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Lissu: Health is top priority

By Guardian Reporter

CHADEMA presidential candidate Tundu Lissu yesterday said that, if elected, extending health insurance to all Tanzanians will be his first and foremost priority.

Addressing a public rally in Tabora, Lissu said that the current health delivery system doesn't ensure that people actually access healthcare facilities.

The candidate said that if elected, his government will ensure everyone is eligible for health insurance, contrary to the current system whereby there are just a few people who benefit from the scheme.

"I have enough experience on this. When I was in Belgium I was treated using a health insurance card. I know health issues are expensive for an individual to pay from his or her pocket, that's why if elected I'll take this issue very seriously for the betterment of lives of Tanzanians," he said.

Lissu maintained that health is a key determinant of an individual's and national potentials to prosper over a certain period of time.

A better health condition crosses these limits as it translates into an increased probability of one to grow in income generating activities, he stated.

"In a country where an individual can have access to better health care, the wider economy grows easily," he asserted, which makes health insurance a priority.

"It is distressing to see people dying due to inability of the patients or relatives to cover treatment costs," he told the gathering.

A Chadema-led government will train its gaze on human development rather than physical facilities, he declared, telling the crowd that to him "human development is everything when it comes to the country's development."

The candidate emphasized that true freedom and human dignity will be preserved in his administration, "as these are key pillars of democracy and development."

Lissu spent months in a Brussels hospital for specialized treatment after being shot multiple times by yet-to-be-identified assailants on

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The opposition Chadema's candidate for the Tanzanian Presidency, Tundu Lissu (3rd-L, foreground) arrives in Tabora Region yesterday for campaign rallies. Photo: Guardian Correspondent



Dr John Magufuli, who is vying for re-election for the Tanzanian Presidency as the ruling CCM's candidate, waves to the crowds yesterday on arrival at Shinyanga municipality's Kambarage Stadium to address a campaign rally. Photo: State House

By Henry Mwangonde, Shinyanga

CCM presidential candidate Dr John Magufuli yesterday asked Tanzanians to add him another term in office and then rate his overall performance as president, arguing that five years is too short a time to appraise a Head of State justifiably.

Addressing a rally at the Kambarage Stadium in Shinyanga, Dr Magufuli said during the past five years in which he has been in office, he has implemented some of the promises he made, and there are still others which require five more years.

He cited the fact that all his predecessors stayed in power for two terms and managed to work on all the developments that the country has witnessed for the past half century, hence the need to give him the remaining time.

'Setting legacy takes more than one term'

●Katambi wants a university for Shinyanga

"Do not assess me on the basis of these five years of my presidency, but give me another five years which will be a full package of serving you and taking this country to another level," he appealed.

Dr Magufuli told thousands of Shinyanga residents that he was committed to serving this country with passion, emphasizing that there is a lot that he has at hand which he

intends to implement in the next half decade. The reelection candidate took time to enumerate achievements attained in his first term, especially regarding infrastructure and water supply projects.

He pointed at around 60.8bn/- spent to implement water projects in Shinyanga during his first term, while a range of other

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EAC cuts yearly budget by \$13m

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THE East African Community (EAC) budget for financial year 2020/2021 set for approval next month has been slashed by over \$13m compared with the preceding year.

At its ongoing virtual sessions, the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA) confirmed having received budget estimates amounting to \$97.6m from the Council of Ministers, with the Speaker forwarding the estimates to the EALA Committee on General Purposes for perusal.

In the previous financial year, the Assembly approved a budget amounting to \$111.4m with the proposals being presented to the House in June 2019 by the erstwhile chairperson of the Council of Ministers and Tanzanian Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Dr Damas Ndumbaro

The House approved a mini-budget or Vote on Account of \$19.6m to support routine operations including expenses of EAC organs for the first quarter of fiscal 2020/2021.

The EAC Secretariat obtained \$9m, the East African Legislative Assembly - \$5.2m, the East African Court of Justice allocated \$0.5m, the Lake Victoria Basin Commission \$0.9m and the East African Science and Technology Commission \$0.5m.

