Pura for supervision of their operations

By Guardian Reporter

DEPUTY Minister for Energy Stephen Byabato has hailed the Petroleum Upstream Regulatory Authority (PURA) for supervising well operations urging them to strengthen efforts to attract more investors to work in the country's upstream oil and gas sector.

Byabato made the remarks this week when he visited the authority's pavilion at the on-going 45th Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair.

He called on the public to visit the pavilion so as to get education and more details on various investments on petroleum upstream sector areas and how the authority is operating.

"You are doing a very good job, I have seen your strategies to lure more local and multinational companies to invest in the upstream sector, this will continue immensely in the country's economic development," the deputy minister told the authority.

For his part, PURA director general Charles Sangweni called on Tanzanians and foreigners to visit the pavilion so as to widen understanding on various things including the on-going petroleum researches in the country as well as several opportunities that are found in the upstream sector.

He also said that the authority in collaboration with the Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) have already prepared a database that will begin on July 15, this year in order to get local service providers to connect them to foreigners.

He said that the database will include suppliers and service providers' experts in the petroleum upstream sector to enable domestic and foreign investors to access qualified experts for business partnership.

Sangweni added that the government has a petroleum activity map where areas are divided into blocks/areas with high

probability of having hydrocarbon potential.

"We are working to strengthen efforts and systems, improve bidding so as to attract more multinational companies with interest in the upstream oil and gas sector, we still have a good number of sedimentary basins that are yet to be fully explored," he said.

He said that over 50 percent of the country's total area (534,000km<sup>2</sup>) has been blessed with potential sedimentary basins which if well explored could transform the oil and gas sector in the country.

"Activities in the upstream sector in Tanzania started in 1952, where the first wells were drilled at Mtwara which resulted in no discovery. In 1974 the first natural gas was discovered at Songo Songo, followed by Mnzabay in 1982. In those years this sector was governed by Petroleum (Exploration and Production) Act 1980. Currently we are under Petroleum Act 2015 (PA 2015), whereby opportunities to invest upstream especially in exploration is through a tendering process," he explained.



**We are working to strengthen efforts and systems, improve bidding so as to attract more multinational companies with interest in the upstream oil and gas sector, we still have a good number of sedimentary basins that are yet to be fully explored**



Mbeya Rural legislator Oran Njeza (R) briefs Water deputy minister Maryprisca Mahundi on the 2.2bn/- Mjele Ward water project, which the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Agency (RuWasa) is implementing. The deputy minister made an inspection tour at the site yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Grace Mwakalinga

By Guardian Correspondent, Tunduru

AUTHORITIES in Tunduru District, Ruvuma Region have warned the public to stop taking laws into their hands when pastoralists' cattle enter their farms and forest reserves but rather send them to legal bodies for further measures.

The district's administrative secretary (DAS) Mwajuma Nasombe made the call during the meeting here to discuss the 2020/21 forest harvesting season that brought together 51 village chairpersons and executive officers (VEOs).

Nasombe acknowledged that even though sending animals in someone's farm or forest reserves is against the law, it doesn't guarantee anyone to take the law into his/her hand by hurting the pastoralists.

## 'You should not take the law into your own hands'

"There are some people who have been taking laws into their own hands and start attacking pastoralists using various weapons, this goes against the country's law. The government will not tolerate these people, let me tell you that we will also take stern measures to these people, whenever you find a pastoralist gone against procedures please send him/her to the respective government office or to the police," she insisted.

The meeting which is conducted once in a year discussed and approved 27 eligible harvesters out

of 30 applicants. These will harvest forest products in 51 villages in the district.

The DAS further wanted the village leaders to implement their responsibilities faithfully and make sure that they supervise the harvesting work to bring positive impacts to people and the government.

Tunduru District forest conservator Denis Mwangama said that timbers in Tunduru are subjected to higher levies compared to other districts or regions whereby

in Tunduru one timber is charged a levy of 2000/- while in Masasi District one timber is charged 500/- thus making Tunduru to have a higher income than other areas.

He said that in the last season, the district injected 1.37bn/- of income from forest products harvesting in various villages where most went to the central government and 5 percent to the district.

"We are going to supervise the harvesting work in this season so as to raise income and revenue collections," he said.

## Taliri promises to ensure modern livestock keeping

By Getrude Mbago

THE Tanzania Livestock Research Institute (TALIRI) has expressed its commitment to continue capacitating pastoralists and the public with essential skills on smart livestock keeping so as to improve income and contribute to the country's development.

Prof Erick Komba, TALIRI director general made the statement this week at the ongoing Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair (DITF).

According to him, the institute has been always educating pastoralists in the country to embark on modern livestock keeping which embraces having a small number of animals for more benefits.

"Many livestock keepers in the country still have low knowledge on the importance of smart keeping; they only think that having large groups of animals is payable which is not true, having just few animals at home who receive good care is very profitable," he said.

He said that through various programmes, TALIRI has been also educating and encouraging farmers to purchase cattle breeds from the institute as well as feeds which will be able to offer them more benefits.

"We are planning to strengthen public awareness to pastoralists in rural and urban areas on the importance of keeping few animals that have many benefits," he said.

He said that apart from producing quality cattle and goat breeds, TALIRI also produce quality animal feeds including planted grasses, trees and other nutritional stones.

He said that the institute through its researchers will continue focusing on conducting solution-based research that will provide lasting solutions to the challenges facing the livestock sector and communities in the country.

Walter Mangesho, TALIRI research officer said that the institute has been conducting a number of researches so as to come up with more quality animal breeds for the country's livestock sector development.

He urged pastoralists and all Tanzanians to change their mindsets and adopt smart livestock keeping for them to increase

productivity and income.

Mangesho said TALIRI has a number of technologies including the breeding technology project by using multiple ovulation and embryo transfer (MOET) in Mpwapwa Centre, Dodoma Region.

"The improved and the Mpwapwa multipurpose cattle breeds are among the best cattle which we recommended for the farmers to adopt, this cattle has a number of advantages as one cattle can produce up to 20 liters of milk per day as well as more meat than the traditional cattle," he said.

The researcher said the institute has also invested much to ensure that all research solutions and technologies in the livestock sector reach communities at the ground level so as to bring positive results.

He noted that supplying several cattle and goat breeds produced by the institute Tanzania to more Tanzanians will transform the livestock sector by increasing production of cattle, meat, skin, milk and other livestock products.

TALIRI was established by Act No. 4 of 2012 and is charged with the mandate of coordinating and conducting livestock research that will provide technologies to improve and sustain the development of the livestock sector in the country.



**The improved and the Mpwapwa multipurpose cattle breeds are among the best cattle which we recommended for the farmers to adopt, this cattle has a number of advantages as one cattle can produce up to 20 liters of milk per day as well as more meat than the traditional cattle**



Lilian Badi takes the oath of office before advocate Deus Nyabiri in Dodoma city on Thursday shortly after being elected chairperson of the National Council of NGOs (NaCoNGO). Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THERE is need for a national strategy to strengthen agriculture and local industrial development, including availability of appropriate seedlings which can sustain drought conditions as well as increasing projects on irrigation farming, a senior researcher with the Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA) has observed.

TMA's Director of Research and Applied Meteorology, Dr Ladislaus Chang'a made the observation here during a week-long training for planners, policy and decision makers to use Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) in practice and sharing selected evidence in different sectors.

The meeting was organized by the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), drew researchers from different sectors so as to tap into the potential in using research data to advise the government on

## 'TMA's strategy should respond to development needs in rural areas'

various policy issues which can help in planning for the country's development.

He added that there is need to have pesticides and farm inputs to improve irrigation agriculture, processing and availability of market.

"Effects of climate change cause drought and irregular rainfall which in term affect farmers and food production in general" he said.

The researcher noted that the country has been experiencing short big rains that do not help in farming, being a clear sign that things are changing drastically.

He observed that in efforts to tackle impacts of climate change in the country, the government is preparing the National Climate Change Strategy 2021-2016 draft, researchers have been informed.

According to Dr Chang'a, different researches suggest that the effects of climate in Tanzania continue extending its roots in different socio-economic sectors and that they expect to double because of an increasing pace in weather conditions.

Dr Changa said researches show that in the past four decades, many areas have had indicators of temperature increase, whereas temperature at night is higher compared to temperature during the day.

According to meteorological projections, researchers say it is expected that by 2100, the temperature is likely to increase up to between 2°C and 4°C in different parts of the country.

Researches further suggest that day and night temperature is

expected to increase in all regions in Tanzania, with the temperature at night expected to be even more terrible.

Because of that, if stringent measures are not taken to mitigate climatic conditions in the country, several sectors are expected to be affected, among them, Agriculture, Livestock, water, energy, fisheries, transport and health.

To mitigate damages of climate change, researchers suggest that more education on how to reduce effects should be intensified in all sectors.

They also recommend that more research on weather should be conducted, as well as preparing the national policy on weather in order to increase efficiency in proper use of weather information provided by TMA.



A student at Arusha city's Kikwe Girls' Secondary School sits on one of the 100 beds the Vodacom Foundation presented to the school yesterday in supporting girls' education. Looking on along other members of the school's community are Vodacom Tanzania head of PR and communications Jacqueline Materu (2nd-L, foreground) and the school's headmaster, Alex Kitomari (L). Photo: Guardian Correspondent

## SA court dismisses Zuma's request to delay prison term

JOHANNESBURG

A South African court has rejected former South African President Jacob Zuma's request to postpone his current prison term, a day after he handed himself over to police to begin a 15-month sentence.

Zuma is currently imprisoned in the Estcourt Correctional Center for failing to obey a court order to testify at a judicial commission that is investigating allegations of corruption during his term as South Africa's president from 2009 to

2018.

Despite turning himself in on Wednesday night, Zuma has challenged his sentence. He has one more legal bid to be released which will be heard by the Constitutional Court, the country's apex court, on Monday.

"The application is dismissed with costs," the Pietermaritzburg High Court's judge presiding over the case said on Friday.

The High Court judgement came hours after the same court

dismissed an application by Ace Magashule, secretary-general of the governing African National Congress (ANC) party, to have his suspension over corruption charges in a separate case set aside.

Both politicians' proceedings are regarded as a test for South Africa's ability to enforce the law, even against powerful politicians, 27 years after the ANC removed South Africa's white minority rulers to usher in democracy.

Zuma's jail order has been seen as the most dramatic chapter yet

in his journey from a revered anti-apartheid activist to a politician tainted by multiple charges of sleaze and corruption, all of which he denies.

As a member of the ANC when it was a liberation movement, Zuma was jailed by South Africa's white minority rulers for his efforts to establish a state that would treat citizens equally.

Zuma, 79, denies widespread corruption and has maintained he is the victim of a political witch-hunt.

## Use Kiswahili to forge closer links, Museveni calls on African nations

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

UGANDA President Yoweri Museveni has urged Africans to use Kiswahili as a way to unify the continent, he said this on his African Integration Day speech on Wednesday.

Museveni said Kiswahili was a 'neutral language', non-ethnic that 'belongs to nobody'.

The Ugandan ruler, who often stresses the importance of development on the continent, also said the way for the 1.4 billion Africans to prosper was to focus on 'integrating the markets that will consume what we are producing as Africa.'

"We were colonised and suffered slave trade not because our ancestors were weak, but were not well organized. We have got more capacity while operating together hence the need to develop strategic security for Africa," Yoweri Museveni added.

In May this year, the East African Community (EAC) Sectoral Council on Finance and Economic Affairs (SCFEA) agreed not to dissolve the East African Kiswahili Commission (EACK) due to its importance of promoting the language and the future of the community.

The decision was based on the position of Tanzania and Kenya and Uganda which rejected recommendation of a consultant who recommended the dissolution of the commission, recommending that its responsibilities be taken to the EAC Information, Technology, Culture and Sports Department.

According to the consultant, dissolution of the EACK would reduce the community's expenditure.

Kiswahili language has been growing with various international broadcasters airing their radio and television programmes in Kiswahili language. He said that currently, there are many Kiswahili speakers in the United States, United Kingdom and Germany.

The Tanzania government has been taking measures to ensure Kiswahili is spoken regionally whereas it has successfully managed to make it the official language of the East African Community (EAC) as well as the Southern African Development Community (SADC).

The late President John Magufuli was touting for adoption of the language as the SADC fourth official language alongside English, French and Portuguese. Kiswahili is an official language of the African Union (AU).

During the Summit of SADC Heads of State and Government in August 2019 in Dar es Salaam, the leaders agreed that Kiswahili would be adopted at the level of council and summit, first as a language for oral communication, before eventually being adopted for written official communication within SADC.

Opening the SADC 39th Heads of State and Government summit at the Julius Nyerere International Centre, President John Magufuli appealed to the leaders to fast track the adoption of Kiswahili to be among the four official languages of the regional body.

## Benjamin Mkapa Foundation to establish special fund for health services provision improvement

By Felister Peter, Morogoro

IN celebrating the first anniversary of the late President, the Benjamin Mkapa Foundation (BMF) is planning to establish a special fund to be contributed by health stakeholders, development partners and well-wishers to enable it to continue improving provision of health services in the country.

The move is aimed at reaching more people with improved health services especially those in the peripherals as well as continuing to improve infrastructures at health facilities at all levels.

"We are grateful for the wise decisions by the late Mkapa to establish this foundation; his principles of transparency and good governance resulted in almost all the sectors including health. As we celebrate his first anniversary, we will continue to live his spirits and harness all the good things he was doing," said Hendry Samky, the foundation's Head of Health System Strengthening Unit.

In an interview with this paper, Samky noted that on July 14th this year there will be a special event for remembrance of the late Mkapa which has been organized to harness his legacy.

According to him, the foundation has for many years been engaging itself with provision of capacity building training to health servants at all levels and undertaking and implemented multiple projects that have positively improved and impacted health sector in both Mainland and Zanzibar.

He said the foundation has so far constructed 482 houses for servants in the health sector and built the capacity of 326 health supervising committees in 22 district councils. It has also employed a total of 3,760 health workers at dispensary, health center and regional hospitals across the country.

The government has however commended the foundation's job well done, promising to continue working closely with it in planning and strategizing on how to further improve health services in the country.

Assistant Director, Human Resource Planning in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Martin Mapunda said: "The foundation has been of great support to the country's health sector; it has employed a number of health workers at various cadres as

well as improving infrastructures."

Mapunda added that the late Mkapa will be remembered for his transparency and good governance principles and championing revolution in the health sector.

Dr Mackfallen Anasel, Head of Department of Health Systems Management at Mzumbe University said that decisions by the BMF to work with higher learning institutions would facilitate improvement of service provision as the university conducts research and builds the capacity of human resources. He said the university assists the foundation in finding proper statistics to ensure that decisions made are based on reality.

According to Dr Anasel, despite efforts by the government and stakeholders such as BMF in increasing the number of health workers, the shortage of servants in the sector is between 50 and 60 percent.

Nakaunda Mangosongo is the Assistant Director (Human Capital Management) in the President's Office Regional Administration and Local Government, he said: "We are proud of the foundation's support in the health sector especially employment of workers at all levels. The foundation is one of the important stakeholders in providing health services."

Mangosongo asserted that the government continues to employ health workers at different cadres to reduce the current gap whereas it has recently employed a good number of servants in the health and education sectors.

The foundation has for 15 years worked closely with the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children and the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PMORALG) to address various challenges in the health sector.

It has expanded its scope of activities from HIV/Aids to start supporting efforts to combat malaria, Tuberculosis (TB) prevention and curing initiatives, maternal health (prevention of maternal and infant mortality rates) and provision of reproductive health education to youth so that they able to avoid early pregnancies.

*"We are proud of the foundation's support in the health sector especially employment of workers at all levels. The foundation is one of the important stakeholders in providing health services."*



A health management human resource evaluation meeting involving the Benjamin Mkapa Foundation (BMF), Mzumbe University and the government in progress in Morogoro municipality on Thursday. Right is BMF's Hendry Samky and second left is Martin Mapunda from the Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children ministry. Photo Guardian Correspondent

## AGRA boss arrives in Tanzania for high-profile conversation on food systems transformation

By Guardian Reporter

AFTER a successful tour of West Africa, Former Prime Minister of Ethiopia and Board Chair of the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA) Hailemariam Dessalegn yesterday landed in Tanzania for four-day official visit.

According to a statement issued by AGRA, among other issues, Dessalegn is expected to meet with President Samia Suluhu Hassan for discussions around her government's food systems priorities.

Tanzania is the fifth consecutive country that Dessalegn is visiting after Kenya,

Ghana, Nigeria and Burkina Faso. Key to his visit is the mobilization of political leadership and private sector participation in promoting agribusiness as a way of promoting food security and increasing household income.

This is especially as Africa prepares for the September UN Food Systems Summit, where the world will take stock of the progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially the commitment to end hunger and poverty by 2030.

Dessalegn will also use the opportunity to invite President Samia to the 11th African Green

Revolution Forum (AGRF) summit, in Nairobi, Kenya, on September 7 - 10, 2021.

To complete his four-day tour of Tanzania, Dessalegn will also engage AGRA's staff and partners in reviewing the impact of their work in the country's pursuit of an agricultural transformation.

Established in 2006, AGRA is an African-led and Africa-based institution that puts smallholder farmers at the centre of the continent's growing economy by transforming agriculture from a solitary struggle to survive into farming as a business that thrives. Together with our partners, we catalyse and sustain an inclusive

agricultural transformation to increase incomes and improve food security for 30 million farming households in 11 African countries by 2021.

The AGRF is the premier forum for African agriculture, bringing together stakeholders in the agricultural landscape to take practical actions and share lessons that will move African agriculture forward.

The forum is designed to energize political will and advance the policies, programs and investments required to achieve an inclusive and sustainable agricultural transformation across the continent.



Masama Cedrick Pangani (L), councillor for Masama South in Hai District, addresses residents of Mkombozi Village yesterday on the importance of having locality security groups popularly known as Sungusungu following a rise in the wave of crime in the area. Photo: Godfrey Mushi

## Annual headline inflation rate for June saw rise - NBS

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE annual headline inflation rate for the month of June, 2021 has increased from 3.3 percent that was recorded in May 2021, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) said yesterday.

Releasing the statistics yesterday, the Acting Director of Population Census and Social Statistics, Ruth Davison said, "The increase of the headline inflation explains that, the speed of price change for commodities for the year ended June, 2021 has increased compared to the speed that was recorded for the year ended May, 2021."

"The increased inflation rate for the year ended June 2021 has been caused by increased price of food and non-food products in the period ended June 2021," she said.

She said some of the non-food items that contributed to increase of annual headline inflation rate for the month of June, 2021 include clothes material by 8.5 percent, clothing for women (6.3) footwear for men (6.2), actual rentals paid by tenants (4.9), food services from restaurants (5.6) and accommodation services in hotels/guest houses (5.7).

Food and non-alcoholic beverages inflation rate for the month of June, 2021, she said has decreased to 4.7 percent from 4.9 percent that was recorded in May, 2021.

In comparison with other East African countries of Kenya and Uganda, she said the annual inflation rate in Kenya for the year ended June, 2021 has increased to 5.87 recorded for the year ended May, 2021 to 6.32 percent for the year ended June, 2021.

For Uganda the annual headline inflation rate for the year ended June, 2021 has increased from 1.9 percent recorded for the year ended May, 2021 to 2.0 percent for the year ended June, 2021

## RC Sendiga pledges govt support to Iringa investor

By Guardian Correspondent

IRINGA regional commissioner, Queen Sendiga has pledged government support to Farm For the Future (FFF), an Iringa-based commercial firm, in its effort to build equity and invest US\$ 1.1 million in building a dam and related irrigation systems.

The investment in the dam which will collect rainwater for irrigating the 250 hectare farm which will grow seed maize and macadamia nuts, the high value crops that would launch a value chain for high value crops in Tanzania and contribute to dissemination of technology, experience and skills to local farmers in Iringa and across the country.

"Looking at the benchmark set in transforming people's lives while successfully running a commercial farm I see FFF as a centre of excellence for commercial farming, good agricultural practices and community empowerment. I believe this unique model could be replicated across Tanzania". She commended FFF for actively working with the government to lift people out of poverty through innovative and practical solutions to some of the key challenges facing local communities particularly malnutrition and lack of knowledge on good agricultural practices.

She made a firm commitment that the government supports the FFF plan to invest in building a dam and related irrigation systems needed for growing seed maize and macadamia nuts. "The government is impressed by your investment plan and we will provide you with all necessary and possible support to make it a success".

The Farm For the Future Chairman and Project Manager, Osmund Ueland said the environmental impact assessment is underway and construction of the dam is scheduled to start in August 2021. "The irrigation systems will

be installed in 2022 to pave way for planting 112 ha seed maize and 65 ha macadamia the same year.

"We are changing people's lives through our community development programs including demo plots in 16 Villages together with our commercial partners. With the right investors on board in the future, we can change lives for thousands of people," Ueland said.

This investment is an opportunity for FFF to demonstrate the importance of efficient water use in commercial and subsistence farming. This is not only an employment opportunity for farmers in Kilolo and Iringa region but also a chance of a lifetime to learn how to grow macadamia which attracts a premium at world markets.

"FFF is now looking for local and foreign investors who see community development as an important part of their path towards achieving commercial success to take part in building the equity for the company, so that production of high value crops under irrigation can start immediately," said Ueland.

The regional commissioner emphasized that FFF is not just a commercial farm but it's a centre of excellence for good agricultural practices and community empowerment. The RC also commended FFF for actively working with the government to lift people out of poverty through innovative and practical solutions to some of the key challenges facing local communities particularly malnutrition and lack of knowledge on good agricultural practices.

She made a firm commitment that the government supports the FFF plan to invest in building a dam and related irrigation systems needed for growing seed maize and macadamia nuts. "The government is impressed by your investment plan and we will provide you with all necessary and possible support to make it a success".



Information, Culture, Arts and Sports deputy minister Pauline Gekul, who doubles as Babati Urban legislator, flips through a report during a visit to the constituency's Bonga Secondary School on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

## Relief as govt empowers agro-bank with 55bn/- guarantees to small farmers' loans

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

IN an intentional move to help struggling small farmers and SMEs access loans at concessionary rates and boost agriculture financing in Tanzania, the government has given the Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB) US \$25 million (55bn/-) to guarantee loans applied for by villagers and their SMEs.

During the just-ended budget session, the government pledged to ensure small farmers and agri-SMEs access affordable financial support and boost agriculture financing.

TADB Managing Director Japhet Justine, told agriculture reporters here yesterday that their bank has received from the Prime Minister's Office US\$ 25 million to enable the bank guarantee loans going to farmers and their institutions and alleviate the problem of farmers accessing credit.

In Tanzania banks and financial institutions demand collateral worth between 125 and 150 per cent of the total loan amount applied for.

Justine assured vine farmers of financial support from the TADB, explaining that vine is one of Tanzania's strategic cash crops.

"The government knows that small and middle farmers are unable to meet 50 per cent of collateral or loan conditions. To overcome this problem, the government has given our bank US\$25 million (over 55bn/-), so that our bank can guarantee loans applied for by farmers in our partner commercial banks. I take this occasion to assure vine growers of getting loans from our bank on concessionary terms," he assured.

He said vine growers need and deserve finance to increase production and productivity. He told growers that they should not worry about getting loans from

the TADB because, he said, the bank was established to support farmers.

Justine was speaking to reporters after attending a meeting called and chaired by Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa that discussed ways of increasing grape production and processing.

Until last month, TADB has supported vine value chains by disbursing 463,983,800/-, it disbursed 70,000,000/= to build warehouses, 27,025,000/- to secure machines and 366,958,800/- to build infrastructure in vine farming areas.



Park Hyatt Zanzibar Hotel manager Nicolas Cedro speaks at yesterday's launch of "special pizza" at Zanzibar's Beach House Café. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

## Prisons Dept security firm comes up with new service

By Beatrice Philemon

THE Tanzania Prisons Force's security firm -Shima Guard Co Ltd has come up with a new security service project that targets industrial areas, financial institutions and individuals so as to ensure that their properties and surroundings remain safe.

Grant Mwaikenda, the company's security officer said this yesterday in the firms' pavilion at the ongoing 45th Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair (DITF).

He said that the company was officially established in September

last year to provide security services in different areas including mining sites, financial institutions, industrial areas, personal security, special security services, security cash transport and other areas.

According to him, the company has already employed a total of 900 security guards in different industrial areas across the country while 450 security guards are still waiting for employment.

"We are calling on Tanzanians in all areas where they are including local and foreign investors willing to use our security services to visit our office, the company has highly

qualified security guards trained by the Tanzania Prisons Corporation Sole and modern security equipment for the safety of people and properties they have," he said.

The company has decided to embark on this project after discovering that the demand is very high especially for businessmen and investors who need to keep their business safe. Also many business people are now looking for ways to keep their properties, employees and customers safe as well as prevent theft, cyber-attacks, damage and more.

Mwaikenda said that the company

will soon extend its services to Mtwara Region so as to provide security services in industries areas.

"We are currently in discussion with the Bank of Tanzania (BOT) so that our staff can start to offer security services," he said.

He further pledged that the company will continue offering best services in various areas, ensure safety of their clients, properties and identify crimes as well as make the company become one of the best companies that offer security training within the country as well as training them on how to prevent and control fire disasters.

## EABC all set to promote private sector, enhancing EAC visibility

By Alima Nkwong, HMC

THE East African Community and the East African Business Council (EAC-EABC) have launched a Technical Working Group (TWG) aimed at promoting the private sector to raise the visibility of the EAC.

The EAC-EABC TWG draws its membership from EAC-EABC, the umbrella body bringing together private sector associations in East Africa has been mandated under the coordination of the EAC Director General for Customs and Trade, Kenneth Bagamuhunda, to spearhead initiatives that will benefit the private sector in East Africa.

Speaking at the launch of the TWG yesterday in Arusha, EAC Secretary General Peter Mathuki said EAC-EABC TWG has a specific mandate to promote activities that will raise the visibility of the EAC in addition to providing a platform for addressing concerns raised by the business community in the region.

He urged the TWG to reach out to every business person, whether large or small, by putting in place a hotline for receiving issues raised by stakeholders, adding that the EAC's focus would henceforth be placing the private sector at the heart of the integration process as outlined in the treaty for the establishment of the EAC.

The EAC SG emphasized that teamwork and ownership would be crucial to the success of the TWG, which should be results-oriented.

"We are on the threshold of a new dawn that will take the community to the people. Whatever we do, must lead to something tangible," he insisted adding that the first three stages of the EAC integration, namely the Customs Union, Common Market and Monetary Union were meant to promote economic integration in the region.

Mathuki said, only a cohesive and organized private sector in East Africa would be in position to benefit from the business

opportunities that would come with the implementation of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA). "The TWG should come up with a harmonized framework for a collective response by Partner States to Covid-19 in the region. A collective response in the region will guarantee economic recovery in a post-COVID era," he said.

On his part, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) Speaker Ngoga Martin said the private sector was taking its rightful place in regional integration through the signing of the TWG.

"We have an obligation under the Treaty as EAC leaders to strengthen the role of the private sector in the integration process. I am afraid that so far, we haven't fulfilled this obligation as required of us," he mentioned adding that EALA's mandate was to provide the legal framework to actualize the aspirations of East Africans.

Ngoga called on the EABC to work with all the committees because the private sector is a cost cutting phenomenon he also stressed that the partnership between EAC and EABC would take the integration process to the next level.

"The private sector through EABC should work closely with the Assembly to ensure that the necessary legal framework is put in place to facilitate the development of the private sector in East Africa," he encouraged

The EABC Executive Director John Bosco Kalisa directed the TWG to identify issues that hinder the free movement of goods in the region and have them resolved on a monthly basis.

He also said, in addition to identifying the issues impeding intra-EAC trade, the TWG should come up with solutions instead of always waiting for the council and summit to resolve such matters.

The EABC CEO hailed EALA for putting in place the necessary legal framework to address Non-tariff Barriers (NTBs) through the NTBs Act, 2017.

## Government and agro stakeholders in Singida working on sunflower production upgrading

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo,

Singida

THE government and key agro stakeholders in the Singida region have embarked on implementation of a special strategy aimed at improving the production of sunflower grains as well as the processing of edible oil.

According to Singida Regional Commissioner (RC) Binilith Mahenge, the region has potential to contribute at least 60 percent of all edible oil demand in the country if the farmers will make effective utilization of land resources available in the region.

Statistics depicts that the region has more than 175 processors of sunflower oil, among them 2 are large, seven are medium, and at least 166 are small-scale potential sunflower processors, but the facilities are not producing to their full capacity due to poor availability of needed raw materials - sunflowers grains.

Due to such shortages, the rest of the sunflower grains are either sourced from other regions whereby sometimes the processing industries are closed due to lack of raw materials.

In total, the potential processors have an estimated installed capacity of around 175,992MT per annum, but however, the smallholder farmers who are the main producers of the needed raw material in the region can only meet 40 percent of the total demand.

Speaking during a special event organised in Ikungi district by Farm Africa Tanzania, District Commissioner (DC) for Ikungi, Edward Mpogolo, said the government in the region had well prepared to ensure the sub-sector attract more farmers in order to heighten production.

He challenged the farmers to form special groups so as to stand a chance to access capital loans from financial institutions, as well as other agronomic services.

"Agriculture is science and thus, you need to be in access to better seed varieties, fertilizers, pesticides as well as fraternizing with recommended agronomic practices," he said while calling on farmers to form small groups and cultivate together hence making it easier for the government and

other stakeholders to assist them with all necessary requirements and training.

However, he appealed to some farmers who have been benefiting from different loan schemes to service their loans in due time in order to allow more farmers to benefit accordingly.

Program Manager for Farm Africa Tanzania, Tumaini Elibariki, said the program has assisted more than 300 smallholder's farmers in Ikungi District to adopt good agricultural practice (GAP) and climate-smart agriculture (CSA) in sunflower and horticulture farming.

He added that the farmers have also been empowered to cultivate hybrid sunflower varieties, namely Hysun33, Aguaru 4, and Aguaru 6, the varieties with high oil content and bumper yields.

"In efforts to practically imparting the farmers with modern agro knowledge, we established at least 300 demonstration farms over various villages of Ikungi District" he detailed.

He informed that the one-year program, dubbed 'Realizing Gender Equality through Empowering Women and Adolescent Girls is being funded by Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) targeting to enhance the social and economic status of women and adolescent girls in Singida and Shinyanga Regions.

On June 13 this year, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa launched the national strategic campaign for the mass investment and production of sunflower grains in the country.

He said it was unfortunate that Tanzania imports more than 365,000 metric tonnes (MT) of edible oil annually which costs the government at least 443bn/-.

However, in efforts to improve the performance of the vital sub-sector, the government is working out several strategies, including the plan to start providing sunflower seeds subsidy, with an eye to improving the production of sunflower from 790,000 to a total of 1,600,000 tonnes. Tanzania leads the continent in having a huge number of small scale, middle and large sunflower processing industries, followed by South Africa with 12 major industries.



Valentine Urassa (R), a livestock food and nutrition expert with the Tanzania Livestock Research Institute, briefs a visitor to the institute's pavilion at the ongoing Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair yesterday on grasses ideal as livestock pasture. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

## Mwinyi instructs contractors of water projects to ensure prompt completion

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi has instructed contractors implementing water projects which are funded by the Exim Bank of India to ensure they are completed within schedule.

Dr Mwinyi gave the directive yesterday during his tour at one of the projects at Dole, in West 'A' District in Unguja. The president also inspected implementation of other development projects and held talks with government officials and citizens.

He complained of bureaucracy

in implementation of the project which according to him, once completed would serve thousands of people. He said the water project is funded by the bank to a tune of US \$ 92.18 million and that the contractor is supposed to complete it within 18 months.

The president also visited some of the un-functioning water wells at Welezo as well as the functioning ones at Bumbwisudi area whereas he assured the residents to start accessing clean and safe water in the coming months. He said the government is implementing short and long term plans to ensure

reliable water services to the residents.

A member of the House of Representatives for Bububu constituency, Mudrik Ramadhan Soraga said that once completed, the project would be a solution to water woes facing the residents at Bububu and those residing near the constituency including those from Magharib A and B districts in central Unguja.

Soraga who is the Minister for Investment in Zanzibar urged the government to shift from the current plan of constructing water wells, instead implement one mega

project that could generate enough water.

Director of the Zanzibar Water Authority (ZAWA) Dr Salha Mohamed Kassim said the Exim Bank funded project would also include construction of 64 water wells and 14 water tanks.

Dr Salha mentioned some of the reasons contributing to delays in implementing the project as delayed issuance of construction permit, tax exemptions and the shortage of sand. She said they have ordered for sand from Tanzania mainland, a process which takes time to be completed.

## Worst of COVID-19 yet to come for Africa, says WHO

By Special Correspondent

AFRICA has just lived through its most devastating week of the pandemic, but the worst is yet to come as the third wave gathers pace on the continent, the World Health Organisation said Thursday.

"Africa has just marked the continent's most dire pandemic week ever. But the worst is yet to come as the fast-moving third wave continues to gain speed and new ground," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, the WHO's regional director for Africa.

Cases are doubling every 18 days, compared with every 21 days only a week ago, she said during a virtual press conference, adding that "the end of this precipitous rise is still weeks away."

Coronavirus cases have been rising in Africa since the start of the third wave on the continent on May 3. During the week ending July 4, more than 251,000 new Covid-19 cases were recorded on the continent, a 20% increase over the previous week and a 12% jump from the previous January peak.

South Africa is the worst-hit country in Africa, with new daily infections hitting record highs of 26,000 cases over the weekend, fuelled by the Delta variant.

Vaccination rates remain sluggish,

with only 16 million people, 2% of the African population, fully vaccinated.

But Moeti said there was some room for optimism because vaccine deliveries were picking up after grinding to a near halt in May and early June.

In the past two weeks, more than 1.6 million doses were delivered to Africa through the Covax scheme, which was set up to ensure equitable distribution of vaccines to poorer countries.

A US shipment of 20 million Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer-BioNTech is due to arrive soon, to be distributed to 49 countries. Donations from Norway and Sweden are due to follow.

"Our appeals for 'we first and not me first' are finally turning talk into action. But the deliveries can't come soon enough because the third wave looms large across the continent," she said.

Africa has so far received 66 million doses and has administered 50 million of them.

Moeti urged governments to expand vaccination sites and take other measures to take advantage of the vaccine deliveries when they come.

According to latest figures, Africa has officially registered 5,730,638 cases and 147,125 deaths from Covid-19.



Iringa district commissioner Mohamed Hassan Moyo (2nd-R) has a word with Bishop Joseph Mgomi (R) of the Ruaha Diocese of the Anglican Church of Tanzania, whom he paid a courtesy call at his residence earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

By Prinesha Naidoo

FOUR African finance ministers urged the Group of 20 nations to pressure the International Monetary Fund to accelerate the disbursement of new loans the continent needs to overcome the economic devastation wrought by the coronavirus pandemic and avert an insolvency crisis.

"Timely, stable and sufficient long-term financing on fair terms for an inclusive and sustainable post-Covid recovery remains out of reach for many developing countries," Nigerian Finance Minister Zainab Ahmed and her counterparts Ken Ofori-Atta of Ghana, Nicolas Kazadi of the Democratic Republic of Congo and Adama Coulibaly from Ivory Coast wrote in statement.

Their call comes before a meeting of G-20 finance ministers and central bank governors in Venice this weekend.

The IMF's board last month

## African finance ministers urge G20 to 'accelerate' access to IMF funds

unanimously supported a proposal to create a record \$650 billion of new reserves, known as special drawing rights, or SDRs, for its members, but only \$33 billion of that has been earmarked for Africa.

The plan still requires final approval by the Washington-based lender's board of governors, which is comprised of representatives from its 190 member countries -- typically their finance ministers or central bank governors.

"The urgency now is to accelerate the disbursement of these SDRs to forestall the current emerging market liquidity crisis devolving into an insolvency crisis," the African finance chiefs said, calling on the IMF to outline how the rights will be dispensed and set reallocation and on-lending terms.

They also want the lender to replenish its Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust, which provides support to low-income countries through interest-free loans, and other funding facilities.

France has committed to reallocating part of its SDRs to Africa. Leaders of the Group of 7 biggest economies last month discussed supporting plans for a \$100 billion reallocation.

South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has previously said about a quarter of the total allocation, equivalent to around \$162 billion, should be made available to African countries and called on rich nations to donate -- and not just on-lend -- their allotments. South Africa is the only African member of the G-20, which

comprises the European Union and 19 other major economies.

Ahmed, Ofori-Atta, Kazadi and Coulibaly also urged the G-20 to consider on-lending at least \$30 billion in SDRs to a new facility that would catalyze investments to Africa, reduce the liquidity premiums on middle-income countries' sovereign bonds and offer incentives for environmentally sustainable investments.

The facility would be similar to the European Stability Mechanism and help African nations address debt vulnerability and investment gaps, as well as threats posed by climate change, they said.

Rich nations should also accelerate the delivery of Covid-19 vaccines to the continent, according to the ministers.

## Developing countries need agribusiness more than has ever obtained before

IMAGINE a global agricultural input company is trying to set up in an African country. It is facing numerous obstacles in its effort to reach smallholder farmers from its port of entry in the country. Improved inputs and fertiliser have the potential to increase crop yields in the populous and nutrition insecure country. But corruption in the government controlled port is delaying the unloading of shipments for many months. Roads are inadequate for conveying farm input and fertiliser to farms and produce back to the port not to mention a huge portion of the harvest typically left to rot for lack of cold chain transport. Farmers are poor, often illiterate, and unaccustomed to using new agricultural technologies and lack access to credit. Imagine also that a government ban on the export of key crops, meant to protect local consumption, has the unintended consequence of shrinking the market and curbing capital investment.

However, the country in this story is Tanzania, and the multinational company is the global leader in fertiliser, Yara. We read this fascinating story in the Harvard Business Review in an article titled 'The Ecosystem of Shared Value' by Mark R. Kramer and Marc W. Pfitzer.

The issues portrayed in Tanzania added up to a classic market failure that perpetuated famine and poverty and also curtailed Yara's growth. The problem was deeply entrenched: The farmers had little power to influence government policy, and they were suspicious of any changes to their traditional methods. International aid temporarily alleviated hunger but left the underlying issues untouched. No single intervention

could prevail; success required that all the interrelated obstacles be addressed at once.

However, Kramer and Pfitzer described something phenomenal that happened in Tanzanian agriculture. Starting in October 2009, Yara worked to bring together 68 organisations, including multinational companies, civil society groups, international aid agencies, and the Tanzanian in a partnership known as the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (SAGCOT), which was initiated at the World Economic Forum Africa summit in 2010. The mission was to build a \$3.4 billion fully developed agricultural corridor from the Indian Ocean to the country's western border, covering an area the size of Italy. It has involved, among other things, investing in infrastructure, including the port, a fertilizer terminal, roads, rail, and electricity; fostering better-managed farmer cooperatives; bringing in agro dealers and financial services providers; and supporting agro-processing facilities and transport services.

Public sources have provided one-third of SAGCOT's funding; the rest comes from the participating private enterprises. Although originally envisioned as a 20-year project, the corridor was well established within three years and has already bolstered the incomes of hundreds of thousands of farmers. Yara was decisive in launching the effort but did not lead or control it. Nor was the company's investment—\$60 million—a major part of the funding. Yet the project has boosted Yara's sales in the region by 50 per cent and increased the company's EBITDA by 42 per cent.

## What new ideas, with World Population Day (July 11) having caught up with us yet again?

WORLD Population Day is an annual event, observed on July 11 every year, which seeks to raise awareness of global population issues. The event was established by the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme in 1989. It was inspired by the public interest in Five Billion Day on July 11, 1987, the approximate date on which the world's population reached five billion people. World Population Day aims to increase people's awareness on various population issues such as the importance of family planning, gender equality, poverty, maternal health and human rights.

The day was suggested by Dr. K.C.Zachariah in which population reaches five billion when he worked as Sr Demographer at World Bank.

While press interest and general awareness in the global population surges only at the increments of whole billions of people, the world population increases annually by 100 million approximately every 14 months.

The world population reached 7,400,000,000 on February 6, 2016; the world population had reached 7,500,000,000 at around 16:21 on April 24, 2017. The world population had reached 7,700,000,000 on year 2019.[5]

In November, UNFPA, together with the governments of Kenya and Denmark, will be convening a high-level conference in Nairobi to accelerate efforts to achieve these unmet goals. On World Population Day, advocates from around the world are calling on leaders, policymakers, grassroots organisers, institutions and others to help make reproductive health and rights a reality for all.

According to UNFPA research in March, an estimated 12 million women experienced disruptions to family planning services.

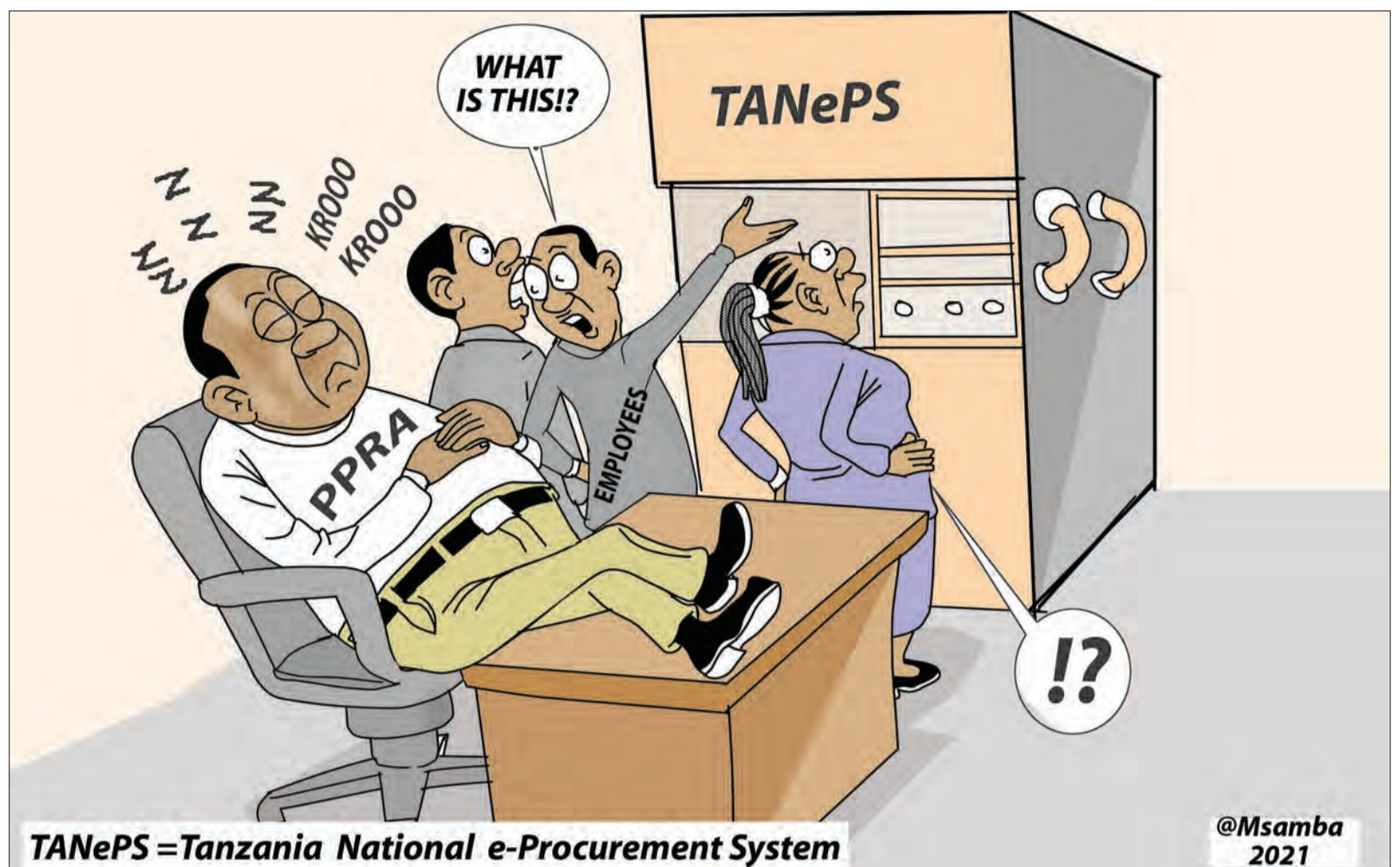
Rights and choices are the answer: Whether baby boom or bust, the solution to shifting fertility rates lies in prioritising the reproductive health and rights of all people.