The East African Kiswahili Commission obtained \$0.3m, the East African Health Research Commission, \$0.3m, while East African Competition Authority is allocated \$0.3m. Similarly around \$0.18m is earmarked for the Inter University Council of East Africa and \$0.3m billed for activities of the Lake Victoria Fisheries Organization.

The Vote on Account was preceded by a resolution of the EALA to constitute itself into a Committee of Supply to consider and approve it, the first time the EAC has made use of this budgeting procedure.

Prior to the allocation exercise, the Assembly

had received and debated the Report of the Committee on General Purposes urging the Secretary General and the Council of Ministers to comply with provisions of the Treaty and the EAC Budget Act 2008, as to the timely preparation and presentation of the Budget to the House.

Mid last month the House referred the Vote on Account to the general purposes where the Speaker demanded that the Vote on Account be handled urgently without any further delay, observing all the same that the amount to be disbursed would not exceed one-third of the budget of the Community.

The State Minister of EAC for Rwanda and chairman of the Council of Ministers, Nshuti Manasseh laid on the table EAC budget estimates for the current financial year, the EAC supplementary budget for the past fiscal year plus the EAC Vote on account for the first quarter of this fiscal year.



The House approved a mini-budget or Vote on Account of \$19.6m to support routine operations including expenses of EAC organs for the first quarter of fiscal 2020/2021

Membe: Isolating herders, farmers will stop conflicts

By Guardian Correspondent, Rufiji

ACT-Wazalendo presidential candidate Bernard Membe yesterday said if he is given the mandate, his presidency will demarcate areas to be used by pastoralists far from farmers as an effective means of ending continual conflicts

between the two major occupational groups.

Addressing a rally at Ikwiriri village in Rufiji District, Coast Region, Membe said successive governments have failed to resolve farmer-pastoralist conflicts that have been going on for decades, sometime turning violent and claiming lives.

"My government will resolve this matter once and for all by ensuring that pastoralists keep their livestock in areas that are far from farms," he said.

With grazing areas designated far from farmlands, Membe said the decades-long conflict will die a natural death as there will be

little interaction between the two groups.

The two groups are often at loggerheads with farmers constantly complaining of livestock keepers for grazing animals in their farms, while in retaliation farmers often attack invading livestock and cause losses to

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Tanzania's High Commissioner to Kenya, John Stephen Simbachawene (R), submits his credentials to Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta at State House in Nairobi yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

VP asks for reelection, pledges boost in social services improvement

By Guardian Correspondent, Chalinze

CCM presidential running mate, Samia Suluhu Hassan has said the Magufuli government will further improve water, health and education services if the party is re-elected for five more years in the forthcoming October General Election.

Samia, who is the Vice President made the pledge yesterday when addressing a campaign rally at Chalinze in Coast Region. She appealed to the residents to continue having confidence with the party since it has outlined strategies to further improve provision of social services.

She said all the villages which have not been reached with water services will be covered in the coming years, insisting on those connected to the service to timely pay their monthly bills.

She said timely payment of bills would enable the Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority (DAWASA) to expand its water distribution networks.

She said those who have missed opportunities in the basic education system, will be enrolled through special programme—Complimentary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET), a community based programme initiated in 1999 to provide formal education opportunities to over children above school age.

Samia said the government will also complete construction of the 178 kilometers road from Pangani-Mkanga to Makurunge which will be constructed at tarmac level.

She said villagers residing near the road reserve will be compensated to pave way for implementation of the

project.

She said the government will in the coming years continue to construct new industries to create jobs for young Tanzanians. According to her, more than 8000 job opportunities will be created.

Addressing the rally, Former President, Jakaya Kikwete called upon the residents to ignore issues raised by opposition aspirants because they do not highlight development successes recorded by the fifth phase government.

"You shouldn't be annoyed by the words from opposition contestants; they always talk the opposite even when they witness many good things done by the government," said Kikwete asking Chalinze residents to vote for President John Magufuli.

He said CCM deserves a 90 percent win in the forthcoming general election due to the good job done in Magufuli's first five years.

"You should vote for the president, members of parliament and councilors from CCM," he said.