In this second year of COVID-19, we are suspended in an in-between state, where parts of the world are emerging from the deep recesses of the pandemic while others are locked in battle with the coronavirus as access to vaccines remains a distant, deadly reality.

The pandemic has compromised health care systems particularly in the area of sexual and reproductive health. It also exposed and exacerbated gender-based inequities: gender-based violence increased under lockdown, as did the risk of child marriage and female genital mutilation as programmes to abolish the harmful practices were disrupted. Significant numbers of women left the labour force - their often low-paying jobs were eliminated or caregiving responsibilities for children learning remotely or for homebound older people increased - destabilising their finances, not just for now but in the long run. Against this backdrop, many countries are expressing growing concern over changing fertility rates. Historically, alarmism over fertility rates has led to abrogations of human rights.

UNFPA advises against reactionary policy responses, which can be extremely harmful if they violate rights, health and choices. The agency emphasises that women must be empowered educationally, economically and politically to exercise choice over their bodies and fertility.

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TANePS = Tanzania National e-Procurement System

@Msamba  
2021

By Chris Jones

AFRICAN Anti-Corruption Day is celebrated annually on 11 July, and this year it comes as perceptions and lived experiences of corruption on the continent are sky-high. The bribery rate in Democratic Republic of the Congo is reportedly the highest in Africa, while Mauritius boasts the lowest bribe rate of the continent.

We know that corruption hinders Africa's economic, political and social development and is a huge obstacle to good governance and basic freedoms. Economists Nelson Sobrinho and Vimal Thakoor state in this regard that corruption behaves "more like sand than oil in the economic engine".

Corruption also affects the wellbeing of individuals, families and communities. Although differing significantly across countries and public institutions in Africa, corruption undermines the chances of hundreds of millions of citizens for a stable and prosperous future.

The African Union points out that corruption has "stolen futures" in Africa, indicating that at least 25 million primary school children alone are its victims.

It's important to point out that foreign role players also contribute to the increase in corruption in the continent. When money that is supposed to support important services such as healthcare and education flows out of countries due to corruption, ordinary citizens are hit the hardest. According to estimates, Africa loses at least \$50-billion a year through illicit financial flows.

### Corruption challenges

Corruption challenges on the continent, as elsewhere, are complex and multifaceted and need to be addressed fundamentally and systemically. Without discussing them specifically, these challenges mostly have to do with political corruption, state capture, patronage networks, conflict of interests, corruption in development assistance, opaque political financing, vote-buying, and the role of foreign actors such as multinational companies.

Added to these is land corruption which affects women most. Furthermore, gender-based corruption, usually rooted in culture and sextortion, is rarely reported to superiors in the workplace due to fear of retaliation or other consequences. For example, in Zimbabwe, up to 57.5% of surveyed women indicated that they had experienced, in different sectors of the community, sextortion.

We know that land is the bedrock of social, economic and political

## Corruption is crippling Africa: 'More like sand than oil in economic engine'



life in Africa. Unfortunately, land distribution and corruption go hand in hand, with one in every two people encountering it during land administration processes in Africa compared with one in five for the rest of the world.

### Increase in corruption

According to the Global Corruption Barometer - Africa 2019, most respondents indicated that corruption had increased in their country. However, the majority (53%) said that as citizens they could make a difference in the fight against corruption, even though 67% of people thought it could lead to prosecution or retaliation.

More than half (55%) of all citizens believed corruption had increased (in the 12 months preceding the survey). Only 23% thought it had decreased. Only 34% gave their government a thumbs up for combating corruption, while 59% thought they were doing poorly in this regard. In some countries (Gabon, Madagascar, Sudan) the latter is higher than 80%.

More than one in four people (28%) who had access to public services such as healthcare and education had to pay bribes for this access in the year preceding this survey. This equates to about 130 million citizens in 35 countries.

The bribery rate in Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the highest at 80%, while Mauritius boasts the lowest bribe rate of 5%, followed by Botswana and Cape Verde Islands with 7% and 8% respectively.

This survey also shows that the poorest Africans are twice as likely to pay bribes for essential public services as the richest. As a result, they have less money for basic necessities such as food, water and medicine.

Concerns about the integrity of public officials are also high. Among the key public institutions, the police are widely regarded as corrupt. Forty-seven per cent of

respondents indicated that police officers were corrupt or completely corrupt. In the DRC it is 81%, with Gabon and Uganda above 70%.

Furthermore, almost four out of 10 citizens think that most or all government officials (39%), parliamentarians (36%), and offices of the president or prime minister (34%) are corrupt.

For example, in the DRC, the office of the president or prime minister (82%) and parliamentarians (79%) are perceived as the most corrupt institutions.

About 36% of people think that business executives in Africa are corrupt. Yet people's actions regarding bribery differ. Men (32%) are slightly more likely to pay bribes than women (25%), and young people between 18 and 34 years old (32%) pay bribes more easily than people aged 55 and older (18%).

### Recommendations

There are several international instruments, regional organisations and initiatives, as well as other key stakeholders such as the media and civil society, trying hard to mitigate and reduce corruption in the continent because it directly affects the lives of citizens, undermines the integrity and effectiveness of Africa's institutions and deprives governments of much-needed tax revenue.

While initiatives to tackle corruption in specific institutions such as the police or parliament are always welcomed, we need a holistic and systematic approach coupled with stronger, ethical governance to fight this scourge. Measures taken from other parts of the world could also be helpful.

**It is extremely important that African governments put anti-corruption commitments into practice such as:**

- Ratifying, implementing and reporting on the African Union Convention to Prevent and Combat Corruption;

- Investigating, prosecuting and sanctioning all reported cases of corruption in both the public and the private sectors, with no exception;

- Developing minimum standards and guidelines for ethical procurement and building strong procurement practice throughout the continent with training, monitoring and research;

- Adopting open contracting practices, which make data and documentation clearer and easier to analyse, and ensuring transparency in hiring procedures;

- Creating mechanisms to collect citizens' complaints and strengthening whistle-blower protection to ensure that citizens can report instances of corruption without fear of reprisal;

- Enabling media and civil society to hold governments accountable;

- Supporting transparency in political party funding; and
- Allowing cross-border cooperation to combat corruption.

While millions of Africans continue to endure the negative effects of corruption, unscrupulous individuals keep their ill-gotten funds abroad and enjoy the high life with their friends and families.

Governments from around the world, especially those with large economies including member states of the G20 and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, can help to reduce corruption in Africa by effectively and transparently implementing the toughest international anti-corruption and anti-money laundering measures and standards and applying them fearlessly.

On African Anti-Corruption Day, we can praise individuals and governments who are trying hard to fight corruption in all its forms. Africa deserves to be corruption-free. Our leaders - on the continent and worldwide - should act with much more urgency, dedication and integrity in this regard.



# Nine countries reject tax reform structure, sending it down rocky road to completion

By Tom Ozimek

NINE countries have refused to sign onto an international tax reform framework that includes a 15 per cent global minimum corporate tax pushed by the Biden administration as a way of reducing international tax arbitrage by US multinationals and blunt the impact of President Joe Biden's proposed domestic corporate tax hike.

While officials from 130 out of 139 countries in the so-called OECD/G20 Inclusive Framework on Base Erosion and Profit Shifting agreed last week to establish the new framework, Ireland, Estonia, Hungary, Peru, Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sri Lanka, Nigeria and Kenya did not sign the agreement.

Irish Finance minister Paschal Donohoe, whose country has attracted many big US technological companies with its 12.5 per cent corporate tax rate, said he would not join the other signatories but would still try to find an outcome he could back.

"I was not in a position to join the consensus on the agreement and specifically a global minimum effective tax rate of 'at least 15 per cent' today," Donohoe said, adding: "I have expressed Ireland's reservation, but remain committed to the process and aim to find an outcome that Ireland can yet support."

Hungarian Finance Mihaly Varga, whose country has a 9 per cent corporate tax rate, dismissed the 15 per cent rate as "too high".

"The global minimum tax would obstruct economic growth, the planned 15 per cent tax rate is too high, and it shouldn't be levied on real economic activity," Varga said in a statement on Friday, though he added that Hungary would continue to negotiate.

The two-pillar framework - the outcome of negotiations coordinated by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) for much of the last decade - is meant to force large Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) to pay tax where they operate and earn profits, while seeking to end a race to the bottom on international corporate tax rates.

Pillar one would reallocate taxing



Guests arrive at the OECD headquarters in Paris, France, on Nov. 27, 2013. (File photo)

rights on more than US\$100 billion of MNE profits per year from their home countries to the markets where they have business activities and earn profits, regardless of whether the firms have a physical presence there.

Pillar two, with its global minimum corporate income tax rate of at least 15 per cent, is estimated to generate around US\$150 billion in additional global tax revenues per year.

The Biden administration's appeal for international cooperation on the global corporate minimum tax rate is a bid to at least partially counteract any disadvantages that might arise from the president's

proposal to raise the US corporate tax rate to 28 per cent, a move planned by Republicans and business groups as hurting the competitiveness of US companies and slowing wage growth.

The new rules emerging from the pact are tentatively scheduled to take effect in 2023, but for that to happen, countries must hammer out remaining details by October so tax codes can be revised next year.

Some signatories, including India and Switzerland, have since expressed reservations. That suggests that a 2023 implementation could be optimistic, given that many countries took years to ratify an earlier, less far-reaching amendment to

international tax treaties.

An added complication comes in the form of European holdouts Estonia, Hungary and Ireland, as European Union law would be the vehicle for enforcing the rules in the world's biggest trading bloc - and that would require unanimous backing by all 27 EU member states.

Biden called the agreement an "important step in moving the global economy forward to be more equitable for workers and middle-class families in the United States and around the world".

"With a global minimum tax in place, multinational corporations will no longer be able to pit countries against one another in a bid

to push tax rates down and protect their profits at the expense of public revenue. They will no longer be able to avoid paying their fair share by hiding profits generated in the United States, or any other country, in lower-tax jurisdictions," he said in a statement.

He added: "This will level the playing field and make America more competitive. And it will allow us to devote the additional revenue we raise to making generational investments, which are necessary to keep America's competitive edge razor-sharp in today's global economy."

Meanwhile, US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen was expected to

press G20 counterparts this week for a global minimum corporate tax rate above the 15 per cent floor agreed by the 130 countries last week.

However, a rate decision is not expected until future phases of negotiations, US Treasury officials said on Tuesday.

The deal was widely expected to be endorsed by G20 finance leaders when they meet on yesterday and today in Venice, Italy.

**• An Epoch News dispatch, with additional reporting by Reuters.**

By Wang Xiaobo

VICTIMS of the highly violent crimes involving beating, smashing, looting and arson that took place on July 5, 2009, in Urumqi, capital of northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur autonomous region, their family, officials of relevant authorities of the region, as well as representatives of industry associations and enterprises revealed the truth about Xinjiang with their own experiences at the 12th press conference held by the region on Xinjiang-related issues in Beijing on July 5.

They disproved lies fabricated by Western anti-China forces about Xinjiang and denounced their acts of grossly interfering in China's internal affairs and severely trampling on international law and the international order in front of domestic and foreign media.

For a long time, anti-China forces in the West, including the U.S., have concocted plenty of disinformation and lies about Xinjiang, using the guise of "human rights" to achieve their political ends, said Xu Guixiang, a spokesperson with the government of Xinjiang.

They have damaged the fundamental human rights of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang, with the intention of meddling in China's Xinjiang affairs, which are the domestic affairs of China, and suppressing the development of the country, Xu said at the press conference.

"As I have said many times, instead of human rights, ethnicity, and religion, Xinjiang's problems are about violent terrorism, radicalization and separatism," said Elhjan Anayat, another spokesperson of the government of Xinjiang, at the press conference.

It's ridiculous for some countries including the U.S. and Canada to criticize and attack the human rights situation in Xinjiang according to fake evidence and groundless lies, he noted.

Saytjan Sawur, a policeman and one of the victims of the incident on July 5 in Urumqi, attended the press conference and told reporters his experience that day.

On that night, Sawur and his colleagues were patrolling the Xinjiang International Grand Bazaar in Urumqi. To protect over one thousand tourists stranded at the bazaar, Sawur and a dozen of his colleagues were besieged and attacked by mobsters.

"A gang of thugs mobbed me and hit me brutally with stones and bricks. After more than ten minutes, I passed out due to excessive bleeding and lack of physical strength," Sawur recalled.

"Although 12 years have passed, we still feel the pain caused by those mobsters. They are the enemy of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang and the enemy of us Uygur people. Now everything is going well in Xinjiang, and we cherish our life very much," he added.

There have been no violent terrorist cases in Xin-

## Xinjiang People refute lies about Xinjiang with facts



Children have fun in "Dove Lane" in the old town Tuancheng of Hotan City, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. (File photo)

jiang for over four consecutive years, according to Anayat, who said that the region has enjoyed high-quality economic development and witnessed its comprehensive economic strength constantly reach new heights.

Xinjiang has scored a complete victory in its fight against poverty, with all 3.06 million rural residents living under the current poverty line being lifted out of poverty, and all 3,666 impoverished villages and 35 poor counties getting rid of poverty. The absolute poverty problem in Xinjiang has been resolved historically, Anayat pointed out.

There has been significant improvement in the lives of people in Xinjiang, thanks to the decision of the regional government to spend 70 percent of its fiscal expenditure on safeguarding and improving people's livelihood in a bid to make sure the fruits of development benefit people of all ethnic groups more and in

a fairer way, which is the best story about Xinjiang's human rights protection, Anayat told reporters at the press conference.

After suppressing Xinjiang's cotton and textile industry, the U.S. has employed state power again and targeted it at the photovoltaic industry of the region this time, Xu pointed out.

Pursuing trade protectionism and bullying in the name of safeguarding human rights, the U.S. has severely violated international trade rules, the principles of market economy, and basic morality and justice, and posed serious threats to the safety of global in-

dustrial and supply chains, Xu explained.

Xinjiang never fears sanctions, as all of them are merely a waste of paper, Xu said, adding that China's photovoltaic industry doesn't exist just for one country, but has become an important part of the global photovoltaic industry chain.

"Some countries spread rumors that enterprises in Xinjiang have assigned employees from ethnic minority groups as 'forced labor' and violated people's human rights. The U.S. Department of Commerce even used it as an excuse to impose sanctions against four polysilicon companies in Xin-

jiang, including our company. I've been outraged at such news," said Zulbiya Ahmat, a machine operator of a company in Xinjiang, at the press conference.

"How could they just indiscriminately stigmatize and impose sanctions against companies? Do they want to shut down the businesses we work for? Do they want to see workers like me lose jobs?" Ahmat asked indignantly.

Ahmat was born in a farmers' family in Turpan, Xinjiang. According to her, her family weren't quite well-off when she was little, and she and her parents have been satisfied with her stable employment in the company.

"I signed a labor contract with the company. It pays contributions for my old-age pension, medical insurance, unemployment insurance, and maternity insurance, workers' compensation, and housing provident fund schemes, and guarantees the benefits, salaries, rest and vacations, and freedom of religious belief of employees from all ethnic groups. Not one person has been treated differently here because of his or her ethnicity and religious belief," Ahmat said.

"We admonish certain countries in the West, including the U.S., not to willfully smear and defame Xinjiang and hurt diligent workers like us," she stressed.

More than 90 countries have voiced support for China's just stance on issues related to Xinjiang through joint speech, separate speech, and letters at the 47th session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), Xu noted.

The evil deeds of anti-China forces in the West are bound to fail, as they run counter to the norms governing international relations, undermine international cooperation on protecting human rights, and betray human conscience, he emphasized.

# South Africa must speak out about attacks on its journalists in Eswatini

By William Bird

**T**HE violence and thugery of the security forces in Eswatini is outrageous, and on that basis alone the South African government should have intervened. The level of violence was starkly illustrated in a recent Daily Maverick article. Is there a proportional level of concern, outrage, and engagement from our government? It doesn't seem so.

For nearly two weeks, South Africa's media, to their credit, have been reporting on the increasing level of violence in Eswatini and we have seen journalists threatened, detained and tortured. The South African National Editors' Forum (Sanef) has issued strong statements and media houses have highlighted the violence against journalists, as well as the escalating situation.

Sanef tweeted that at least two newsrooms, SABC and Newroom Afrika, have had to withdraw their journalists from Eswatini because of the ongoing attacks and intimidation against them.

The issue has been picked up by regional and international bodies including Misa and the Committee for the Protection of Journalists. So, we have clear evidence not only of the most egregious treatment of its own citizens, but also clear violations of the rights of South African media organisations and journalists.

We might understand the reluctance to respond stridently to an internal situation where diplomacy calls for sides to engage peacefully, but to say nothing when our own citizens are violated and assaulted is shameful and a clear abrogation of the Department of International Relations and Cooperation's (Dirco's) constitutional and regional duties and responsibilities.

To date, the most recent press release on the violence in Eswatini we can find on Dirco's website says this, and it's worth quoting in full just to demonstrate how spectacularly inadequate it is:

### "Media Statement, 01 July 2021

Ongoing political and security situation in the Kingdom of eSwatini

The South African Government notes with great concern the ongoing political and security situation in the Kingdom of eSwatini.

We are particularly concerned by reports of loss of life and destruction of properties.

The right to peaceful protest is universally recognised.

The South African Government calls on the security forces to exercise total restraint and protect the lives and property of the people, in keeping with the country's constitutional provisions and laws.

In addition, South Africa urges all political actors and civil society to engage in meaningful dialogue



in order to resolve the current political challenges facing the country."

Not only has Eswatini assaulted and tortured members of our media, it has also instructed MTN to cut services to the internet. Newroom Afrika carried an interview with the Eswatini minister of commerce, who tried to justify shutting down the internet by saying it was so that they could figure out a way to isolate the foreign agents who were mobilising against them. It's a feeble argument at best and a blatant falsity. Internet

shutdowns are clear violations of the right to freedom of expression.

### US NPO the Internet Society says:

"The United Nations considers cutting off users from Internet access, regardless of the justification provided, including on the grounds of violating intellectual property rights law, to be disproportionate and thus a violation of Article 19, Paragraph 3, of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. It also calls upon all States to ensure that Internet access is maintained at all times, including during times of political unrest."

Not only has Eswatini violated basic rights in shutting down the internet, but it also forced a South African company to participate in this. Again, we would have expected an urgent response from Dirco and the government.

The problem with tolerating those who seek to undermine and limit media freedom is that they only get worse. Eswatini ranked 141 out of 181 countries in the World Press Freedom Index in 2020. We have seen how our silence has emboldened and allowed the situation to get worse. We would call on them to act now, but given that they have failed to respond to clear rights violations, we fear our call will disappear into the void.

If we tolerate and allow our government to tolerate attacks on journalists they will only get worse.

Just this weekend we saw members of the media, and the SABC's Samkele Maseko in particular, being threatened and assaulted, while others (including Jacob Zuma's son Edward) reportedly threatened to burn a media vehicle. Despite calls from the media to respond and instead of clear condemnation from the government and the ANC in particular, there is silence. While the ANC has some matters on its hands, its members and the government all have duties to protect the media and ensure they can do their jobs.

Over the past few months, a number of our journalists have been threatened and attacked for simply doing their jobs. Frequently, the attacks have been carried out by political party members and there has been silence from our parties. It's an ominous sign as we head towards local government elections. Journalism fulfils a public good, whatever its limitations. There can be no democracy without a free media.

As we are witnessing in Eswatini, "All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to do nothing." We have allowed Eswatini to descend further into the most abhorrent rights violations. We need our political parties to see that the system that gives them their power depends on free media and it is in their interests to defend and protect it. **DM**

# A decade ago, US President Joe Biden lost faith in the US mission in Afghanistan

Washington

**P**RESIDENT Joe Biden's frustrations with Afghanistan were boiling over more than a decade ago, and they never subsided again.

On a visit to Kabul in January 2009, shortly before being sworn in as Vice President, Biden warned then-President of Afghanistan Hamid Karzai at a dinner that he might lose Washington's support unless he called for all Afghans. He did not start the regime, indicating targeting Karzai on corruption charges. Brother.

Karzai hit back, saying the US was indifferent to the deaths of Afghan civilians.

According to several people present, as the controversy progressed, Biden threw down his napkin and the dinner ended abruptly.

After the United States toppled the Islamist Taliban government in retaliation for al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the September 11, 2001 attacks on the United States, Biden first supported strong military and humanitarian efforts to rebuild Afghanistan.

But the conflict with Karzai and the rest of the uncomfortable journey filled Biden with the feeling that the war in Afghanistan is framing Washington and may be invincible.

He returned to Washington with a stern warning to elected President Barack Obama: Now is not the time to keep more troops in Afghanistan.

"It wasn't just impatience," said Jonah Blank, a long-time former Biden aide who accompanied him on the 2009 visit. "Year after year, his optimism began to fade away."

Biden lost that policy controversy as Obama eventually ordered an increase of new troops in Afghanistan and escalated the war during his term, which ended in 2017.

But Biden is now in charge of the White House and is overseeing a near-total military withdrawal, despite objections from some military experts, Democratic and Republican lawmakers and humanitarian officials. Biden's Republican predecessor, Donald Trump,



US President Joe Biden meets Afghan President Ashraf Ghani at the White House. (file)

struck a deal with the Taliban under which all US troops would be gone by May this year. Sources say Biden was concerned that withdrawing from that deal would lead to further attacks on US troops and an extension of the war.

Biden acknowledged Thursday that a new civil war could break out in Afghanistan, but reiterated his commitment to pulling out US troops. While the United States will maintain diplomatic and humanitarian support for the Afghans, Biden said their future is up to them.

It was the Democratic president's most public attempt to reassure Americans of Afghanistan's strategy as the Taliban take over a country reeling from chaos.

"I made the decision with clear eyes," Biden said. "I will not send another generation of Americans to war in Afghanistan without any reasonable expectation of achieving a different outcome."

Nearly 2,400 American service members have died in America's longest war - and many thousands have been injured.

According to an Ipsos poll from April, a majority of Americans supported Biden's decision to move troops out of Afghanistan, but only 28% of respondents agreed that the United States met its goals in Afghanistan, compared with 43% said that the US withdrawal now helps Al Qaeda.

### no guarantee

Critics, including some US government officials, have warned that the withdrawal is without guarantees that the Taliban will participate in the peace process or demo-

cratic elections, or break ties with al Qaeda.

The Pentagon says the US troop withdrawal is 90% complete, and the Taliban has begun to capture areas of the offensive where it once kept at bay. On Thursday, it captured a key border with Iran.

Republican Senator Lindsey Graham, who accompanied Biden on his 2009 trip to Afghanistan, said this week that al-Qaeda could re-emerge in Afghanistan and lay the groundwork for another attack on the United States. "It is not in America's national security interest for the Taliban to occupy Afghanistan."

Democrat Senator Gene Shaheen said he was "deeply concerned" by the conditions in Afghanistan.

Heather Barr, interim co-director of the Women's Rights Division at Human Rights Watch, who spent years in Afghanistan, also had a grim assessment: "It sounds like an absolute disaster, as if the country is collapsing."

The decision to leave was not an easy one, but current and former aides said Biden's concerns about being trapped in Afghanistan began in the late stages of the George W. Bush administration and crystallized over the years.

The 2009 visit convinced him that the policy was failing.

"What he saw and heard on the trip," Obama wrote in his 2020 memoir, "A Promised Land," "con-

vinced him that we need to rethink our entire approach" and that Afghanistan is a "dangerous swamp".

Biden was at times the only senior White House official to oppose an increase in the military to support a counter-terrorism strategy.

Yet the years that passed have only intensified the concerns of Biden and his close aides, including Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

The 2011 assassination of bin Laden, in a US raid that Biden suspected in neighboring Pakistan, was a major achievement for Obama. But it also removed another reason for the United States to maintain a strong presence in the region.

"Biden argued throughout the process, and will continue to argue that the war was politically unstable at home," Robert Gates, a defense secretary under Obama who clashed with Biden, said in a 2014 memoir.

Biden's administration hopes it can gain some leverage over the Taliban in US-backed peace talks that have threatened to withdraw financial aid to the poor, landlocked country.

Yet the risk of a swift exit is giving the Taliban a free hand. Blinken told Reuters during the 2020 presidential campaign that Trump's mistake was agreeing to leave Afghanistan with nothing in return from the Taliban.

Agencies

## CAPITAL RADIO

# RATIBA YA VIPINDI JUMATATU - JUMAPILI

MONDAY TIME PROGRAMME	TUESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	WEDNESDAY TIME PROGRAMME	THURSDAY TIME PROGRAMME	FRIDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SATURDAY TIME PROGRAMME	SUNDAY TIME PROGRAMME
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Tembelea mitandao ya kijamii ya CAPITAL RADIO



CAPITAL RADIO

## UN Women and Zanzibar House of Representatives for transformative change favouring gender equality

By Guardian Reporter

JUST a few years before she was elected as a Member of the Zanzibar House of Representatives (ZHoR), Zawadi Amour Nassor didn't have political aspirations, but life had bigger plans for her.

Today, she represents the Konde constituency of Northern Pemba, where the Representative seat had previously only been held by men.

As a first-time contestant without much political experience, Hon. Nassor - a former teacher, was an avid advocate on ending violence against women and girls. Too often, she would see cases that either went unreported by survivors, or where perpetrators were not held to account due to gaps in the legal system.

"I have always been a problem-solver, driven by the need to speak out against what I saw as injustices," said Nassor.

"Eventually, I realized that in order to really make a difference and effect change, I needed more decision-making power, so I decided to run for a constituency seat in the ZHoR."

Through a UN Women project on Women's Leadership and Political Participation, "Wanawake Wanaweza" Phase II which is funded by the Governments of Finland and Sweden, USAID and the Government Switzerland, Nassor was able to participate in community mobilization meetings organized in collaboration with the Tanzania Media Women's Association, building her confidence to navigate through the process.

"Deciding to vie for political leadership still isn't easy for a woman in Pemba. We still live in a very patriarchal society, where many men - and women - feel like a woman cannot lead them. Women have to balance their political careers with family life, which is not always easy, and there are still those that misinterpret religion, mistakenly believing that it doesn't allow women to lead."

The Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has made strong progress on women's leadership and participation in decision-making. The House of Representatives currently has 76 Representatives, 38% of whom are women. Women make up 31% of the ministerial cabinet, 36% of District Commissioners and Councils are fast approaching 50:50 representations with the proportion of women Councilors at 46%.

Now that Nassor forms part of the 38% of women in the House of Representatives, she says, the real work has begun.

Recently, she participated in a UN Women 4-day Transformational Leadership workshop for over 50 Members of the Association of Women Members of the Zanzibar House of Representatives (UWAWAZA), which also included some male gender equality champions within the House.

The workshop, organized under the "Wanawake Wanaweza" Phase II project in partnership with the University of Dar es Salaam took the Representatives through modules on leadership; key principles of gender equality and women's empowerment; applying a gender lens to legislation, oversight and representation functions; gender responsive budgeting; and approaches to mitigating violence against women in politics.

According to UN Women Tanzania's Representative, Ms. Hodan Addou, strengthening the capacity of the women's caucus of the ZHoR and its members, especially the first timers and young leaders, is critical to ensure women and girls' challenges are given the attention they deserve.



Zawadi Amour Nassor, Member of the Zanzibar House of Representatives speaks at a recent UN Women training workshop on Transformational Leadership. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

"This is why we have been working with UWAWAZA since 2015, strengthening Members' capacities to effectively participate in House discussions and debates, as well as to foster gender equality and the empowerment of women in their legislative functions," said Addou, further emphasizing that in addition to the provision of continuous support, advice, training and knowledge sharing for women, the support of male legislators is also vital, which is why 15 male champions were also participating in the training.

UN Women's "Wanawake Wanaweza" Phase II project has been implemented in Tanzania since 2018, with the aim of advancing women's leadership and political participation by strengthening the

analysis of legal and policy frameworks, supporting institutional change, eliminating social barriers, and strengthening the capacities of current and aspiring women leaders, among other initiatives.

In this phase so far, over 300 women Representatives of the ZHoR and MPs from the Parliament of Tanzania have benefited from capacity building.

At the opening of the recent workshop on transformational leadership, ZHoR Speaker, Hon. Zubeir Ali Maulid said that as a result, notable changes have been evident in the performance of women Representatives.

"In the past, women were not as vocal in the House, but now more and more women are speaking up, asking questions and putting forward

motions," said the Speaker.

Given the substantive number of new members, the Team Lead for UN Women's "Wanawake Wanaweza" Phase II, Ms. Erasmina Massawe, said UN Women is aiming to scale up its support to women's caucuses of Parliament and ZHoR in the near future.

"Strengthening the effectiveness of women in decision-making, is not only for the benefit of the women leaders," said Massawe, "more support will help enhance the gender-responsiveness of the legislative organs and the successful implementation of development plans, elevating the status of women in Zanzibar and Tanzania as a whole."

Looking ahead, Nassor says that with the changing political landscape for women in Zanzibar, she is

hopeful for the future.

"In the last election, more women collected forms for either House of Representatives or council seats than ever before. With a female President, the first female Chief Secretary in Zanzibar and more and more women being appointments, women are proving that they can lead, and we are gaining acceptance," said Nassor.

"My goal has always been to represent the needs of my constituents, and I've set a target for myself to fulfill at least 70% of my campaign promises. I'm taking it step by step, promise by promise, and with more opportunities for learning, I feel confident that I will achieve that goal."

## Ten years after independence, South Sudanese struggle with scars of strife

JUBA

THE people of South Sudan have been battered by the ravages of conflict and armed violence during most of the first decade of the state's existence.

Underscoring the scale of the violence is the fact that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has provided surgical care to more than 9,000 weapon-wounded patients since the birth of the world's newest country in July 2011.

In 2020, women and children comprised nearly a quarter of the patients treated by the ICRC.

Ana Lucia Bueno, who supervises health programmes for the ICRC in South Sudan said that weapon-wounded patients often require complex and long-term treatment that goes beyond immediate surgical care.

"These patients need physical rehabilitation to restore mobility. They, like many other victims of conflict and violence, also need mental health support. But the sad truth is that the majority of South Sudanese don't have access even to the most essential health services, let alone specialized care," she said.

She added: A fragile healthcare system further weakened or destroyed by the violence is only one

of the tragic consequences of the protracted crisis in South Sudan. A lack of food, prolonged and repeated displacements and loss or separation from loved ones are some of the sad realities people continue to face."

In remote areas of South Sudan, people die of preventable and treatable diseases, as access to primary healthcare remains difficult.

"We do not have hospitals here. We have just lost a child in this home next to us. She fell very sick and died in the bush on the way while she was being taken to the nearest hospital", said Daniel, a community leader in Western Equatoria, where families have been displaced by the on-going conflict.

Nine per cent of children in South Sudan die before the age of five, according to World Bank data.

Many people must walk for long hours, and sometimes even days, to reach the nearest health care practitioner, as only estimated 40 per cent of health care centers in South Sudan remain functional.

Attacks against medical personnel and facilities, as well as limited number of health workers are some of the factors that contributed to this dramatic situation. In the past ten years, the ICRC provided almost 1.5 million consultations in the pri-



mary healthcare centers it supported.

About one in three South Sudanese are displaced from their home, and many lost livelihoods and the ability to provide for their families. To help families cope and rebuild livelihoods, over the past decade, the ICRC together with the South Sudan Red Cross (SSRC) distributed food

to over 3.3 million people, vaccinated over 5.2 million heads of livestock and distributed seeds and agricultural tools to over 3 million people.

It provided 130,000 phone calls to people separated from their families, registered over 6,000 missing people and helped clarify the whereabouts of almost 3,000 missing.

Climatic shocks and COVID-19 make it harder for communities that have lived through enormous suffering to restore their dignity and provide for themselves. The steps toward peace need to solidify into long term stability and security for families devastated by conflict and armed violence to be able to shape their own future.

## UNICEF signs first COVID-19 vaccine supply agreement with African Union

By Guardian Reporter

UNICEF has signed an agreement with Janssen Pharmaceutica NV to supply up to 220 million doses of the J&J single-dose vaccine for all 55 member states of the African Union (AU) by the end of 2022.

Some 35 million doses are to be delivered by the end of this year.

The agreement between

UNICEF and Janssen Pharmaceutica NV will help implement the Advance Purchase Commitment (APC) signed between the African Vaccine Acquisition Trust (AVAT) and Janssen in March of this year.

That agreement secured an option to order another 180 million doses, bringing the maximum access up to a total of 400 million doses by the end of 2022.

UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore said: "African countries must have affordable and equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines as soon as possible. Vaccine access has been unequal and unfair, with less than 1 per cent of the population of the African continent currently vaccinated against COVID-19. This cannot continue."

He added: "UNICEF, with its

long history of delivering vaccines all around the world, is supporting global COVID-19 vaccination efforts through AVAT, COVAX, and other channels to maximize supply and access to vaccines."

According to him, vaccinating the world against COVID-19, as the virus continues to spread and mutate, is one of the largest and most complex collective health undertakings

the world has ever seen, and needs all hands on deck.

Fore said: "In the race to defeat this virus, equity is not a 'nice to have' it's an absolute necessity. This pandemic has cost everyone something, and some people everything. Only together can we bring the suffering to an end."

The African Union established AVAT in November 2020 to deliver COVID-19 vac-

cines to the African continent, with a goal of vaccinating 60 per cent of each AU country's population.

Under the plan, the African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and AVAT have signed a cooperation agreement on behalf of the AU for the development of an Advance Procurement Commitment (APC) Framework to support Member State access to COVID-19

vaccines.

UNICEF will procure and deliver COVID-19 vaccines on behalf of the AVAT initiative. Other partners include the Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) and the World Bank. While multiple vaccines are anticipated to be part of the initiative's portfolio, Janssen's single-dose vaccine is the first to be included.

# The new social contract: An opportunity for deliberative participation

KATHMANDU

THESE days there hasn't been certainly a shortage of reports portraying the decline of liberal democracy around the world.

With rising populism and a divisive use of social media, we should not be surprised about a general malaise taking roots in most advanced liberal democracies.

From the Freedom in the World 2021 report published by the Freedom House to the Democracy Index 2020 released by the Economist Intelligence Unit to the IDEA's Global State of Democracy Indices there is more and more evidence that liberal and representatives' democracies are under duress.

Could the ongoing debate about a New Social Contract, a concept launched by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, help revive one of the essential elements of any democratic society, people's interest and participation in the civic life?

If his recent re-election at the helm of the United Nations might have dissipated doubts that this new idea was just a fad, what are the chances for this debate surrounding the New Social Contract to become an opportunity to enhance public engagement at local levels without further dividing the gulf between classic liberal democracies on one side and other nations adopting less democratic, more authoritarian political systems?

Provocatively, could such debate instead help narrowing such the gap?

To set aside any doubts, inevitably, the New Social Contract is not about enhancing democracy around the world.

This would clearly a utopian proposition for the Secretary General to embrace but rather an attempt to rethink and improve, regardless of the political system being adopted, the norms between citizens and the state.

Initially coined during the 18th Nelson Mandela Annual Lecture in 2020, Guterres made the case for a more just and inclusive society centered around the fights against inequalities and discriminations because, he said, "People want social and economic systems that work for everyone".

"The New Social Contract, between Governments, people, civil society, business and more, must integrate employment, sustainable development and social protection, based on equal rights and opportunities for all".

As vague as it is in terms of boundaries and ultimate goals, the New Social Contract can be seen as a framework that can, not only revitalize our societies but also build a fairer, cleaner and just economy able to overcome the multiple challenges created by the pandemic.

The Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals attached to it, offer the blueprint upon which such idea can be built locally.

Being still a working in progress, the New Social Contract can offer an impetus not only at re-designing the relationships between social partners, governments, unions and businesses but it can also be a source to generate more interest among the population about public life.

Making sense of it especially from the perspective of youth can be challenging but it is essential doing so because we cannot imagine a renewed citizenry without including youth whose vast majorities are uninterested and disenchanted from the public discourse.

A possible pathway to generate new passions for civic life among youth would start from helping them being more informed



A woman casts her vote during the general elections in Mozambique.

about what is happening at local and national levels, something that can evolve to higher forms of deep interests.

The last stage of this continuum would be supporting them into embracing forms of direct engagement.

Engagement is driven by a strong interest for the public life and the willingness to turn such desire to know more into contributions, actions on the grounds.

Last year, UNV came up with a new volunteering framework that fully captures the different features and characteristics of giving your time, energies and skills for the public good.

Indeed, volunteerism with its different forms and dimensions, is one of the best tools to involve people and youth in particular in the public life.

That's why it is not surprising that the upcoming UNV's State of the World's Volunteerism Report, is going to explain how volunteerism can be a true enabler for determinant for the New Social Contract.

More opportunities for public engagement will also generate more trust, an essential trait of any healthy and cohesive society and it is here where the ongoing efforts to localize the SDGs can make the difference by bringing

people together for the common good, for achieving the goals at grassroots levels.

Achieving the SDGs at this level is not about just actions, about mobilization of resources of human, in kinds or financial nature. It is also about deliberation and here, after this long detour, I am reconnecting with the issue of democracy.

The design of a New Social Contract as a conducive platform to achieve the SDGs locally by involving people on the ground, can be a tool to elevate the quality of democratic discourse, generating platforms for a new form of shared decision making or shared governance.

Interestingly, while political parties wherever they operate, might become a hindrance to such change because their role as gatekeeper of public participation would be eroded, this conceptualization of shared governance might become of interest to nations not adhering to representative, parties dominated liberal systems.

In the field of political science there is a dynamic movement of social scientists exploring the concept of deliberative democracy that would allow, through different means, including sortition, to have new forms of real, rather than

token, forms of public involvement and participation in the decision making.

It's true that so far, most of the attempts putting in practice deliberative democracy have been applied in the contexts with solid liberal democratic traditions.

A diverse range of "experiments" have been carried out with the most successful probably being the Ostbelgien Modell adapted by the Parliament of the German-speaking Community of Belgium where there is a permanent Citizens' Council that enable an ecosystem of Citizen's Assemblies. Ireland in the past used successfully some aspects of deliberative democracy to involve the general public in discussing and debating key constitutional issues that also helped generating consensus on gay marriage gender equality.

This legacy continues with a Citizens' Assembly that recently submitted a report, after prolonged consultations and deliberations, on the issue of gender equality.

Iceland has been using a hybrid form of public deliberation, though led by a small number of elected citizens but with ample opportunities for people to crowdsource the nation's constitution.

Other forms, with vary degree of success and with different level of inclusivity and decision-making power, were tried in two provinces of Canada, British Columbia and Ontario.

Within the growing area of deliberative de-

mocracy studies, there is now a great interest on the so-called "deliberative micro public" where a limited number of citizens gather to decide on certain issues of common interest.

If you have seen The Best of Enemies, a movie portraying an exercise of public deliberation about segregated learning in the Jim Crow's United States in the early seventies, you get the idea about what these might look like.

Many of these lessons learned might also be of interest to policy makers whose political systems have not embraced democracy.

With the discussions still going on how the New Social Contract should look like at local levels and with the agenda of SDGs localization being recognized as instrumental to achieve the Agenda 2030, we could have an opportunity to advance stronger forms of public participation in the decision making locally and everywhere.

This would strengthen the meaning of good governance around the world while also creating new space for deliberations in contexts that normally shut them.

Perhaps deliberative participation, a term that might be easier to sell globally, if properly carried out at local levels, could become a cornerstone of the New Social Contract, reinvigorating classic democracy where already exists while creating space for others political systems to evolve and be more inclusive.



Members of the Madheshi community of Biratnagar attend a political rally to demand autonomous federal regions and greater representation in parliament.

**RADIO One** **RATIBA YA VIPINDI** **JUMATATU - JUMAPILI**

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME	TIME PROGRAMME
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## NUTRITION

## How vitamin C protects babies against dangers to brain health

NAIROBI

ALL parents dream of having healthy children that will be able to enjoy life in all its fullness, while being physically and mentally fit to achieve their dreams.

This dream usually becomes a reality for most people. But in some cases, unborn children may experience certain hurdles in the womb, which end up impeding their optimal development and general well-being.

For instance, pregnancy related complications such as maternal obesity, gestational diabetes, placenta infections and pre-eclampsia (high blood pressure during pregnancy) can lead to low oxygen levels in the womb. The condition is medically referred to as chronic foetal hypoxia.

The low oxygen levels usually interfere with the proper growth of the child and can lead to brain health problems such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), cerebral palsy, learning disabilities and brain changes that have been linked to Alzheimer's disease in later life.

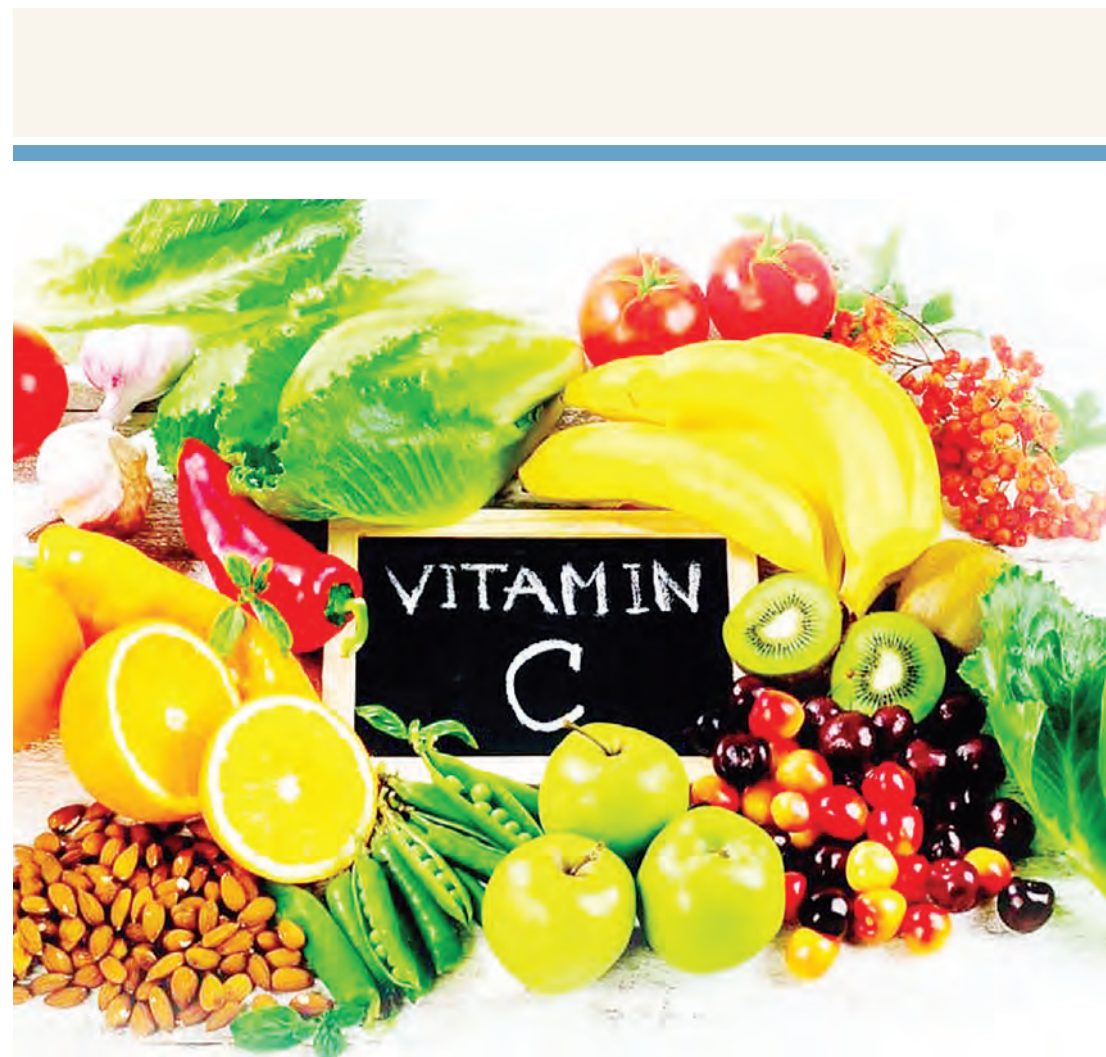
Health experts note that to avert these challenges, more emphasis should be put in helping mothers embrace recom-

mended health practices and behaviours during pregnancy, so as to forestall complications that are detrimental to the well-being of the unborn child.