Chairperson of CCM Women Wing, Gaudensia Kabaka called upon leaders in Chalinze to continue promoting the party's policies at grassroots level.

Aspirant of the Chalinze Parliamentary seat, Ridhiwani Kikwete said the fifth phase has implemented a number of flagship projects which needs to be completed in the next five years.

Ridhiwani said the government has constructed 38 dispensaries in Chalinze within five years. He said that three existing health centers have been upgraded and are now offered specialised medical treatment to the villagers.

Lissu: Health is top priority

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September 7, 2017 while on official parliamentary duties in Dodoma. Upon his return, the politician was

rapidly nominated by Chadema as its presidential candidate at the party's general council.

The party's deputy secretary general (Zanzibar), Salum

Mwalimu is the running mate while Said Issa Mohamed was picked as Chadema presidential candidate for Zanzibar.

Lissu who collected 405 votes in

the nomination process defeated the party's central zone chairman Lazaro Nyalandu and Dr Mayrose Majinge who collected 36 votes and one vote respectively.

Mtibwa allots 40bn/- for building of water reservoir for boost in sugarcane cultivation

By Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa,

Mvomero

MTIBWA Sugar Factory has set aside US\$18million (40bn/-) for construction of water reservoir to scale up sugar cane production.

The new project will make the Mvomero-based factory introduce 2,000 hectares of farm land, which in turn will see an increase of 40,000 tonnes of sugar per year.

The firm's general manager Stanley Rau, said: "This is part of the factory's move to address shortage of sugar in the country."

He said at its full capacity the proposed dam will have the capacity of storing more than 20 million water cubic meters with the length of more than five kilometers.

"We don't expect sugar deficit again," he said, noting that the proposed dam will be one of the largest in sub-Saharan Africa.

Apart from expanding sugar cane production, the factory is working closely with out-growers to the extent that they are being linked with financial institutions to boost production.

The official said that recently, cane

growers have been linked with CRDB Bank to capacitate them financially, so that they can be able to get seedlings and farm inputs. The new arrangement, he said, enables out-growers to produce more and in turn improve their livelihoods as compared to the past.

The factory, according to him, empowers them with skills on modern sugar cane agronomic practices. We're also working in partnership with CRDB Bank to assist them financially, he said.

In May, this year Mtibwa sugar unveiled a plan to produce 38,000-tonnes sugar.

Firm's infrastructure and electrical manager, Juma Paramba was quoted as saying last season (2019), the factory targeted to produce 32,000 tonnes of sugar, but due to various challenges including heavy rains the target was not met.

"Our target is to produce 38,000 tonnes this season."

The country is estimated to consume about 520,000 tonnes of sugar annually, including 120,000 tonnes refined sugar used for industrial purposes. However, with annual production of 300,000 tonnes, there is a deficit of 220,000 tonnes.



The country is estimated to consume about 520,000 tonnes of sugar annually, including 120,000 tonnes refined sugar used for industrial purposes. However, with annual production of 300,000 tonnes, there is a deficit of 220,000 tonnes



University of Dar es Salaam deputy vice chancellor (Research) Prof Bernadeta Killian (L) and Empower Limited founder and managing director Miranda Naiman pictured in Dar es Salaam yesterday exchanging documents at the launch of Generation Empower exchange programmes meant to impart knowledge to university students. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Membe: Isolating herders, farmers will stop conflicts

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pastoralists.

In a recent incident at a village in Tunduru district, Ruvuma region last week, an armed group of pastoralists invaded farmers attacking randomly, killing one person and seriously injuring eight others.

The herders claimed their cattle had been stolen by persons whom they believe plotted with the neighboring farmers. The deceased, one Said Katimbe succumbed to injuries after being pierced with a sharp object in

the chest.

The ACT-Wazalendo candidate promised to employ more people in the civil service and the public sector generally, saying that there are cadres whose demand is high but the current authorities have not hired enough people.

"For instance, there are a lot of trained teachers out there who are jobless, and the government needs more teachers in our schools. If I form the next government, the first vacancies I will announce will be for teachers," he added.