This entails encouraging women to embrace healthy diets and to attend all antenatal care (ANC) visits. The check-ups enable doctors to identify and tackle emerging complications early enough, before they can harm the baby. Preliminary research conducted on mouse models also offers insights into the role that nutrition can play in the prevention of brain health problems caused by low oxygen levels in the womb.

A new study published in the Federation of American Societies for Experimental Biology (FASEB) Journal indicates that increased intake of nutrients rich in antioxidants may protect unborn children from brain problems caused by common pregnancy complications that reduce oxygen levels in the womb.

Antioxidants are compounds or substances that help defend body cells from damage caused by potentially harmful molecules known as free radicals. One major source of antioxidants is Vitamin-C, which was found by the study to be effective



Foods high in vitamin C on a wooden board.

in averting brain development problems caused by low oxygen in the womb.

The nutrient is found in many foods, particularly citrus fruits and vegetables. In addition, Vitamin-C is well known for being a potent antioxidant and immune booster. Since the human body cannot produce or store vitamin-C, it is essential for people - especially pregnant women - to consume it regularly in sufficient amounts.

Those who fail to meet

the recommended rations, based on their nutrition assessment results, are often given supplements to boost Vitamin-C levels in the body. During the study, Vitamin-C supplements given to pregnant rats with low oxygen levels in the womb, was shown to protect the future brain health of the offspring.

"It's hugely exciting to think we might be able to protect the brain health of an unborn child by a simple treatment that can be given to the mother during pregnancy," said Professor Dino Giussani, the lead author of the study from the University of

Cambridge's Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience.

"In medicine today there has to be a shift in focus from treatment of the disease, when we can do comparatively little, to prevention, when we can do much more. This study shows that we can use preventative medicine even before birth to protect long term brain health."

While conducting the research, a group of pregnant rats were kept in an environment with deprived air (13 percent oxygen), while the rest enjoyed normal air (21 percent oxygen). Half of the rats in each group were

given Vitamin C in their drinking water throughout the pregnancy, which was closely monitored.

After they delivered, the baby rats were raised to four months old, which is equivalent to early adulthood in humans. Thereafter, the researchers proceeded to perform various tests aimed at assessing their brain health and function.

The results of the study showed that rats born to pregnant women with deprived oxygen took longer to perform memory tasks and could not remember things as well. On the contrary, affected rats whose mothers had been given Vitamin-C throughout their pregnancy, performed the memory task just as well as offspring from mothers that enjoyed normal pregnancies with sufficient oxygen levels.

The study also revealed that the hippocampus part of the brain (area associated with forming memories) was less developed in rats born to mothers that suffered from low oxygen levels in the brain.

"Impairing oxygen delivery at critical periods of development of the baby's affects the number of nerve connections and cells made in the brain. This surfaces in adult life as problems with memory and an earlier cognitive [brain function] decline," said Dr Emily Camm, another author of the study from the University of Cambridge's Department of Physiology, Development and Neuroscience.

The researchers seek to conduct further studies to determine the ideal dose of Vitamin-C that would be ideal for use in human beings - among pregnant women with deprived oxygen in their wombs - so as to avert brain health complications in affected offspring.

## TECH SAVVY

## Cape Flats partners invent app that makes users more employable

CAPE TOWN

A Mitchells Plain entrepreneur is over the moon after the app he helped created, to help unemployed youth to find jobs, recorded more than 100 000 users.

Allan van der Meulen, 24, is a co-founder of the digital data-free web app called Zlto, which is designed to incentivise, track, and increase positive behaviour by users who do voluntary work in their own communities.

Speaking to News24, Van der Meulen said the app was designed to help young unem-

ployed people in South Africa achieve Zlto points by completing small jobs in the community, while gaining work experience at the same time.

Zlto app has already more than 100 000 users

Users can then exchange the points for vouchers to buy food, electricity, airtime, and clothing to assist their households or themselves at any retail store.

"Growing up on the Cape Flats, youth unemployment is a huge problem, as many people feel like they have no choices and there's no alternative. For a very long time, I thought this too." He and his partner, Senzo

Masumpa, launched the app in 2016 to help unemployed people find jobs.

Van der Meulen - who still resides in Portlands, Mitchells Plain - said like any app, you needed to create a profile, tap on any of the 10-minute nano courses you wish to complete to gain the points, volunteer at any place in your area, upload pictures to the app as "evidence" that you have done the voluntary work and provide a bit of detail of the work you have done.

He added going for a job interview, having your hair cut and travelling to the shop to

buy essentials all required money, and if you're unemployed this was a huge struggle. "When I asked people in the community what prevents them from finding jobs, they told me they have no money." However, Zlto allows people to go out, volunteer, and make some money.

"The app isn't designed to take away the mentality that people still need to go out into the world and look for jobs, people must not be reliable on Zlto, the app is there to make users more employable," Van der Meulen said.

Some of the volunteer jobs on offer include spending some

time at libraries, assisting a mechanic, helping out at hospitals, cutting people's grass, or going to the shop for someone. "A team of reviewers will verify the tasks using block-chain technology."

The web app is data free and reaches people across the globe. Van der Meulen added he was a student at RLABS in 2014 when it launched youth cafés in partnership with the Department of Social Development, where young people could do various courses.

It was there that he learnt about social innovations and digital currencies which looked

at whether young people would attend a workshop and accumulate some points then use those points to pay for additional courses. "The experiment was successful and that's where we started to work on the possibility of making the app beneficial to people," he said.

In 2020, Van der Meulen and his team distributed around R10 million worth of food, airtime, and electricity. He also introduced nano courses and Covid-19-related tasks in the community. "It's been an overwhelming feeling so see how the app has gotten many young people off the streets and earn-

ing their Zlto points," he added.

In November 2018, the team won the Google Impact Challenge in South Africa, claiming \$250 000 (R3.2 million) that went toward the app which they used to employ more staff, bring in partners, and expand to other regions. Van der Meulen said currently the app was being used in South Africa, Nigeria and Tanzania as well as a pilot project in the UK. Zlto's office is based in Vangate but users can do the courses at home.

"The goal is to reach more unemployed people with our app and to educate them more about enriching them-



## PENALTY

## Reckless drivers ordered to clean streets, parks, beaches in Sharjah

ABU DHABI

Two Emirati motorists caught performing driving stunts in residential areas have been ordered to clean streets, parks and beaches by a Sharjah court. Kalba Court of First Instance sentenced the men to community service for their reckless driving, as well as other traffic offences.

Their punishment will also include cleaning other public facilities and nature reserves. The ages of the two men were not disclosed. One of the pair must complete two months of community services, while judges sentenced the other to five weeks.

"The public prosecution always seeks to bring about a radical change in the behaviour of defendants while at the same time, enforce measures that are deterrent to dangerous practices," said Saeed Belhaj, director of Kalba Public Prosecution.

Last month in Abu Dhabi, five men were sentenced to three months of community service as punishment for reckless driving. They were also fined Dh50,000 over traffic offences in three different cases heard by a court.

The group who were filmed drifting their vehicles and "showing off their cars in neighbourhoods", had their cars confiscated and sold at auction to pay for the damage to public roads. Originally they were sentenced to six months in jail, which was replaced by three months of community service.

## Get enough sleep or face low energy and poor concentration - research

JOHANNESBURG

AT least a third of adults are not getting enough sleep, impacting detrimentally on a range of health processes, including mood, energy and concentration, according to research.

One US survey, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), found that almost 35% of adults are getting less than seven hours of sleep a night, sometimes lead-

ing to bad moods, low energy, difficulty in concentrating and a general inability to function adequately.

The survey indicated that sleep deprivation may increase the risk of several chronic health conditions, while other research indicates that sleep-deprived people report an increase in negative moods and poor concentration, focus and alertness. The US Sleep Foundation says

improved sleep may boost both short- and long-term cognitive performance.

SA health expert, Giulia Criscuolo said the current pandemic had upset routines and sleep cycles and the lack of adequate rest was impacting on cognitive abilities and concentration. "Aim for at least eight hours of restorative sleep a night and take steps to improve sleep quality. Eat healthily, manage stress, exercise daily and

try natural support aids for sleep, focus and energy, such as GO2, 100% natural essential oil inhalers which help stimulate the brain's limbic system which guides our emotional responses," said Criscuolo.

Essential oils are compounds extracted from plants and used for centuries for their therapeutic properties such as supporting calm, sleep, energy and alertness. Inhaling the oils may sup-

port the body to respond accordingly, Criscuolo added.

Martin Persson, from GO2 distributors, Stributique, said: "GO2 Inhaler Sticks are a game changer for natural health in SA because they are safe, easy to use and contain high quality, pure essential oils, known for their therapeutic, cosmetic, aromatic and spiritual support."

## LEISURE

# Barbecue, Guinness and perfect 'flavour'

## NAIROBI

A perfect pairing of barbecue meats and beer is highly subjective. Some people love the traditional crunchy unflavoured nyama choma with beer. Others are now seeking a more flavourful taste; slowly grilled meats covered in slightly thick, sweet sauces.

Kenya Breweries Limited (KBL) is seeking to introduce a new way of enjoying beer and meat. The brewer has partnered with barbecue enthusiasts Chef George Kariithi, the founder of George Grill King, Chef Stephanie Khafafa and Chef Rubia to teach beer lovers how to pair Guinness-variant Hop House 13 with barbecued meats.

Last week, it launched a culinary experience dubbed 'Flavor by Fire.' The event that was held at the Liquor House on Nairobi's Kiambu Road saw guests taste the crunchy, chewy, flavourful meats that were perfect, as was the atmosphere. Anne Joy Michira, EABL head of marketing beer, said there is always something special about cooking food over fire. "It brings people together in a way you don't get using other cooking methods. Hop House 13 has a similar effect - it's the perfect way to celebrate getting together with friends and family for some quality

time," she said, adding "Guinness pairs so perfectly with roasted and barbecued dishes, and we use fire to give Guinness brands flavour and unique taste."

The campaign also aims to celebrate chefs and foodies alike, inviting Guinness Hop House 13 consumers to try a few recipes at home. Hop House 13 will be working with the three barbecue chefs who will share recipes and demonstrate to consumers how to prepare the food and pair it with their favourite drink.

According to Chef George, the malty and dark flavours of the dark beer heighten the savoury flavours of the meat which is typically slow roasted in dark spices for hours. But this pairing goes way beyond flavour. It's not just pairing dishes like his seasoned beef or chicken, he also cooks with beer.

"The smoky and malty notes found in the beer bring out the sweetness and smoked flavours in his entrées, making for a simple, but tasty, combo," he said. Joel Kamau, KBL's commercial director said that they will have Hop House 13 Flavour by Fire experiences in selected outlets across the country.

"Kenya was the first market in Africa to launch Hop House in 2019 and we believe through these flavourful experiences, we will be able to drive appetite ap-



EABL's Head of Marketing Beer, Anne Joy Michira (left), and George Kariithi at Liquor House on Kiambu Road on July 1, 2021.

peal for Hop House that makes it an obvious choice when you think

of a good time with friends over a sumptuous meal," he said. Hop

House 13, a lager from the house of Guinness, and crafted in Ireland, is

now brewed in Kenya. It is double hopped for more taste.

## INCENTIVE

# Uganda helps farmers grow trees for money in bid to reverse forest loss

## KAMPALA

FROM tree-planting drives to tighter laws on illegal logging, countries worldwide are searching for a silver bullet to stop the loss of forests vital for nature and climate protection.

After decades of losing thousands of hectares each year, Uganda has found a way not only to slow deforestation but to reverse it - mainly by helping people grow their own trees to cut down instead of clearing ecologically valuable rainforest.

New data released by the state-run National Forestry Authority (NFA) in May showed the proportion of the country

covered by trees rose from 9% in 2015 to 12.4% in 2017. In a tweet about the figures, the NFA said its 2019 National Biomass Study, due out in December, will likely show that tree cover has increased further.

Stuart Maniraguha, the NFA's director of plantations development, said the data - collected using remote-sensing equipment and researchers on the ground - suggests things could be looking up for Ugandan farmers struggling to grow mainly rain-fed crops in increasingly extreme weather.

"As an agricultural country, (more forests) means more reliable rainfall," he told the Thom-

son Reuters Foundation. "It indicates that we are on a positive journey towards economic and ecology restoration." Protection of the world's forests is seen as vital to curbing global warming as they store planet-heating carbon and help regulate the climate through rainfall and temperature.

Those who live in and around Uganda's Central Forest Reserves, more than 500 protected areas that cover about 15% of the country, say tree loss has exacerbated the often disastrous effects of erratic weather patterns for communities.

Last year, more than 700,000 Ugandans living near lakes and

rivers were displaced from their homes after a year of unusually heavy rain caused the worst flooding since records began. The NFA said that before the reversal of Uganda's tree loss, the amount of land covered by forest had plunged from almost a quarter in 1990 to 9% in 2015.

In its 2016/2017 state of the environment report, the National Environment Management Authority attributed the sharp decline mainly to land-hungry farmers, noting that of the 1.9 million hectares of forests and wetland lost between 1990 and 2015, about 80% had been converted to grow crops.

Sustainable plantations

To restore the forests, Maniraguha said the NFA has used a range of methods, including promoting agroforestry - growing trees and crops together on the same land - and running tree-planting programmes.

And to stop people felling trees in protected areas, the authority gives technical help to farmers growing tree plantations, backed by partners including the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and local charity NatureUganda.

The biggest gains in tree cover over the past few years

have occurred in the southwest, where farmers grow trees for use as timber, firewood and electricity poles, Maniraguha said. The NFA has a goal for 24% of Uganda's territory to be covered with trees by 2040, he added.

Peter Kasenene, who owns a 200-hectare (500-acre) plantation in Mawojo, in central Uganda - 70 hectares of which he planted under the FAO programme - said farmers like him are helping drive sustainable development on a local level.

"You work only in the first year after planting. Then the trees grow on their own," said

the 75-year-old former university professor who served as a finance minister from 2001 to 2006. "That one you see there is the third generation - I cut, I replant," he explained, pointing to a patch of eucalyptus trees which, along with pine, make up most of his plantation.

Kasenene said the FAO pays him 800,000 Ugandan shillings (\$225) for every hectare he plants and he also earns a healthy income from selling the wood from the mature trees. "You get the buyers, they cut the trees and put money in my account - I am comfortable," he said.



Women drying their beans on a tree plantation owned by Peter Kasenene in Mawojo, central Uganda. (File photo)

## EMPOWERMENT

# AfDB supports women businesses in Nigeria with \$50m loan

## LAGOS

THE Board of Directors of the African Development Bank has approved a loan of \$50 million to Nigeria's First City Monument Bank (FCMB) to channel to local enterprises and women-empowered businesses in the agribusiness, manufacturing, healthcare, and renewable energy sectors.

Thirty percent of the funds, which are intended to mitigate the effects of the challenging Covid-19 environment, are earmarked for underserved women-empowered businesses.

In addition, the Bank will provide a technical assistance grant of \$200,000 through its Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) initiative supported by the

Women Entrepreneurship Finance Initiative. The grant will complement the loan by enabling First City Monument Bank to provide non-financial services, including training, and to strengthen its monitoring and reporting functions.

"The African Development Bank is pleased to support FCMB's strategy to become a dominant player in address-

ing the funding needs of women-empowered and local enterprises," said Stefan Nalletamby, the African Development Bank's Director of Financial Sector Development.

"This project will extend valuable resources to critical but underserved segments during the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, with its adverse macroeconomic impacts."

## ETHICS

# How can women journalists be best protected from sexual harassment?

## KIGALI

A REPORT published by Women in News, a media development programme, has found that a significant number of female journalists in Rwanda have experienced harassment of different natures.

The report, which was published on July 5, shows that 40.7% women journalists in Rwanda experienced verbal sexual harassment and 32% physical sexual harassment. The organization is part of the World Association of News Publishers and works with 80 media organizations from 15 countries in Africa including Rwanda.

Speaking to The New Times, Egidie Bibio Ingabire the chairperson of the Association of Women Journalists in Rwanda (ARFEM) said that there are many victims who have been sexually harassed by their superiors in the newsroom or even sources that they interview while in the field.

"We have a problem where most of them do not come forward with their accusations for many different reasons, one being they are scared of losing their jobs and another is they are scared of how they will be perceived by colleagues. They even fear they may not be believed," she said.

"Sometimes women in the newsroom do not know that they have been harassed because many media houses do not have clear guidelines that show what constitutes sexual harassment and what really falls under that category. There is also the issue of being discouraged by colleagues who tell them it is not a 'big deal'" added Ingabire,



Egidie Bibio Ingabire, chairperson of the Association of Women Journalists in Rwanda.

who works for the state broadcaster.

Emmanuel Mugisha, Executive Secretary of Rwanda Media Commission (RMC) said they are working closely with ARFEM to put clear guidelines for media organizations to follow through the policy on sexual harassment.

"The policy will not just cater for these being harassed in the newsroom but also in the field where they encounter these problem. We also want media houses to create a safe environment where victims can talk to specialists about the problems they encounter which will not only protect their confidentiality but also be helped professionally," he said.

"The only thing condoning such behavior is the silence of victims, and that is why people either their supervisors or their sources get away with it, we encourage the victims to come forward because we are willing to help them with the help of many other partners" he added. Mugisha recommends all media organizations to hold regular discussions on the issue and empower their female journalists so they can always come forward when they encounter these problems.

UNIQUE

# The Barking Lot: Riyadh's first dog cafe opens its doors

RIYADH

IN June last year, Saudi Arabia's first dog cafe opened in the coastal city of Khobar. The Barking Lot, where dog owners can enjoy a cup of coffee alongside their beloved furry friends, delighted animal lovers in a country where pets are generally barred from public places. Now, a new branch has opened in Riyadh.

"I decided to do a place for pet owners where they can have the freedom to enjoy time with their dogs," Kuwaiti owner Dalal Al-Sharhan tells The National.

"If you own a dog, you can't go in the streets or public parks to walk them around or have fun with them. It's really forbidden here and it's against the law."

She first got the idea during a previous visit to the kingdom. "I came to Saudi Arabia for a visit with my dog, but wasn't allowed to walk on the beach with him," she told AFP after she opened the first branch. "I was very sad and decided to help by opening a coffee shop for people who have dogs - and even for those who do not."

Hassan Al Amri, who lives in Riyadh, says the new venue has opened up possibilities for pet owners in the capital. "We didn't have that dog community before, but now we have this wonderful place where you can come and have fun with your family, your dogs and your pets, and where we can build a community and share experience."

Both cafes, which serve cold and hot drinks for humans, welcome male and female customers with dogs of all sizes in tow. Riyadh resident Leah enjoys her time at the new brightly-hued branch, which opened in May. "We came here so he [her dog] could play with other dogs and it's so nice, and then I could have a drink too."

The Barking Lot is not just a cafe, either, as there's also a boutique with food and treats for pooches, plus a grooming station, where dogs and cats are treated to washes and blow-dries as part of the services offered.

Residents and families of all different backgrounds



The coffee shop, which serves cold and hot drinks for humans, is also a boutique with food and treats for pooches.

congregate at the cafe, particularly on weekends, when it's at its busiest. A security guard stands to attention at the en-

trance for crowd control and to ensure Covid-19 safety guidelines are being followed. Al-Sharhan is pleased with

the success she has seen with her two venues so far, and now has plans to expand to other areas of the kingdom, includ-

ing the western region, which encompasses Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah. The Khobar branch operates from 2pm to midnight, while Riyadh is open 4pm to 1am. Both are closed on Mondays.

ACTIVISM

## 'Excluding women from top vital roles threatens Covid-19 recovery'

GENEVA

GLOBAL efforts to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic are under threat because women are being excluded from critical decision-making roles, the United Nations said on Thursday, 8 July.

Only 6% of coronavirus task forces, which are responsible for coordinating government responses to the deadly virus, have equal numbers of men and women, while 11% have no women at all, found the UN Development Programme (UNDP).

"The pivotal decisions being made today will affect the well-being of people and planet for generations to come," Achim Steiner, UNDP's administrator, said in a statement. "Sustainable recovery is only possible when women are able to play a full role in shaping a post-Covid-19 world that works for all of us."

New data by the UNDP and the Gender Inequality Research Lab at the University of Pittsburgh found that women hold less than one in three top leadership positions in public administration globally, jeopardising a green and inclusive recovery.

While 58% of employees in health ministries are women, they only hold 34% of health policy decision-making positions, their research in 170 countries found.

The analysis comes as many countries grapple with the economic and social fallout from Covid-19, which UNDP said could push another 105 million women and girls into poverty by 2030. UNDP highlighted an "alarming rise in violence against women and girls" and the "large loss of jobs and income, which are threatening to set back progress on gender equality."

It said that governments are more responsive and accountable and the quality of public services, particularly around health, childcare and violence against women, significantly improves when women take leadership roles in public administration.

"While the findings are disheartening, they are not surprising," Henriette Kolb, head of the gender and economic inclusion group at the World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

"Women in both the public and private sector are severely underrepresented in leadership positions. However, if we want to create a resilient, equitable, inclusive and growing economy, we need everybody to have a seat at the leadership table."



Henriette Kolb, head of the gender and economic inclusion group at the World Bank Group's International Finance Corporation.

ITV PGM SCHEDULE			
<b>SATURDAY 3 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:00 Habari	8:00 Al Jazeera	9:00 Shika Bamba 5	10:00 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt
10:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt	12:00 Hawawumi lakini wamo	13:00 Korean drama rpt: Jumong	13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe	16:20 Igizo: Rebecca	17:00 Shamsam za Pwani	18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama: Jumong	19:00 Jungu Kuu	19:30 Shika Bamba	20:00 Habari
21:00 Igizo: Rebecca	21:30 Art and Lifestyle	22:30 ITV TOP 10	22:45 Hawawumi lakini wamo
23:45 Soap: Uzalo rpt	00:30 DWTW		
<b>SUNDAY 4 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:00 Habari	8:00 Al Jazeera	9:00 Kipindi Maalum: Mashindano ya Kuogelea	10:00 Tamasha la Michezo
13:30 Mwangaza	16:30 ITV Top 10	17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo	18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi	18:30 Masajio ya waki	19:30 Igizo: Rebecca	20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko	21:10 Mizengwe	21:30 Kipindi Maalum: Vodacom	22:00 Mjuzi Zaidi
22:15 Bongo Movie: Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin	00:05		
<b>MONDAY 5 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:30 HABARI	8:00 KumeKucha Michezo	8:55 Habari za saa	9:00 KumeKucha Kishindo
9:30 Soap: Uzalo	9:55 Habari za saa	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa	11:00 ITV TOP 10 rpt	11:55 Habari za saa	12:30 Kipindi Maalum: Mashindano ya Kuogelea
12:30 Habari za saa	12:55 Igizo rpt: Rebecca	13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania Yetu	13:45 Habari za saa
14:15 Mjuzi Zaidi	14:30 Art and Lifestyle rpt	14:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza Huru			
<b>TUESDAY 6 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:30 HABARI	8:00 KumeKucha Michezo	8:55 Habari za saa	9:00 KumeKucha Kishindo
9:30 Soap: Uzalo	9:55 Habari za saa	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa	11:00 ITV TOP 10 rpt	11:55 Habari za saa	12:30 Kipindi Maalum: Mashindano ya Kuogelea
12:30 Habari za saa	12:55 Igizo rpt: Rebecca	13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania Yetu	13:45 Habari za saa
14:15 Mjuzi Zaidi	14:30 Art and Lifestyle rpt	14:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza Huru			
<b>WEDNESDAY 7 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:30 HABARI	8:00 KumeKucha Michezo	8:55 Habari za saa	9:00 KumeKucha Kishindo
9:30 Soap: Uzalo	9:55 Habari za saa	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa	11:00 ITV TOP 10 rpt	11:55 Habari za saa	12:30 Kipindi Maalum: Mashindano ya Kuogelea
12:30 Habari za saa	12:55 Igizo rpt: Rebecca	13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania Yetu	13:45 Habari za saa
14:15 Mjuzi Zaidi	14:30 Art and Lifestyle rpt	14:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza Huru			
<b>THURSDAY 8 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:30 HABARI	8:00 KumeKucha Michezo	8:55 Habari za saa	9:00 KumeKucha Kishindo
9:30 Soap: Uzalo	9:55 Habari za saa	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa	11:00 ITV TOP 10 rpt	11:55 Habari za saa	12:30 Kipindi Maalum: Mashindano ya Kuogelea
12:30 Habari za saa	12:55 Igizo rpt: Rebecca	13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania Yetu	13:45 Habari za saa
14:15 Mjuzi Zaidi	14:30 Art and Lifestyle rpt	14:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza Huru			
<b>FRIDAY 9 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:30 HABARI	8:00 KumeKucha Michezo	8:55 Habari za saa	9:00 KumeKucha Kishindo
9:30 Soap: Uzalo	9:55 Habari za saa	10:00 Watoto wetu	10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa	11:00 ITV TOP 10 rpt	11:55 Habari za saa	12:30 Kipindi Maalum: Mashindano ya Kuogelea
12:30 Habari za saa	12:55 Igizo rpt: Rebecca	13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania Yetu	13:45 Habari za saa
14:15 Mjuzi Zaidi	14:30 Art and Lifestyle rpt	14:55 Habari za saa	15:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza Huru			
<b>SATURDAY 10 July</b>	5:30 Uwanya wa Mazoezi	6:00 HABARI	6:40 KumeKucha
7:00 Habari	8:00 Al Jazeera	9:00 Watoto wetu	10:00 Shika Bamba 5
10:30 Mjuzi Zaidi rpt	11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt	12:00 Hawawumi lakini wamo	13:00 Korean drama rpt: Jumong
13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin	14:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe	14:20 Igizo: Rebecca	15:00 Shamsam za Pwani
16:00 Jiji Letu	16:15 Korean drama: Jumong	16:30 Jungu Kuu	16:45 Shika Bamba
17:00 Habari	17:30 Igizo: Rebecca	17:45 Art and Lifestyle	18:00 ITV TOP 10
18:00 Soap: Uzalo rpt	18:15 DWTW		
<b>SUN 04 July</b>	08:00 Al Jazeera	08:30 In good shape	09:00 Capchat rpt
09:00 Sports Gazette rpt	09:30 The Decor	09:55 Korean Drama: Emperor of the Sea	10:00 Out n' About
10:30 Innovation rpt	10:55 In good shape	11:00 Capchat rpt	11:30 Bundeliga Kick Off rpt
11:55 In good shape	12:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love	12:30 Abu yako	
<b>SUN 05 July</b>	08:00 Al Jazeera	08:30 In good shape	09:00 Capchat rpt
09:00 Sports Gazette rpt	09:30 The Decor	09:55 Korean Drama: Emperor of the Sea	10:00 Out n' About
10:30 Innovation rpt	10:55 In good shape	11:00 Capchat rpt	11:30 Bundeliga Kick Off rpt
11:55 In good shape	12:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love	12:30 Abu yako	
<b>SUN 06 July</b>	08:00 Al Jazeera	08:30 In good shape	09:00 Capchat rpt
09:00 Sports Gazette rpt	09:30 The Decor	09:55 Korean Drama: Emperor of the Sea	10:00 Out n' About
10:30 Innovation rpt	10:55 In good shape	11:00 Capchat rpt	11:30 Bundeliga Kick Off rpt
11:55 In good shape	12:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love	12:30 Abu yako	
<b>SUN 07 July</b>	08:00 Al Jazeera	08:30 In good shape	09:00 Capchat rpt
09:00 Sports Gazette rpt	09:30 The Decor	09:55 Korean Drama: Emperor of the Sea	10:00 Out n' About
10:30 Innovation rpt	10:55 In good shape	11:00 Capchat rpt	11:30 Bundeliga Kick Off rpt
11:55 In good shape	12:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love	12:30 Abu yako	
<b>SUN 08 July</b>	08:00 Al Jazeera	08:30 In good shape	09:00 Capchat rpt
09:00 Sports Gazette rpt	09:30 The Decor	09:55 Korean Drama: Emperor of the Sea	10:00 Out n' About
10:30 Innovation rpt	10:55 In good shape	11:00 Capchat rpt	11:30 Bundeliga Kick Off rpt
11:55 In good shape	12:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love	12:30 Abu yako	

## WORLD

## 2 US citizens among suspects in killing of Haitian president

PORT-AU-PRINCE

A heavily armed commando unit that assassinated Haitian President Jovenel Moïse was composed of 26 Colombians and two Haitian Americans, authorities said on Thursday, as the hunt went on for the masterminds of the killing.

Moïse, 53, was fatally shot early on Wednesday at his home by what officials said was a group of foreign, trained killers, pitching the poorest country in the Americas deeper into turmoil amid political divisions, hunger and widespread gang violence.

Authorities tracked the suspected assassins on Wednesday to a house near the scene of the crime in Petionville, a northern, hillside suburb of the capital, Port-au-Prince. A firefight lasted late into the night and authorities detained a number of suspects on Thursday.

Police Chief Charles Leon paraded 17 men before journalists at a news conference late on Thursday, showing a number of Colombian passports, plus assault rifles, machetes, walkie-talkies and hammers.

"Foreigners came to our country to kill the president," Charles said. "There were

... 26 Colombians, identified by their passports ... and two Haitian Americans as well."

He said 15 Colombians were captured, as well as two Haitian Americans. Three of the assailants were killed and eight remained on the run, Charles said.

Colombian Defense Minister Diego Molano said in a statement that preliminary information indicated that Colombians involved in the attack were retired members of the country's military. He said Bogota would cooperate in the investigation.

Haiti's minister of elections and interparty relations, Mathias Pierre, identified the Haitian-American suspects as James Solages, 35, and Joseph Vincent, 55.

Officials in the mostly French- and Creole-speaking Caribbean nation had said on Wednesday the assassins appeared to have spoken in English and Spanish.

"It was a full, well-equipped commando, with more than six cars and a lot of equipment," Pierre said.

Officials have not yet given a motive for the killing. Since taking office in 2017, Moïse had faced mass protests against his rule - first over corruption allegations and his management of the economy,



Suspects in the assassination of Haiti's President Jovenel Moïse are shown to the media, along with the weapons and equipment they allegedly used in the attack, at the General Direction of the police in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, on Thursday. (AP)

then over his increasing grip on power.

An angry crowd gathered on Thursday morning to watch the police operation unfold, with some setting fire to the suspects' cars and to the house where they had hunkered down. Bullets were strewn in the street.

"Burn them!" shouted some of the hundreds of people outside the police station where the suspects were being held.

Charles said the local population had helped police track down the suspects, but he implored residents in the sprawling seafaring city of 1 million people not to take justice into their own hands.

A 15-day state of emergency was declared on Wednesday to help authorities apprehend the killers. But interim Prime Minister Claude Joseph said on Thursday it was time for the economy to reopen and that he had given instructions for the airport to restart operations.

## Vacuum of power

Moïse's death has generated confusion about who is the legitimate leader of the country of 11 million people, which shares the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic.

Haiti has struggled to achieve stability since the fall of the Duvalier family dictatorship in 1986, grappling with a series of coups and foreign interventions.

A UN peacekeeping mission - meant to restore order after a rebellion toppled then-President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 2004 - ended in 2019 with the country still in disarray.

"I can picture a scenario under which there are issues regarding to whom the armed forces and national police are loyal, in the case there are rival claims to being placeholder president of the country," said Ryan Berg, an analyst with the Center for Strategic & International Studies.

Haiti's 1987 constitution stipulates the head of the Supreme Court should take over. But amendments that are not unanimously recognized state that it be the prime minister, or, in the last year of a president's mandate - the case with Moïse - that parliament should elect a president.

Agencies

## South Africa's Zuma begins prison sentence for contempt of court

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa's former president Jacob Zuma spent the first night of his 15-month imprisonment sentence at Est-court Correctional Centre in KwaZulu-Natal, Correctional Services Department spokesperson Singabakho Nxumalo said on Thursday.

Speaking to Xinhua, Nxumalo said due to COVID-19 regula-

tions, Zuma would be isolated from other prisoners for 14 days.

"Newly admitted inmates must be isolated and are later moved into the general population to take preventative measures on COVID-19," he said.

Zuma would also not be allowed to have visitors because of the pandemic. Nxumalo said all admission



processes regulations would be properly explained to the new inmate.

"Other relevant prescripts pertaining to admitting and orientating newly incarcerated persons will also be followed and executed," he said.

Zuma was taken to police custody around 23:00 Wednesday, an hour before the deadline the court had given the police.

He was given the 15-month sentence after defying the Constitutional Court's order which

compelled him to appear and give evidence at the State Capture Commission in February.

There are a number of legal wranglings that still remain including his rescission application to the Constitutional Court set for hearing on July 12. The Pietermaritzburg High Court will on Friday deliver judgement after Zuma challenged his 15-month imprisonment. Xinhua

## Why Western mudslinging has failed to dampen Xinjiang cotton

URUMQI

IN a textile plant in the city of Shihezi, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, machines with 100,000 spindles rumbled to spin cotton into yarn.

"We are producing at full capacity as Xinjiang yarn is in heavy demand from downstream companies," said the production director of the plant. "Our yarn sales have rebounded markedly in the past few months and we have little inventory left."

Despite the Xinjiang cotton boycott instigated by some Western politicians under the pretext of "forced labor," the region's cotton and textile industry has shown resilience by further tapping markets and winning over more customers with its superior quality.

## FREE PUBLICITY

Xinjiang is the largest cotton growing area in China. The region's cotton output hit 5.16 million tonnes in 2020, accounting



A saleswoman introduces products made of Xinjiang cotton at a store of Chinese brand Li-Ning in Shihezi City, northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, July 7, 2021. (Xinhua)

for 87.3 percent of the total in the country, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Demand for Xinjiang cotton has continued to increase as stocks decreased in recent months, according to the China Cotton Association (CCA).

By the end of May, the inventory turnover of commodity cotton in 43 warehouses in Xinjiang stood at 1.97 million tonnes, down by 502,700 tonnes over end-April.

"There's an upside about Western boycott of Xinjiang cot-

ton: it gets a lot of free publicity," Zhou Run, head of a cotton farmers' cooperative in Shihezi, said in a lighter vein.

"Many farmers are willing to grow cotton because of the handsome income and the high mechanical picking rate," said Zhou, noting that a member of his cooperative rented 133 hectares of cotton farmland this year.

## STRONG DOMESTIC SUPPORT

The West's mudslinging cam-

paign has not only put Xinjiang cotton under the global spotlight but also drawn many consumers to its high quality, which is attributed to ample sunshine, arid weather and significant temperature differences between day and night.

Many apparel companies are proud to show off their use of Xinjiang cotton as a signature of high quality. Chinese brand Li-Ning has been putting "made of Xinjiang cotton" on their price tags. A cotton sample is even attached to some products.

"After the boycott, many teenagers have come to our store specifically asking for clothes made of Xinjiang cotton. Sales can go over 100 pieces a day," said Huang Qiuyan, a saleswoman in a Li-Ning store in Shihezi.

Textile products made of Xinjiang cotton are also popular at Chinese stores of Japanese retailer Muji, which has said it would continue to use Xinjiang cotton as no proof

of forced labor has been found. On many e-commerce platforms, "made in Xinjiang" or "shipped from Xinjiang" were highlighted as sales boosters.

The CCA expected the country's cotton consumption to expand about 5.9 percent year on year in the 2020-2021 period.

## GROWING OVERSEAS DEMAND

In the first four months of this year, China's export volume of cotton textiles and garments hit 19.7 billion U.S. dollars, up 44 percent year on year, according to China Chamber of Commerce for Import and Export of Textiles.

The growth rate is also 11 percentage points higher than that of total textiles and garments exports over the same period.

"Despite the impact of the Xinjiang cotton boycott, the demand for Chinese cotton products in the international market is very strong," said Zhang Xi'an, deputy director of the chamber. Xinhua

## Philippines lets children go out after a year of staying home

MANILA

THE Philippines has allowed minors at least 5 years old to go outdoors, easing one of the world's strictest pandemic restrictions on kids after keeping them at home for more than a year.

Children in areas under the two loosest quarantine levels can now go to parks, playgrounds, outdoor restaurants and tourist sites, presidential spokesman Harry Roque said in a statement Friday. Still, they are banned from going to malls, he said.

Economic managers have been calling for looser movement curbs as family activities can help drive consumer demand and boost the economy that's struggling to recover. The capital region and nearby provinces, the Philippines' key economic engine, are under the second-lowest quarantine level.

The Philippines is battling one of the worst coronavirus outbreaks in Asia, with nearly 1.46 million cases and more than 25,000 deaths as of July 8. The daily case count has eased from a record-high in April.

Meanwhile, its coronavirus task force also decided to let local governments decide if they will accept fully-vaccinated individuals even without testing, Roque said. Only 4.5 percent of the population has received second vaccine doses.

The Philippines' Department of Health (DOH) reported 5,881 new COVID-19 infections on Friday, bringing the total number of confirmed cases in the Southeast Asian country to 1,461,455.

The death toll climbed to 25,720 after 70 more patients died from the viral disease, the DOH said.

## Russia sets sights on bolstering treaty of good-neighbourliness with China, says diplomat

MOSCOW

MOSCOW is determined to continue fostering the potential of its Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation with Beijing by boosting ties in a wide range of areas, Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a briefing yesterday.

She pointed out that July 16 would mark 20 years since the treaty was signed, thereby "establishing the legal basis for the present-day model of Russia-China relations, comprehensive partnership, strategic interaction and practical cooperation."

"In accordance with an agreement reached by the leaders of Russia and China, the celebration of the treaty's anniversary is the most important event in terms of political dialogue between the two countries this year," the Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman noted.

"Russia remains determined to continue efforts to fulfill the treaty's potential, and deepen ties with China in a wide range of areas, guided by the major concept enshrined in our basic bilateral document, that is, the determination to pass down to the next generations the friendly relations between the two countries' people," Zakharova added.

According to her, the 20-year-long experience "of the gradual boosting of bilateral ties" makes it clear that the treaty "has stood the test of time." "Its provisions remain relevant in today's environment," the diplomat noted.

## UK plans to scrap quarantine for non-UK vaccinated arrivals

LONDON

BRITAIN plans to scrap quarantine for fully-vaccinated arrivals from other countries in the coming weeks, transport minister Grant Shapps said yesterday, a day after announcing a rule change for those in Britain who had had both shots.

"We want to be able open that up for people. We're actively working on it," Shapps told Sky News. "In the next couple of weeks I'll be able to come forward and say more about other locations in the world."

He announced on Thursday that fully vaccinated British residents arriving in England from medium risk amber countries would no longer have to self-isolate on arrival.

Shapps said the process of recognising vaccination status would focus on countries administering WHO-approved vaccines, and said the process was complex because each country has different certification systems.

Britain on Thursday reported 32,551 new COVID-19 cases and 35 more deaths, bringing the tally to 5,022,893 and the toll to 128,336, according to the latest official data.



## Agreement on Blue Nile dam can and must be reached - UNEP chief

UNITED NATIONS

THE executive director of the UN Environment Programme (UNEP), Inger Andersen, said on Thursday that an agreement between Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan on the Blue Nile dam in Ethiopia can and must be reached.

While shared watercourses have been the cause of dispute, they can also be the foundation for cooperation. Well-planned hydraulic infrastructure on a shared river course can be a source of enhanced collaboration and need not be a zero-sum game, she told the Security Council

in a briefing on the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam (GERD), whose construction is nearing completion. With integrated planning, damaging seasonal inundations can be prevented, energy can be traded, water storage can be optimized, and benefits can materialize both in terms of development and in terms of water optimization, she said.

Ethiopia, Egypt and Sudan have recognized the tireless efforts made by the African Union to facilitate negotiations. While progress has been made in many areas of the negotiations, consensus has not been reached regarding some critical as-

pects, including arrangements for the management of protracted drought, development of upstream and downstream of GERD, and a dispute resolution mechanism, she noted.

"At this stage, and with other sources of regional tension increasing, we must recognize that overcoming the remaining differences among the parties will require careful, meticulous work, supported by the relevant technical and legal experts and with a determination by the three states to arrive at a cooperative solution, in pursuit of sustainable development for all in the spirit of 'one river, one people, one vision.' An agreement on

GERD can be reached, and, indeed, must be reached," she said.

A large dam -- any large dam -- impacts and alters a river's flow. Where water is scarce and drought frequent, such as is the case in the Blue Nile Basin, cooperation on a shared river is the only long-term sustainable option, said Andersen. Cooperation among the riparians regarding this critical natural resource has never been more important. As the governments of Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan have all recognized, the countries are experiencing rising demand for the water resource, be it in terms of agriculture or in terms of energy

demands. This is due to a combination of factors including population growth, urbanization, and industrialization, she said.

Effective, cooperative water management also becomes all the more important in the context of climate change. Climate models indicate that the flow of the Nile will exhibit increasing variability during the period of modeling up to 2040, leading to more floods, and more intense droughts. It is therefore imperative that the parties work together to manage these interconnected challenges. To reach an optimal agreement, trust, transparency and open

engagement will be key, she said.

The United Nations remains ready to support Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan, and the African Union, in their efforts to achieve an agreement on GERD that is beneficial to all. Coordination around hydro-infrastructure in this basin is critically important. When done right, and with strong political leadership by the riparian nations, it can provide a basis for deeper, mutually beneficial regional cooperation around shared natural resources, which would enhance sustainable development and peace, said Andersen. Xinhua



## Russia ready to use its base in Tajikistan to defend allies, says Lavrov

VIENTIANE



RUSSIA will do everything, including using its military base in Tajikistan, to defend its allies from the threat coming from Afghanistan, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said on Wednesday.

"We will do everything to prevent any aggressive moves against our allies, including using the Russian military base on the border between Tajikistan and Afghanistan," the Russian top diplomat said after talks with his Laotian counterpart Saleumxay Kommasith.

Lavrov (pictured) recalled that Russian President Vladimir Putin held talks with his counterparts from Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, and was in contact with other Central Asian leaders.

"Obligations within the framework of the Collective Security Treaty Organization remain in full force. Representatives of the organization's Secretariat visited a section of the Tajik-Afghan border, evaluated the situation, and will report to the permanent council," he stressed.

The foreign minister noted that Russia was watching closely the situation in Afghanistan. "The situation is tending to a rapid deterioration, including in the context of the hasty withdrawal of US and other NATO troops, which have failed to achieve tangible results in terms of stabilizing the situation there over the decades of their stay in this country," Lavrov stated. **Agencies**

## WHO says COVID-19 vaccine supplies to Africa picking momentum

NAIROBI

THE delivery of COVID-19 vaccine to Africa through COVAX facility, donations and direct purchases from manufacturers has accelerated, hence injecting vitality in the continent's fight against the pandemic, a World Health Organization (WHO) official said Thursday.

Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa, said that significant progress in vaccine deliveries after a prolonged crunch will boost efforts to suppress a third wave sweeping across the continent.

"With much larger COVID-19 vaccine deliveries expected to arrive in July and August, African countries must use this time to prepare to rapidly expand the rollout," Moeti said in a statement, stressing that African governments and partners should expand vaccination sites, improve cold chain capabilities and embark on community-based awareness campaigns to boost uptake of COVID-19 jabs.