'Setting legacy takes more than one term'

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development projects took up close to 31.9bn/-, and he has many plans for the region if reelected.

Shinyanga being a mining region, upon re-election he will proceed to establish special mining zones for artisanal miners, a plan that involves extending loans to empower them realize their business plans, he stated.

On transportation, he said various roads are under construction to more effectively connect Shinyanga with

other regions.

Earlier, the candidate aspiring for the legislature for Shinyanga Urban constituency, Patrobas Katambi asked for more votes for the president, appealing that upon his reelection the president needs to form a special agency to map out how to spur economic growth in the region.

"When you return as president, give us a university which will help our people here do business and spur economic development in our region and empower our people," he added.



Tanzania Electric Supply Company Ltd (Tanesco) marketing officer Sylvester Matiku sensitizes residents of a village in Rukwa Region earlier this week by explaining to them the role electricity plays in fighting poverty. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent, Nkasi

Rukwa resident succumbs to injuries sustained over 'love'

A MAN reported to have stabbed himself in Nkasi District, Rukwa Regions last week after allegedly killing his partner over jealousy succumbed to his injuries in the early hours of yesterday.

Rukwa Regional Police Commander Justin Masejo told reporters here yesterday that Frank Galimoshi (30) who was hospitalized was a suspect in the killing of his spouse Tabitha Mwanyanje (29) on Tuesday night last week.

He said Galimoshi is believed to have slit the throat of Mwanyanje, killing her, and stabbed himself multiple times in a bid to take his own life before neighbours intervened.

It is claimed that in recent days the

couple did not trust each other in their intimate relationship.

Reports say one day last week as they were together the woman, a teacher at Chalantai Primary School received a message in her mobile phone indicating her salary had been credited to the bank.

Frank, her husband became suspicious, thinking it was an sms from one of her lover, hence a fracas began that in the end caused her death while his attempts to take his own life ended by being hospitalized under close police guard.

However, yesterday morning Frank died and his body was later handed over to his family member for burial.

Samwel Kisingo, a Chala resident said the murder committed by Frank was brutal considering the woman was not his life to start with, they were just living together, after abandoning his wife and children.

Speaking to reporters, Rukwa Regional Police Commander Justin Masejo said the incident occurred on August 25 this year at around 4.00am after a quarrel between them that made the man take the dreadful step,

He said the quarrel started when the woman received a credit alert message for her salary, with the man thinking it was an MPesa alert message for money from her lover.

The RPC said soon after he realized he had killed her, he started stabbing himself with a knife in a failed suicide attempt, but ultimately died yesterday.

The RPC called on the community to settle their marital disputes in accordance with legal procedures, and if possible they should seek help from religious leaders and gender desks at police stations.

Kijazi calls on engineers to adhere to professional ethics and conduct

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

CHIEF Secretary (CS) Engineer John Kijazi has called on engineers in the country to adhere to professional ethics and conduct, saying there are some of them who do substandard work.

While acknowledging the big role they play in building the national economy, he noted that some of his colleagues taint image of the profession.

In his opening speech at the 17th Annual Engineers Day yesterday, the CS noted that engineers have greatly contributed to the economic growth that has seen Tanzania attain the lower-middle income status.

He said there are a lot of construction works going on in the country terming it a positive step towards improving national economy, calling on the engineers to play their roles effectively.

"It is undeniable that your projects in the industrial sector among others have contributed in reaching the middle-income status but there are those who still underperform," he said, calling on the Engineers Registration Board (ERB) to be vigilant on such engineers.

He challenged the board to ensure that the few of its members that spoil the image of others are dealt with accordingly since the government is improving environment for engineers and would not allow such mischief.

Eng Kijazi called on the engineers to come up with innovative projects and technology and should not just rely on importing technology from other countries, stating that the government's industrial drive needs new technologies.

The PS cited an example of how the government used to purchase foreign payment system from vendors but decided to establish own e-government system that has proved very effective.

He called on them to be part of the industrial process that has created over 8447 industries whereby 201 are big ones, 460 middle ones, 3406 small ones and 440 micro. The industries, he said has helped create 482,601 direct jobs by 2020 up from 254,786 6 in 2015, being 200,027 new jobs.