According to Moeti, more than 1.6 million vaccine doses were delivered to Africa in the last fortnight through the COVAX facility while more than 20 million doses from Johnson & Johnson and Pfizer-BioNTech are expected to arrive soon.

She said that 49 countries have been notified of the allocations they are expected to receive, adding that significant donations from some European countries will be delivered to the continent in the coming weeks.

So far, 66 million doses have been delivered to Africa, including 40 million secured through bilateral deals, 25 million through COVAX and 800,000 supplied by the African Union African Vaccine Acquisition Task Team. And 16 million people, or less than 2 percent of Africa's population, are fully vaccinated amid plans to supply 520 million doses to the continent by the end of 2021.

COVAX partners have intensified negotiations with manufacturers to secure additional vaccine consignment and inoculate high risk groups against the coronavirus, Moeti said, noting that WHO has partnered with African countries to conduct a review of the initial vaccine rollout in the continent to help inform successful rollout of the jabs during the second phase.

According to Moeti, countries that have registered successful rollout of the vaccine so far include Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Eswatini, Ghana and Rwanda.

Richard Mihigo, coordinator of Immunization and Vaccines Development Program at WHO Regional Office for Africa, said that an accelerated vaccine supply to the continent will boost efforts to suppress new coronavirus strains that are behind the current surges.

## Developed countries urged to honour climate commitments

UNITED NATIONS

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday called on developed countries to honor their commitments to helping the developing world with climate mitigation and adaptation.

"I am keenly aware that developing countries need reassurance that their (climate) ambition will be met with much-needed -- and still lacking -- financial and technical support," Guterres told the first Climate Vulnerable Finance Summit hosted by Bangladesh.

To rebuild trust, developed countries must clarify now how they will effectively deliver US\$100 billion in climate finance annually to the developing world, as was promised over a decade ago, he said in a video message.

"Solidarity begins with the US\$100 billion. We need a clear plan for this goal from now until 2025. I will be emphasizing this to G20 finance ministers tomorrow," he said.

Their support to developing countries in the short term will either facilitate low-carbon, climate-resilient recovery, or it will entrench them in high-carbon, business-as-usual, fossil fuel-intensive investments, with high stranded asset risks, he warned. "We cannot let this happen."

Guterres also called for a breakthrough in climate adaptation.

Just 21 percent of climate finance goes toward adaptation and resilience. That is US\$16.7 billion a year. Yet current adaptation costs for developing countries are US\$70 billion a year, and this could rise to as much as US\$300 billion a year by 2030, he said. **Xinhua**

# Biden says Afghans must decide own future, US to leave Aug 31

WASHINGTON

PRESIDENT Joe Biden on Thursday strongly defended his decision to pull US military forces out of Afghanistan, saying the Afghan people must decide their own future and that he would not consign another generation of Americans to the 20-year war.

Speaking in the White House East Room, Biden (pictured) said the Afghan military has the ability to repel the Taliban, denying reports that US intelligence had forecast a collapse of the US-backed government in Kabul in six months amid warnings of a civil war.

Biden set a target date of Aug 31 for the final withdrawal of US forces, minus about 650 troops to provide security for the US embassy in Kabul, and said thousands of Afghan interpreters will be moved to safety.

A long-time skeptic of the 20-year military presence in Afghanistan, Biden said the United States had long ago achieved its original rationale for invading the country in 2001: to root out al-Qaeda militants and prevent another attack on the United States like the one launched on Sept 11, 2001. The mastermind of that attack, Osama bin Laden, was killed by a US military team in neighboring Pakistan in 2011.

Biden was careful not to declare victory, saying "there's no mission accomplished."

"We achieved those objectives, that's why we went. We did not go to Afghanistan to nation build. And it's the right and the responsibility of the Afghan people alone to decide their future and how they want to run their country," he said.

According to an Ipsos poll from April, a majority of Americans support Biden's decision to move troops out of Afghanistan, but only 28 percent of adults agreed that the US accomplished its goals in Afghanistan, and 43 percent said the US withdrawal now helps Al Qaeda.

Addressing critics of his decision directly, Biden asked: "How many thousands more Americans, daughters and sons, were you willing to risk? How long would you have them stay?"

"I will not send another generation of Americans to war in Afghanistan with no reasonable expectation of achieving a different outcome," he said.

The speech represented Biden's most extensive comments to date about the US withdrawal from Afghanistan under pressure from critics to give more ex-



planation for his decision to withdraw. Biden called on countries in the region to help bring about an elusive political settlement between the warring parties. He said the Afghan government should seek a deal with the Taliban to allow them to coexist peacefully.

"The likelihood there's going to be one unified government in Afghanistan controlling the whole country is highly unlikely," he said.

Biden said the United States plans to move thousands of Afghan interpreters out of the country in August and they can safely apply for US visas.

Pentagon spokesman John Kirby said the United States was looking at a range of options to house Afghan interpreters temporarily as they wait for their visas, including potentially military installations on US territory as well as in third countries.

Kirby said the administration was looking at how to move the interpreters from Afghanistan, but the preferred option was chartered commercial aircraft.

The United States last weekend abandoned Bagram air base, the longtime staging ground for US military operations in the country, effectively ending America's longest war. The Pentagon

says the withdrawal of US forces is 90 percent complete.

Washington agreed to withdraw in a deal negotiated last year under Biden's Republican predecessor, Donald Trump. Biden overruled military leaders who wanted to keep a larger presence to assist Afghan security forces and prevent Afghanistan from becoming a staging ground for extremist groups.

Taliban fighters seized control on Thursday of a district in western Afghanistan that includes a major border crossing with Iran, Afghan security officials said, as the Islamist insurgents continued their rapid military advances around the country.

The commander of US troops in Afghanistan, General Austin Miller, warned last week that the country may be headed toward a civil war.

But Biden said Afghan troops far outnumber the Taliban, 300,000 to 75,000, and that a Taliban takeover can be stopped.

"It's not inevitable," he said.

And he said there was no comparison between Taliban forces and the North Vietnamese Army that defeated the US-backed South Vietnamese in the 1970s and prompted a hasty American with-

drawal.

"There's going to be no circumstance you're going to see people being lifted off the roof of an embassy in the -- of the United States from Afghanistan. It is not at all comparable," he said.

US Representative Michael McCaul, ranking Republican on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, said Biden had "only offered more empty promises and no detailed plan of action."

"The time for platitudes and casting blame is over. The American people deserve answers and concrete solutions -- not false hope," McCaul said.

The US intelligence community believes the Afghan military is weak and that the Kabul government's prospects for survival in the short term are not good, US government sources familiar with official assessments said. Biden denied that US intelligence had forecast a collapse of the Kabul government in six months.

Biden's administration is also grappling with its plan for expedited visas for Afghan people most at risk of being attacked by the Taliban. Rights groups are pushing to add up to 2,000 vulnerable women to the list. **Agencies**

## Chinese aerospace expert dedicates himself to building China's strength in space

ON June 17, Qi Faren, former chief designer of China's Shenzhou spacecrafts, watched the launch of China's crewed spacecraft Shenzhou-12 at Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center in northwest China's Gobi Desert as an ordinary citizen for the first time.

"I used to watch rocket launches in our office building, while this time I watched the launch at a square with the crowd, and every step of the launch made me feel excited. It was such a precious experience," said the 88-year-old man.

This Chinese expert in aerospace has taken part in the development of China's first guided missile Dongfeng-1, and contributed to the design of the country's first man-made satellite Dongfanghong-1 (DFH-1), DFH-2 relay satellite, and DFH-3 second-generation communications satellite as an important technical director.

In 1992, Qi was appointed as chief designer of China's Shenzhou spacecraft series at the age of 59. When he was in charge of the Shenzhou spaceflight program, Qi formulated overall plans with Chinese characteristics and in line with China's reality, under which China sent Shenzhou-5 spacecraft, its first human spaceflight mission, into space in 2003.

Qi's important contributions to solving major engineering and technical problems in the development of satellites and spacecraft brought high honors to him, including a grand prize of the State Scientific and Technological Progress Award and the national labor award.

Qi was born in the 1930s, a time when China was impoverished and weak. When he was young, Qi made up his mind that when he grew up he would build airplanes so that China would become stronger and won't be bullied any more.

All his life choices have been made according to the calls of the country and the needs of the aerospace cause. Besides Shenzhou spacecraft, Qi has also been engaged in the development of China's first missile, rocket, and satellite.

Qi has devoted his entire life to the cause of the Communist Party of China (CPC) and the country's aerospace. His important contributions to China's space exploration is a vivid demonstration of his given name "Faren", which means the emergence of new things



Qi Faren, chief designer of China's Shenzhou spacecraft, gives an interview to People's Daily Online, Sept. 27, 2008. (File Photo)

and a promising start of a situation.

When China took its first steps in aerospace in the 1950s, many practitioners in the industry, including Qi, hadn't even seen missiles and satellites. The tight technology blockades from foreign countries at that time made Qi aware that China needs to rely on its own, not anyone else, for the development of its aerospace.

Since they didn't have cryogenic lab, Qi and his colleagues borrowed the navy's cold storage facilities; and as no advanced computers were available, they used hand tally counters for calculation and wrote down the figures one by one.

After numerous experiments and breakthroughs, Qi and his colleagues eventually sent the DFH-1 satellite into space. Built fully by home-made components and parts, DFH-1 shows China's determination to stick to self-reliance and self-improvement, and has encouraged many Chinese people.

When he took the position as chief designer of the Shenzhou spacecraft, Qi was really stressed out as he had to be responsible for the lives of the astronauts on manned spaceflight missions.

After sending four unmanned test spacecraft into space and solving many difficulties along the way, Qi and his colleagues finally

accomplished the Shenzhou-5 mission.

Every step of China toward the space mirrors the hard work of Chinese aerospace professionals. It is because of the decades of arduous exploration and dedication of aerospace workers that China's space cause has grown from scratch and secured many major achievements.

Qi delivered a speech on China's aerospace cause and spirit in Hong Kong on June 25. In his speech, Qi pointed out that the purpose of promoting manned spaceflight is not to compete with other countries, but to build space station to make use of resources, conduct research, and achieve results for making people's life better.

"I have known from personal experience that a country or a nation can't depend on others but itself to develop and grow stronger. No country will simply hand over its advanced technologies to others," he said.

"There are many reasons behind our achievements over the past over 60 years of aerospace development, a major one of which is that we have forged the aerospace spirit in the process.

We march forward with the spiritual strength we get from the spirit, and achieve our success," Qi noted.

People's Daily

## UN calls on South Sudan leaders to shore up peace process amid anniversary

JUBA

THE United Nations in South Sudan on Thursday urged leaders to use the tenth anniversary of independence marked yesterday to inject fresh momentum into the peace process to deliver stability, peace, and prosperity that citizens deserve.

In separate statements, the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said the world body stands with all South Sudanese in pursuit of a peaceful, prosperous, and stable nation despite the many challenges the country has faced since independence in 2011.

"We also urge the country's political leaders to seize this opportunity to make the hopes and dreams of a decade ago a reality by securing the sustainable peace needed to enable full recovery and development," said Nicholas Haysom, special representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS.

Haysom said significant progress has been made since the signing of the 2018 peace deal, including the formation of a transitional government, reconstitution of the national legislature, and the convening of a constitution-making process.

The implementation of the revitalized agreement, however, is slow, and peace remains fragile, he said. "The journey from war to peace has been a long and difficult one and there is still much to be done so that people can exercise the democratic right they earned a decade ago."

According to UNMISS, South Sudan still continues to face many obstacles to sustainable peace, including the lack of a unified security force, pervasive insecurity related to inter-communal conflict and opportunistic crime driven by economic deprivation.

"It is important that these issues are addressed through the full implementation of the Revitalized Agreement which provides a credible framework for bringing durable peace," Haysom said.

OCHA on its part said it will seek partnerships and cooperative arrangements with the government based on common values. It said ten years ago, the people of South Sudan set out on a path of self-rule and independence with the promise of a better future.

The UN agency said many challenges ensued, and progress toward nationhood was stifled because of recurring conflict and the incalculable loss of life.

According to OCHA, opportunities for a smooth transition to peace to enable the people of the world's youngest nation to achieve their economic, social and political aspirations were missed.

"However, despite some lost opportunities, it is never too late to invigorate the peace process so that humanitarian assistance is more effective, and conditions are created where development activities can have broader and greater impact," said Matthew Hollingworth, the outgoing humanitarian coordinator ad interim in South Sudan.

Hollingworth, who is also WFP Representative in South Sudan, said despite the challenges, the UN has provided unwavering humanitarian assistance, aid, and development assistance that has been a crucial lifeline for millions of people in South Sudan.

# SPORT



Kibwana Shomari. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

## Yanga defender opens up on Djuma's arrival

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

AFTER Yanga had completed the signing of former DR Congo's AS Vita's right fullback Shaban Djuma, Kibwana Shomari, currently the preferred player in the position in the outfit, has noted he welcomes the challenge.

Both Shomari and Djuma play in the position, so, they will join fellow defender, Paul Godfrey, in contesting for a place in the team's starting line up under head coach Nassredine Nabi.

Commenting on the registration, Shomari said that Djuma's arrival in Yanga is not new in football, as for a team to be better, good players ought to be recruited. The former Mtibwa Sugar fullback maintained he welcomes the Congolese defender in the squad.

Shomari noted: "The issue of Yanga signing another right fullback is not a new issue in football, so someone moving

from one place to another, as it is the case for Djuma, is normal."

He stated: "That is how soccer is... I for example was not here early on but I'm here today."

"It is good for Yanga to have the best players who will help the team do well, so the important thing is players should fulfill the responsibilities that the coach gives them."

"If he is really registered by Yanga, we welcome him," the youthful defender noted.

Djuma becomes the first Yanga player to be signed towards next season, the fullback is said to have signed a two-year contract with Yanga.

Yanga's signing now means that Djuma is set to bring a new challenge to Shomari, who has played almost all of Yanga's league games this season.

If Djuma performs well at Yanga, the team will benefit from his quality in pushing forward and boosting attacks and even scoring goals.

## National athletics team set for farewell in Arusha

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA'S athletes bound for Tokyo Olympics will receive the national flag in Arusha on Sunday, Tanzania Olympic Committee (TOC) disclosed recently.

Filbert Bayi, TOC Secretary General, said Deputy Minister of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Pauline Gekul, is expected to be the guest of honour in the ceremony.

He said the national team will depart on July 29, whereas leader of delegation, Henry Tandau, will depart for Tokyo next Sunday to arrange the team's arrival and other logistics.

He pointed out: "The Team travelling to Japan for Olympics will be presented with the national flag on Sunday, we expect the Deputy Minister for Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, Pauline, to be the guest of honour."

"The event will be held in Arusha as the team is camping in that region," he said.

Bayi said he and TOC president Gullam Rashid will leave for Japan on July 22.

"There will be more seminars and conferences which we will attend, they are all important meetings for the development of the Olympics," he said. The TOC official also disclosed that they have proposed Director of Sports Development in the Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports Yusuph Singo to be the government's leader of the trip.

Three athletes, Felix Simbu, Gabriel Geay and Failuna Abdi, will represent the country in the Olympics.

The trio is camping at Arusha College of Forestry, Wildlife and Tourism (Olmotonyi) under coach, Thomas John, and other coaches.

The camp is now under TOC and Bayi said the

athletes are in good shape and have promised to do their best at the Tokyo Olympics.

"We visited the camp on Tuesday. The athletes are doing well and they have promised to work hard for the country. TOC has done its best by paying their allowances and other expenses," he said.

Bayi also disclosed that the International Olympic Committee (IOC) has directed that each of Japan-bound athletes should have a smartphone which will be used to update the Coronavirus status of each athlete.

"There are many measures the IOC has put in place for Coronavirus crisis, one of them is each athlete should have a smartphone with Ocha and Cocoa applications," Bayi disclosed.

"The two applications will help the IOC and the individual athlete to know their coronavirus status, it is updated after 14 days, the good thing is that all of our athletes have smartphones," he said.

On Wednesday, Gullam said the country's delegation to the Tokyo Olympics will not travel to either Rwanda or Qatar for Coronavirus vaccination as directed by the IOC.

The IOC directed that athletes travelling to Japan for the Olympics should willingly (voluntarily) be vaccinated in Rwanda or Qatar.

"We will travel straight to Japan for the Games, the Coronavirus vaccination directed by IOC in Rwanda and Qatar is not a mandatory," the TOC leader noted.

Gulam disclosed: "It is voluntary... what we will do is to be tested three days before departure and while in Japan follow all the laid procedures which include regular testing and other things."

"It will be a tough job for our doctor as he will be required to test us time and again," he said.

## SPORTS

## Caravans' cricketers thrash Strikers in DC Kazim Nasser Division A 50 overs tournament

By Guardian Reporter

CARAVANS Cricket Club posted a six-wicket drubbing of Strikers in the 2021 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Kazim Nasser Memorial League (KNML) Division A 50 overs' match played at the University of Dar es Salaam ground mid this week.

The tie's eventual winners put dominant showing, much as they were missing regular skipper, Sreejith Kumar.

Veteran cricketer, Hamisi Abdallah, took the outfit's skipper's role and had successfully taming Strikers that were led by experienced player, Sanjay Bhatia.

Having won the toss, Strikers chose to bat first. Their openers, however, could not pull off a partnership as Jatin Darji was out for duck in the second over of the innings, when the score was just seven runs on the board.

Their wickets fell at regular intervals and, at one point, a total team score of 100 runs was a distant possibility for the team.

Except for skipper Bhatia, who scored 17 runs, none of his other teammates could go past his score and the team was all-out for just 113 runs in 37.1 overs.

Mukul Kumar, slotted in at low order, chipped in with 14 runs, as was the case for Karim Khan, given the latter ended with 14 runs.

Vaibhav Bhatia, as well, notched two-digit figure, as he ended with 13 runs.

All Caravans Cricket Club's six bowlers took wickets in what was a dominant bowling performance.

Youthful cricketer, Johnson Nyambo, and experienced players, Praveen Puthanpurayil, Kassim Nassoro and Jitin Pratap Singh, took two wickets each.

Suraj Kumar and Nandakishan Pottachira piled misery on Strikers batting units, as they claimed one wicket apiece.

Singh was the most economical, having conceded 10 runs for his two wickets, and his economy rate was at 1.67.

Spinner Nassoro was the best, hav-



Caravans Cricket Club's Jitin Singh (L) is presented with man of the match prize by the club's senior member, Mohandas, shortly after the outfit locked horns with Strikers in the 2021 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Kazim Nasser Memorial League (KNML) Division A 50 overs' clash, which took place mid this week. PHOTO: COURTESY OF DC

ing conceded 20 runs from his 10 overs of which five were maidens.

Caravans Cricket Club's bowlers, however, contributed the highest score for Strikers, conceding 35 extras in all.

In response, Caravans Cricket Club began their chase of 114 runs for victory in the allotted 50 overs, but they too could not get off to a flying start.

Openers, Nassib Kelvin and Gokul Das, played exactly the same way their Strikers' counterparts did, they too lost their first wicket in the second over.

Das and Jitin Pratap Singh, deployed at number three, then laid the foundation for an easy victory.

Das, thereafter, lost his wicket to a brilliant delivery by Strikers' Darji at the former's individual score of 12 runs and the team score at 37 runs.

Nandakishan Pottachira continued the chase along with Singh, who made a good 40 runs at a run-a-ball, which included three boundaries.

Singh thereafter was dismissed once the team's score had reached 87 runs, but, by then, Caravans Cricket Club was cruising towards victory at an easy pace.

Nassoro joined Pottachira and both took their team's score towards the 100 runs mark.

Pottachira got out at his individual score of 27 runs in 25 balls, which included a boundary and a six.

Nassoro and Wilbert Martin took the score past the target and Caravans Cricket Club ended up with 117 runs on the scoreboard, losing only four wickets and

in just 21.3 overs.

Caravans Cricket Club, for that matter, got off to a flying start in the tournament.

Singh was awarded the man of the match prize for his brilliant all-round performance.

Unimoni Bureau de Change company sponsors the tournament's man of the match prize, seeking to offer morale boost to the competition's participating players.

The firm is well known across the globe and it is very supportive to the sport all over the world.

The firm has sponsored such tournaments like Unimoni Asia Cup and it has promised to fully support domestic cricket in future once the firm's business starts flourishing, as it has recently started operating in Tanzania.

## Coach Didier Gomes to field fringe players in remaining VPL fixtures

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

SIMBA SC head coach Didier Gomes has said he is considering resting some of his players, after having his squad closing in on successfully defending the Vodacom Premi League's top honour for the fourth time in a row.

Coach Gomes announced the plan when he spoke to reporters, after his side thrashed Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC 2-0 in a top flight match in Dar es Salaam mid this week.

The DR Congo striker Chris Mugalu netted for the eventual winners in the third and 44th minutes.

Gomes said: "We have successfully defended the top flight title... the league was long and the matches were very close and we are also preparing for the Federation Cup final."

"Simba is a family and there are players who are very attractive to me in practice but, due to the size of the squad, they have missed the opportunity, Miraji Athumani, Said Ndemla, are among of the players doing well and I'm happy to work with them," the French coach noted. Striker Mugalu put his virtuosity to show, notching the goals for Simba SC and catapult the squad to the win in the tie, held at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Mugalu made the most of assists from Zambian midfielders, Larry Bwalya and Clatus Chama.

He netted the opener in the second minute of the game as he finished off an assist by Chama. The Congolese forward notched the second in the 45th minute in which the attacker made the most of Bwalya's pass.

With the win, Simba SC has notched 76 points after playing 31 matches, six more than their closest challengers Yanga which has also played 32 matches.

And now Simba will need a draw when the squad hosts Coastal Union at the same venue on Sunday to be crowned Premier League champions for the fourth time in a row.

The win against KMC FC makes Simba SC reach 76 points which can only be achieved by Yanga if the outfit wins its remaining two games.



Simba SC head coach Didier Gomes.

## England dare to dream ahead of Euro 2020 final against impressive Italy

LONDON

ENGLAND fans are looking forward to a first major tournament final in 55 years as their team prepare to face Italy in the Euro 2020 final at Wembley tomorrow.