The PS noted that the government is

committed to help improve conditions for engineers, thanking the government of Norway and the World Bank for continued support to engineers in the country.

He also thanked the ERB for the good work they do and for continued convention of the annual event that bring the professional engineers together to discuss challenges and opportunities in their field.

Dr Kijazi said this year's theme for the meeting, "4th Industrial Revolution Towards Achieving SDGs: Challenges and Opportunities for Engineers" was in line with the governments drive for industrialisation.

Permanent Secretary in the ministry of Works, Transport and Communication, Elius Mwakalinga said that it is a good thing now that many local engineers are getting projects unlike in the past where most of them did not get opportunities to undertake big projects. He added that the ministry acknowledges that a lot of resources are needed to develop engineers and it is doing all it takes to support them. "In the past, many engineers were not getting project but this has changed since the government intervened," he said.

Earlier, ERB Chairman, Eng Ninatubu Lema appealed for the government and private sector to invest in developing engineers. He said engineers on the other hand should have change of mindset and become more creative rather than waiting to be called.

He noted that the meeting brought engineers together to deliberate on matters affecting how to move forward, noting that outcome recommendations will be forwarded to the government.

"We still call on the government to continue helping engineers get projects, noting there are many young engineers who need support," he said.

On the same note, he said the number of engineers in the country is still far below the required number, explaining that there are only 29,000 engineers which are low compared to the national population of about 60 million. However, he argued that the aim is to have 80,000 engineers by 2025.



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Contract Duration : One Year (Non-Renewable)

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<https://www.brightermonday.co.tz/listings/gender-and-youth-coordinator-2-positions-p6jz4>

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Project : Kizazi Kipya Project
Position Location : Tabora
Contract Duration : One Year (Non-Renewable)

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Application Link:
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Project : ACHIEVE Tanzania project (starting 1st October 2020)
Position Location : Dodoma or Dar es Salaam
Contract Duration : One Year (Renewable)

Application Link:
<https://www.brightermonday.co.tz/listings/senior-finance-officer-general-accounts-achieve-tanzania-project-2qg096>

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All current consultants are advised to re-apply

Save the Children reserves the right to accept or reject any application or part thereof, and is not bound to give reasons for its decision.

Kyela embarks on boosting of water supply, states DC

By Guardian Correspondent, Kyela

THE authorities in Kyela District, Mbeya Region, have pledged to continue to improve water infrastructure to enable residents easily to water at low cost.

Kyela district commissioner Clodia Kitta revealed this early this week during her inspection visit of water sources in the district, many of which are located in Busokelo, Rungwe District.

She said the government has provided Kyela District Council adequate funds for revamping many projects, the implementation of some of which has already been completed, while some are in various stages of completion.

The DC said for the projects to last long and become beneficial to the people, every person has the responsibility to protect the water sources thereof and avoid cutting trees near them.

She called upon community water committees in the district to ensure they collect enough funds for regular maintenance of equipment of the water projects.

Residents in the district thanked the

government for the implementation of water projects as were promised and that water is abundantly available now than it was the case in the past.

Joseph Mwakifuna, an Ipinda resident said in the past they used to fetch water from shallow wells, whose cleanliness and safety were not up to standard, "but now things have improved for better".

He said many people used to suffer from water borne diseases including cholera, especially during rainy seasons.

"As of now we use water from wells for washing clothes and bathing, we do not use it for drinking as we already have piped water," he added.

Kyela District has an abundant of water sources from four major rivers of Songwe, Kiwira, Mbaka and Lufilyo.

Last year the Minister for Water Prof Makame Mbarawa visited the district during which he inspected water projects under Kapapa Group costing more than 3.5bn/-.

The project, whose source is at Busokelo in Rungwe District serves more than 13,000 residents in four wards of Ipinda, Mwaya, Talatala and Ikama.



Tanzania Revenue Authority commissioner general Dr Edwin Mhede elaborates on the progress the authority has registered in the last five years. This was at the opening of a weeklong evaluation meeting for TRA's Internal Tax Department held in Mbeya city yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By The Guardian Reporter, Mbeya

TANZANIA Revenue Authority (TRA) Commissioner General Dr Edwin Mhede has said revenue collection has increased from 10.67tr/- in the FY 2014/2015 to 17.87tr/- in FY 2019/2020.

Dr Mhede was speaking in Mbeya yesterday at the opening of a four-day task force meeting to assess the performance of the Department for Domestic Revenue comprising the country's regional TRA managers.

Dr Mhede said the collection was equivalent to an increase of 850bn/-

TRA domestic revenue increased by 76 pct in five years - Dr Mhede

per month in FY 2014/15 to 1.5tr/- per month this year, or an increase of 76 percent.

He said the increase follows the government's improvement of tax collection control system, enforcement of discipline, ethics in

TRA and plugging various holes for tax evasion including mobilizing the use of electronic machines for tax payment.

"In addition many big government projects in the country's various areas using internal revenue acted as catalyst

for the mobilization of voluntary tax paying as taxpayers see the value of the taxes they pay," he said.

He said the authority has been taking various steps to ensure workers and staff perform their duties ethically and with accountability

including the establishment of a special department to oversee issues of ethics.

Mbeya Regional commissioner Albert Chalamila, who was an official guest at the opening of the meeting congratulated TRA for performing well

in domestic revenue collection during the last five years, as the revenue is utilized in the implementation of various development projects.

He said the country's economy was growing well due to achievements in revenue collection.

Mbeya Region TRA manager Eunice Liheluka said in FY 2019/20 they were given the target to collect 75bn/-, but only managed 66bn/- or 88 percent.

He said in order to attain 100 percent they are supposed to work together with taxpayers.



Higher Education Students' Loans Board official Goodluck Goda (L) runs through the procedure followed in applying for HESLB loans. He was making a briefing in Dar es Salaam yesterday to visitors at the board's pavilion at the ongoing exhibition organised by the Tanzania Commission for Universities. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Ministry calls for promotion of more heritage sites

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism has appealed to stakeholders in the tourism sector to embark on advertising the country's more than 100 heritage sites that are not being highlighted despite their income potential.

The call was given early this week by the Ministry's Permanent

Secretary Dr Aloyce Nzuki at a meeting that discussed conservation and development of heritage that have been legally gazetted.

He said since the establishment of the Department of Heritage, nearly 500 sites were identified but only 18 are being used and stressed more efforts are needed to advertise them.

"I ask tourism stakeholders and the citizens in general to value the heritage

sites we have because if we advertise them well, we shall increase the GDP than the situation now where we are concentrating on only the 18 heritage sites," said Nzuki.

He said the attractions in the heritage sites have been wooing many tourists worldwide many of who have been yearning to learn how our ancestors lived.

The Acting Director of the

Department of Antiquities Dr Fabian Kigadye said despite having many areas for tourists attraction, they are not utilised adequately for the development of tourism.

He said many heritage sites have not been well preserved making many people unable to grasp their importance, hence workers in the department should work on the challenge.

African countries engaging in ground-breaking COVID-19 vaccine initiatives

By Special Correspondent, Brazzaville

WHILE the race to find safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines continues, African countries are signing up to a ground-breaking initiative, which aims to secure at least 220 million doses of the vaccine for the continent, once licensed and approved.

All 54 countries on the continent have expressed interest in COVAX, a global initiative which is co-led by the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi) and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The partners are working with governments and manufacturers to procure enough vaccine doses to protect the most vulnerable populations on the continent.

Through the Gavi-coordinated COVAX Facility, the initiative seeks to ensure access for all: both higher and middle-income countries which will self-finance their own participation, and lower-middle income and low-income countries which will have their participation supported by the COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC).

There are eight countries in Africa that have agreed to self-finance their vaccine doses through the COVAX Facility. This expression of interest will turn into binding commitments to join the initiative by 18 September, with upfront payments to follow no later than 9 October 2020.

"Equatorial Guinea has signed up to COVAX as it's the most effective way to ensure that our people can access COVID-19 vaccines," said Hon Mitoha Ondo'O Ayekaba, Vice Minister for Health and Social Welfare, Equatorial Guinea.