Three years on from their defeat by Croatia in the World Cup semi-final, Gareth Southgate's men overcame Denmark 2-1 in extra time at a rocking Wembley on Wednesday to reach their first European Championship final.

Italy were also pushed beyond 90 minutes by Spain in their semi-final on Tuesday, but won on penalties to keep their bid for a first Euro title since 1968 alive.

England stand just one game away from ending their long and painful trophy drought, which dates all the way back to the 1966 World Cup. But Italy are on a 33-match unbeaten run, reviving their reputation on the global stage after an embarrassing failure to even reach the 2018 World Cup in Russia.

A Wembley crowd of almost 65,000 whipped themselves into a frenzy against Denmark with rousing renditions of "Sweet Caroline" and "Three Lions (football's coming home)".

The decisive moment came late in the first period of extra time when Dutch referee Danny Makkelie awarded a spot-kick for Joakim Maehle's challenge on Raheem Sterling which survived a VAR check, and England held out to seal the win after Harry Kane scored on the rebound after his penalty was saved by Kasper Schmeichel.

The final whistle sparked scenes of pandemonium inside Wembley – hosting the biggest crowd in the UK since the start of the coronavirus pandemic – and across the country.

Flag-waving fans in London's Trafalgar Square abandoned their seating to merge into a huge, swaying crowd after the final whistle. One group of supporters climbed on top of a double-decker bus.

For Denmark, defeat spelt the end of a fairytale run to the last four after the trauma of witnessing star Christian Eriksen collapse in their opening group game against Fin-

land following a cardiac arrest.

- Vibrant England -

England have suffered semi-final heartbreak at major tournaments four times since 1966 and those agonising defeats have been etched in the psyche of English football. But Southgate has overseen the emergence of a vibrant young team unconcerned by the failings of their predecessors.

"They've responded to what was always going to be a really challenging night," Southgate said of his players, who had not conceded a goal until the Denmark game. "We were so smooth through the quarter-final and relatively unscathed through the second round. We knew that at some point we were going to concede and we would have to respond."

The semi-final was attended by British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Prince William, who is president of the English Football Association.

Johnson, who initially refused to condemn fans for booing the England team while they took the knee earlier in the tournament, has not ruled out the prospect of an 'emergency' bank holiday should England triumph on Sunday. But captain Kane was determined to stress that nothing was won yet.

"It's the first time in our history as a nation, getting through to the European final at Wembley, and it's one of the proudest moments in my life, for sure," said the forward. "But we haven't won it yet, we've got one more to go."

Italy reached their 10th major tournament final with a tense victory over Spain.

Tomorrow's match will be the culmination of a remarkable turnaround in the team's fortunes since Roberto Mancini took over as coach following the doomed qualifying campaign for the World Cup.

"Beyond the players, I'd say that everything comes from Mancini who knows how to make the right choices," Italy legend Dino Zoff told AFP. "For me, it's not a surprise to see Italy in the final. I was convinced they'd do well."

AFP

## Messi to City would be financial doping - Tebas

MADRID

LA Liga president Javier Tebas has said only "financial doping" would enable Paris Saint-Germain or Manchester City to sign Lionel Messi on terms similar to his previous Barcelona deal.

Messi, 34, is a free agent after his contract with Barca expired on June 30. The Catalan club are hopeful of signing him to a new deal but first must make cutbacks to reregister him for next season due to La Liga's Financial Fair Play rules.

The Argentina international's last contract was worth more than €500 million over four years, including signing-on fees, bonuses and his weekly salary. Tebas says Messi must take a hit to remain at Camp Nou.

"Exactly," he said in a call with the UK media when asked if Messi would have to take a big pay cut this summer. "He won't be able to sign on the previous conditions, that's impossible. But I don't think any European club would be able to pay that amount."

PSG have already signed Sergio Ramos, Achraf Hakimi and Georginio Wijnaldum this summer, while City have been linked with €100m plus moves for England duo Harry Kane and Jack Grealish.

However, Tebas had a warning for the two State-owned clubs, who have both shown an interest in Messi.

"City have lost €270m [during the pandemic] so obviously they wouldn't even consider signing Messi [on his previous salary]," the La Liga chief added. "PSG have had losses, too, so they can't even consider signing Messi [for that much]."

"If they do, it will be financial doping. It would be incredible if it happened. We need to establish limits. Financial doping is damaging football. It's not real money because it's not generated by the clubs. Money not from football causes bad inflation and ruins football because clubs must put in all this effort [to compete], which takes them above their financial capacity."

"We have to fight against this. This is one of the pending issues in European football. If it's not solved, the game will

find itself in a very complicated situation."

Tebas insisted that the league would not be flexible when it comes to registering Messi's new deal, saying that he believes Barca will make the necessary cutbacks and that the attacker is "closer" to re-signing for the Blaugrana than going elsewhere.

However, having earlier said he "doesn't know" if Messi will be registered in time for the start of La Liga on Aug. 14, he also insisted the league should not obsess over individual players.

"We always want the best players, but Neymar left, Cristiano Ronaldo left and we're still here, still growing," he said. "And as far as I know neither Serie A nor Ligue 1 have grown as much as they would have liked."

"When the Italian [league] took Ronaldo, they said to me broadcast rights would go up. They have just lost €200m on international television rights and on a national level it's 10% down. I would be sorry if Messi left, he's the best ever, but we should not become obsessed with [individual] players."

Barca's salary cap before the pandemic was over €600m, while it dropped to €347m this year. It will fall again next season, but Tebas says they will bounce back.

"Barcelona are facing uncertain times but they will be able to solve their problems because they have the highest turnover in the world," he added. "When they get back to normal turnover, they will have restructured their debt and reduced their wage bill."

"Like others, due to pandemic, they have gone over their spending limit. When clubs go over, we have a rule called one by four: We allow new players [to be registered] whenever they reduce the current wage bill."

"For each euro they want to use for signings, they have to save €4. For example, if the players that Barca have signed, [Sergio] Aguero and others, are going to cost €50m for the next season, it means €200m must be saved, either by transfers or by reducing the wage bill." (Agencies)

# Euro 2020 has been a soccer road trip unlike any other

By Sam Borden, ESPN Senior Writer

THE German U-Bahn subway lurched to an abrupt stop. The conductor began speaking frantically over the loudspeaker. He sounded emotional, and I got concerned something was wrong, so I asked the man sitting across from me if he would mind translating.

It turned out the conductor wasn't speaking to me or, really, most of the customers on board. His message was directed at the few dozen Belgian soccer fans, dressed in red and black, who had been screaming and singing and shouting and smashing their hands against the sides of this Munich train in rhythm with the thrumming beat of the pop music blaring from their portable speaker.

"Would you please ... stop ... banging on the train!" the conductor pleaded. "The car is shaking ... and it has become dangerous!"

The scene was, at once, compelling, absorbing, somewhat hilarious, borderline unsafe and yet still fully captivating, which is also a handy description for what it's been like covering this COVID-era European Championship in person over the past month.

Normally, being on the ground for an event like this Euros wouldn't be unusual. Four years ago in France, or even two years ago in Russia for the World Cup, there were hundreds of journalists on planes and trains going from city to city, and the press boxes were full – just like the stadiums – as the tournament unfolded.

Obviously that's not what it's been like this year. Because of the pandemic, the number of outlets covering the event at all is down to a relative paucity, and I've yet to come across another American journalist who traveled to Europe from the U.S. Those companies who are actually covering the games have generally kept their employees in only one or two cities – just doing matches in London, say – because movement between countries is, to put it kindly, very difficult.

At ESPN, though, we thought it was important to chronicle what this tournament looked like and sounded like and felt like as we broadcast the games, and so I arrived in Rome four days before the opening match and have been crisscrossing the continent ever since.

I have been in Italy and Macedonia, Denmark and England, Scotland and Germany, and the Netherlands. I would generally call myself a fairly easygoing traveler, but keeping track of the protocols you must navigate in the pandemic – passenger locator forms, exemption letters and fit-to-fly documents – has required a level of focus that goes far beyond the typical "Passport? Check. Wallet? Check. Phone? Check" tap of my pockets. Once, at a border control in Amsterdam, I proudly handed over my papers before the officer even asked for them, thinking I was so well-organized at this point I knew exactly what was required.

"Uh – this is written in Danish?" the officer said quizzically, gently handing back the documents I'd used a few days earlier to get into Copenhagen. I sheepishly dug back into my tattered folder of forms.

Testing, too, has required near-daily attention. Of course, crossing into a new country requires proof of a recent negative COVID test (even if you are fully vaccinated, which I am), but some stadiums also require negative tests to enter them on matchdays, and other stadiums require negative tests simply if you want to show up a day before the game to watch a team train.

My nose, then, has developed some legitimate scar tissue, particularly since many countries in Europe still seem to be using the yardstick-style swab technique as opposed to the more gentle Q-tip swirl approach that I'd come to appreciate at walk-in clinics in America. "Here is a tissue for your crying," the Italian nurse who gave me a test in Rome said when she saw my eyes watering following her swab. I took one and couldn't help but notice the box was



Denmark's sublime opening goal against England. (Agencies)

nearly empty.

As diligent as I – and I believe the majority of fans – have tried to be with all the testing, there are also times when the whole thing has felt a bit like a smoke screen. At the round-of-16 match in Amsterdam, for example, my colleagues and I waited for about an hour in line in the city center to get matchday COVID tests. The results, we were told, would be emailed within an hour, and then everyone would have to show that email at the stadium before going in that afternoon.

Several hours later, with kickoff approaching, we still hadn't received our results, and the website for the government-mandated testing company had a message saying that they were experiencing a computer issue. We ran to a nearby same-day testing service and paid for a pricey rapid test, but several fans at the stadium who experienced the same thing told us they, and many, many of their friends, were ultimately allowed into the game without ever having received any kind of test result – positive or negative – at all. From a public health standpoint, it was a worrisome failure.

Some of the other COVID protocols installed for this tournament have just been weird. Before the games began, UEFA essentially decreed that anything that happens on the field during a game or practice doesn't count in terms of contact tracing, even if players are literally in each other's faces for an entire game. When it comes to pitch-side interviews – also conducted outside – UEFA officials dutifully jump in and spritz the microphones with antiseptic spray whenever a player finishes speaking.

The press boxes have been turned into tiny bank-teller windows, with plastic glass surrounding each person's seat – again, a seemingly reasonable idea in theory, but a little bizarre when the press is sitting among, say, 60,000 unmasked fans at Wembley who certainly don't seem to be especially interested in social distancing. At one game, I saw a friend of mine working just down the row from me, and we waved at each other, silently, through the glass, like two goldfish swimming in different bowls.

And yet still, when the games begin and the anthems play and the whistle blows, the overwhelming emotion I've felt over here is simply gratitude. From the players, from the coaches, from the fans, from the volunteers – even with all the logistical nightmares that come with playing a tournament in 11 different countries in the midst of a pandemic, after the year we've all experienced everyone is mostly just happy to be here. To be among people. To cheer for someone kicking a ball with the sort of wizardry that is impossible to ignore.

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we've all experienced everyone is mostly just happy to be here. To be among people. To cheer for someone kicking a ball with the sort of wizardry that is impossible to ignore.

I felt that in Skopje, where I watched with North Macedonians who were so proud to see their national team playing in a major tournament for the first time. "This is like a holiday," the country's president, Stevo Pendarovski, told me just before the game began, and when Goran Pandev, the Macedonian legend, scored his country's first goal, it was as if the entire capital was shaking.

I felt it in Copenhagen, where the Danish people were rocked by Christian Eriksen's terrifying heart attack in Denmark's first game but showed an inspiring resilience in supporting Eriksen and the team and each other. I visited the wall by the waterside in the city center, where thousands of fans came to sign messages of support to Eriksen in Magic Marker.

Just before I signed, too, I talked with a local teacher named Pernille Hansen, who told me that she and her students had spent the day after Eriksen's collapse revisiting a lesson on proper priorities. It was a lesson that had come up a lot during the pandemic.

"It's a big deal," she said. "Some of the students were a bit afraid, and it's important to talk about it. It's important for me to write this message. [Eriksen's] a brilliant, brilliant football player, but he's also a [partner] and a father. And we can all relate to that, can't we?"

We certainly can. And two weeks later, when Denmark trounced Wales on their way to an unlikely, spectacular semifinal, it was impossible to miss the gratitude on the players' faces – for the moment, for the journey, for the opportunity to turn something so hard into something so meaningful. There were tears. I felt thankful to be there to see them.

That Denmark's run ended on Wednesday, in a semi-final at Wembley, was surely disappointing to many. But England's surge to their first final since 1966 has lifted this country in a way not seen for decades, with shouting and chanting and singing and laughing permeating every borough and bridge. There were 60,000 in the stadium on Wednesday, but Declan Rice told me after the game, "It felt like 200,000 – and what a treat to be here for that." A treat indeed. In the end, I mostly feel fortunate to be here, fortunate to be part of something where everyone is trying – as best they can – to create an event that reminds people we are living through something, not simply pausing our lives as we wait for something to end. There is a spirit of community that is heightened because of what we've all endured, and it's been visible everywhere, including on that train in Munich, the one where the conductor shouted at the rowdy Belgians because things were getting dangerous.

Once the man across from me translated, I remember twisting my head around to see how the fans would react. Would it get it ugly? Would they get louder and bang harder, as so many soccer fans would do?

Not here. Not this time. Not at this tournament. There was no petulance. No protests. One fan shouted to all the others, and suddenly the banging stopped. The music lowered slightly. The group began clapping their hands to the beat instead of hammering on the roof.

"Danke," the conductor said over the PA. Thank you. I turned back to look out the window. The train rolled on.

**Gwiji** by David Chikoko



# SPORT

Finally! England exorcise demons  
to reach first major final since 1966

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Simba Queens

## Ihefu SC to fight for spot in next season's top flight

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

MBEYA's Ihefu SC has disclosed it is preparing well for the team's next week's Vodacom Premier League encounters against Yanga and Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium to be played in Dar es Salaam.

Ihefu SC's head coach, Zubeir Katwila (pictured), said his charges are preparing well for the two encounters that he described as very crucial to their Premier League survival.

Ihefu SC currently sits 15th with 35 points from 32 games, they will face Yanga on Wednesday and four days later play KMC FC.

"It is very difficult and tough assignment, the two games will define our destiny in the league. We are preparing well for the two games, our aim is to win both matches," he said.

He said his charges have vowed to win the Yanga match as the win will help instil confidence in his players ahead of the KMC FC match.

"At this stage every match is important to us, we need to win our game against Yanga on Wednesday as that will ease the pressure. It will also mean that we can do well against KMC FC," he said.

But the Ihefu SC will have to be at their best as they will face Yanga, which comes from a 1-0 win against their age-old rivals Simba SC.

In the first round game played at Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya, Yanga cruised to a 3-0 victory over Ihefu SC courtesy of Deus Kaseke, Yacouba Songne and Feisal Salum goals.

However, Katwila said this time it is a different scenario, insisting that Ihefu SC is geared to fight to win.

Yanga's head coach Nassredine Nabi said his team is well prepared to win all of its remaining games.

He also disclosed that he is impressed by the way his charges are adapting to his playing philosophy and tactics.

"The games ahead of us are very difficult, but I'm happy that my charges are adapting well to my instructions," he said.

Nabi also disclosed that next season Yanga will be much stronger than this season.

"We are in the process of building a team which will do much better next season, it will be a team which can compete well in both local and international events," he said.

The club has completed signing of Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) player, Shabani Djuma, on a two-year deal.

The side is further linked to a move to have signs of Lazarus Kambole, Marcel Ngimbi, Dickson Ambundo, Bryson Raphael, Denis Kibu, Abubaker Nassir, Anthony Akumu and Heritier Makambo.



## Coastal Union all out to stun Simba SC in VPL

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

VODACOM Premier League strugglers, Coastal Union, have stated they are ready for the tomorrow's top flight match against Simba SC, which will take place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Coastal Union will, on the one hand, be hoping for good results against Simba SC, who have never lost to the Tanga-based outfit recently.

Juma Mgunda, Coastal Union's head coach, said although it will be a tall order for his club to beat Simba, they are working hard so as to collect maximum points tomorrow.

The last time the two sides met in this season's Premier League was late last year and Simba won 7-0.

However, this time around Mgunda said there is renewed hope and belief in his team's camp.

He noted: "The Sunday game is one of important matches which we must play to win, we are not on a good position on the league's standing and we know that any other results will cost us badly."

"We need to fight on for our survival," the tactician noted in a monitored radio interview.

He said he is confident that his charges would play tomorrow's clash well and hopefully record the much needed results.

"My players are all mentally and physically prepared for the game, we need good results in the clash," he said.

The Tanga-based side is positioned second from the bottom of the league table with 34 points from 31 games.

Coastal Union has played its past four Premier League games without a win.

They lost 3-0 to Ihefu SC, 1-0 to Polisi Tanzania, 2-0 to Mbeya City FC and managed 2-2 draw with Tanzania Prisons.

On the other hand, Premier League leaders Simba SC, who are coming from 2-0 win over Kinondoni Municipal Council FC, has a strong squad which can rise to any occasion.

The Msimbazi Street-based side only needs a point from tomorrow's game to be crowned Premier League champions for the fourth season in a row.

Simba SC's head coach, Didier Gomes, speaking after the win against KMC FC, said his focus is on the remaining Premier League games and the Federation Cup final against Yanga, scheduled for July 25 at Lake Tanganyika Stadium in Kigoma. Coastal Union

## Yanga's seven players in danger of facing exit door



Yanga's players attend training in Dar es Salaam recently to shape up for the Vodacom Premier League (VPL) fixtures. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

YANGA's season is not over yet, with the Federation Cup final against age-old rivals, Simba, on the horizon, but some attention will have been placed upon the transfer window.

Coach Mohamed Nabi side is on the hunt for additions to bolster his ranks next term as they look to close the gap on runaway Vodacom Premier League champions, Simba.

A number of first-team could soon be packing their bags.

With that in mind, here are some of the players who could potentially be in their last few weeks at the club.

### Haruna Niyonzima

The Rwandan midfielder's lack of game-time speaks for itself and he has been very much a peripheral figure this season.

He also did not make it onto the park at all against Simba in both games and, with his contract coming to an end, it seems his time at Yanga will be ending soon.

### Faroukh Shikalo

The Federation Cup final against Simba in Kigoma this month could be the former Kenya's Bandari shot stopper's final outing.

The self-induced troubles of his direct rival, Metacha Mnata, might slightly help his cause, though the club could still opt to bring another foreign replacement in his position.

### Waziri Junior

It happens in football. Some play-

ers just find the pressure at a big club like Yanga too much, some are not given enough of a chance. It is likely a mixture of both for Waziri Junior.

### Abdallah Shaibu

He has not had the best of starts to his second Yanga spell. This is not because he is a bad defender, but the regulars have made it hard for him to break into the team.

'Ninja' ñ as he is popularly known could head out on loan to get some game time instead of rusting on the stands at Jangwani Street side.

### Ditram Nchimbi

To be fair, the ex-Polisi Tanzania striker did not have much of a big record, with less than 20 goals in four seasons of top flight football credited to him when he joined Yanga in late 2019.

### Lamine Moro

The Ghanaian central defender has not had much game time recently, with his relationship with the club's technical team said to be not a good one.

He probably comes with a huge salary and, looking at his experience, he should be on the pitch every week and it seems quite obvious now that his future lies elsewhere.

### Metacha Mnata

Off-the-field issues have caught up with him and derailed his progress in confirm-

ing his number one goalkeeper status at the club.

His contract is coming to an end, a situation which could see him part ways with the club as he is serving a suspension as a result of gross misconduct towards his own fans.

### Michael Sarpong

Looking at the Yanga dealings in the transfer market prior to the start of the season, there was so much hope for the Jangwani Street team's faithfuls, after the club made a number of high-profile signings.

Michael Sarpong was one of the players who was hyped upon his arrival but has failed to deliver the much needed goals.

### Fiston Abdulrazack

The Burundian international came into Yanga highly-rated in his home country and elsewhere but has struggled.

It looks like his best days seem behind him and Yanga cannot afford to carry a striker who is not either scoring or assisting.

### Paul Godfrey

He has been a spectator for most of the season. The signing of experienced DR Congo right fullback, Djuma Shaban, pushes him even further down the pecking order.

He is unlikely to make the cut and could be either released or sent out on loan ahead of next season.

## Simba Queens confirm Women's Champions League opponents

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

REIGNING Mainland Tanzania Women Premier League champions, Simba Queens, have landed Ugandan side, Lady Doves, and PVP Bunyezi from Burundi in Group A of the CECAFA Women's CAF Champions League qualifiers set for Nairobi, Kenya from July 17-August 1.

Simba Queens will be part of nine teams from the CECAFA region that are set to battle for the one slot available in the tournament. The teams have been divided into three groups.

Group B will see the Commercial Bank of Ethiopia take on YEI Joint Stars from South Sudan and New Generation Queens from Zanzibar.

The final pool (Group C) also has three teams including Scandinavian WFC (Rwanda), FAD Club (Djibouti) and hosts Vihiga Queens (Kenya).

The group winners and one best loser will qualify for the knockout stages where the eventual champions will represent the region in CAF Women's Champions League.

The CAF Women's Champions League competition is a new competition introduced by CAF to develop women's football products in Africa. It will feature top teams from all over the continent. It will run from November all through to December 2021 in Egypt.

To decide the teams that will participate at the final competition in Egypt later this year, Zonal Qualifiers will be played as preliminary rounds.

Each of the six CAF zones will have at least a representative at the final tournament with Union of North African Football Associations (UNAF) and West Africa Football Union B (WAFU-B) getting two slots each. The UNAF will get two slots with a team from Egypt (host nation) and the other going through the Qualifiers.

Egyptian women league winners, Wadi Degla, get automatic qualification as the team from the host nation for the final tournament of the CAF Women's Champions League.

On the other hand, WAFU-B got two slots because of having the CAF Women Africa Cup of Nations Champions, Nigeria.

Therefore, teams that will reach the final of WAFU-B Qualifiers will make it to the final tournament.

Simba Queens have already beefed up their squad by signing both locals and foreign players.

They have been in a residential training camp for the past three weeks.

## Flexibles by David Chikoko