"We are concerned as some wealthier countries have made moves to secure their own interests. We believe that through this initiative we can access successfully tested vaccines in a timely manner and at lower cost."

In addition, 46 countries in Africa are eligible for support from the financing instrument, the COVAX AMC which has raised approximately US\$ 700 million

against an initial target of securing US\$ 2 billion seed funding from high-income donor countries, as well as private sector and philanthropists by the end of 2020.

"COVAX is a ground-breaking global initiative which will include African countries and ensure they are not left at the back of the queue for COVID-19 vaccines," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO Regional Director for Africa.

"By reaching beyond the continent to work together with other governments and manufacturers on a global scale and pooling buying power, countries can protect the people most vulnerable to the disease in Africa."

"It's critical that countries in Africa participate in vaccine trials, in addition to the clinical trials taking place in other regions of the world," said Dr Richard Hatchett, Chief Executive Officer, CEPI.

"Testing vaccines on the continent ensures that sufficient data is generated on the safety and efficacy of the most promising vaccine candidates for the African population so they can be confidently rolled out in Africa once vaccines are approved. CEPI is investing in the research and development of a diverse range of vaccine candidates, with the aim of delivering safe and effective vaccines to those who need them most through COVAX."

Through COVAX, vaccines that have passed regulatory approval or WHO prequalification will be delivered equally to all participating countries, proportional to their populations. Health workers and other vulnerable populations will be prioritized and then vaccine availability will expand to cover additional priority populations in participating countries.

"To roll out a vaccine effectively across countries in Africa, it is critical that communities are engaged and understand the need for vaccination," said Dr Richard Mihigo, Programme Area Manager, Immunisation and Vaccine Development, Programme Area Manager, Immunisation and Vaccine Development, WHO Regional Office for Africa.



Bahati Juma, an education coordinator with the Global e-Schools and Communities Initiative, conducts empowerment training in Kibaha yesterday for the heads of Coast Region schools. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Wenje promises girls school hostels in case he becomes Rorya MP

By Guardian Correspondent, Mara

THE Rorya Constituency Parliamentary aspirant on the Chadema ticket, Hezekiah Wenje, has said if he wins the seat he would ensure every secondary school in Rorya District has a hostel for girls as a measure against unwanted pregnancies in schools.

He was speaking on Wednesday at a public rally that launched the election campaign at Bututu village grounds in Rablwo Ward in the district.

He said there was the need for

Rorya residents to trust him in order to serve them and push forward development.

He told the rally that apart from girls' hostels he would also ensure road infrastructures are improved to enable people to travel comfortably at lower cost.

The party's Kitembe Ward aspirant for the Council seat Thomas Rissa Patrick asked Wenje to assist Rorya residents in eradicating cattle rustling if he wins the seat.

Rissa said personally he was defending his Council seat and

when he was councillor he waged a war against cattle theft, adding that the situation now is a little bit solved.

He said in the fight, he sometimes used his own money to ensure suspects of livestock theft were arrested and stolen livestock recovered.

He said if one mentions development in Rorya including children's education one will not miss to mention livestock that has had great contribution in the District's development, but the biggest snag was cattle theft.

Authorities come up with campaign set to rid Mufindi District of GBV

By Correspondent Friday Simbaya, Mufindi

AUTHORITIES in Mufindi District have launched a campaign against gender-based violence (GBV) to be implemented in collaboration with UN Women and Unilever Tea Tanzania.

Launching of the campaign takes into consideration the increased GBV cases in the district with most of the victims being children and women. The campaign which started in August goes with the theme: 'Protection of mother and the child is the foundation of development'.

Social Welfare Officer in Mufindi District Council, Sechewele Dagaa said the campaign that is expected to end in September this year aims to educate women and men in Mufindi district on various forms of GBV as well as sexual violence and its impacts to the community.

According to Sechewele most of the gender based violence cases in the district are reported by women. She said there were also some incidents involving men, but they are not reported to relevant authorities.

"The campaign will be conducted in Mufindi District Council; we also expect to meet people in tea plantations and surrounding villages. We will visit the plantations since most of the workers do not access to sexual violence education," said the officer.

She said that since the campaign was launched in August, 2020, they have been facing different challenges including limited time to provide education to the villagers as most of them are engaged in various income generating activities during day time.

Most of the villagers work in tea plantations while others spend hours in farms, she said.

UN Women Tanzania Project Manager, Lucy Tesha said the international community supports the government's efforts towards combating all forms of violence against women and children.

Tesha added that the agency is supporting the government in implementing the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children (2017/18 - 2021/22).

According to her, the plan aims to enable the country to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (2030), the African Union Commission's Development Agenda (2063) and the National Development Vision (2025).

She said that national statistics indicates that Mufindi District in Iringa Region is among the areas with the highest rate of GBV cases across the country.

In 2019, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa was quoted saying that implementation of the National Action Plan for the Elimination of Violence against Women and Children is in-line with the country's development vision 2025.

Majaliwa said the plan aims to safeguard their rights and ensure their full access to education, health and employment opportunities in their communities.

The premier added that violence against women and children is the contemporary issue which needs joint efforts between government and stakeholders to address.



The campaign will be conducted in Mufindi District Council; we also expect to meet people in tea plantations and surrounding villages. We will visit the plantations since most of the workers do not access to sexual violence education

CAUTION NOTICE

Godrej Consumer Products Limited is the sole and exclusive owner and proprietor of the Trade Mark consisting of the Stylized HIT Label which appears in the products images of which are exhibited here below.



The products are insecticides produced in different fragrances such as green tea, lemon, orange and many others.

Since 2019 a company known as Target International (T) Limited has engaged in illegal manufacture, importation and distribution of counterfeit products which are identical with the products of Godrej Consumer Products Limited. A Temporary Injunction was recently issued against Target International (T) Limited in Miscellaneous Commercial Application no. 54 of 2019 prohibiting them from manufacturing, importation and distribution of the counterfeit products pending the determination of commercial case no. 60 of 2019 between Godrej Consumer Products Limited V Target International (T) Limited.

TAKE NOTICE that any product identical to these products which bears the print "Imported and distributed by Target International (T) Limited" is a counterfeit.

The genuine product must bear the print: "Imported and distributed by BOPAR ENTERPRISES LTD ZANZIBAR"

TAKE FURTHER NOTICE that any dealing in counterfeit products is a criminal offence under the Merchandise Marks Act, Cap. 85 of the Laws of Tanzania, and upon prosecution one may be liable to a fine or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year or to both such fine and imprisonment.

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF TANZANIA
(COMMERCIAL DIVISION)
AT DAR ES SALAAM**

**MISCELLANEOUS COMMERCIAL APPLICATION NO. 54 OF 2019
(Arising out of Commercial Case No. 60 of 2019)**

**GODREJ CONSUMER PRODUCTS LIMITED.....APPLICANT
VERSUS
TARGET INTERNATIONAL (T) LIMITED.....RESPONDENT**

DRAWN ORDER


WHEREFORE the Applicant had filed an application praying as follows:-

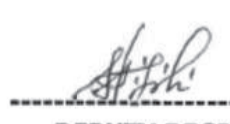
1. That the Honourable Court may, pending determination of Commercial Case No. 60 of 2019, be pleased to grant a temporary injunction restraining Respondent or its agents or servants from manufacturing, selling, importing or exporting or commercially dealing in any other manner with counterfeit mosquito and insect repelling spray bearing the HIT Trade Mark in the Tanzania market.
2. Any other or further relief that this Honourable Court may deem it fit to grant.
3. The costs of this application be awarded to the Applicant.

The matter coming up for Ruling before Hon. P.S. Fikirini, J and delivered by Hon. H.S. Mushi, DR on this 3rd day July, 2020 in the presence of Mr. Gulam Hassan Advocate for the Respondent and holding briefs of Mr. Kamuzora Advocate for the Applicant.

THIS COURT DOETH HEREBY ORDERED THAT:
The application for temporary injunction thus granted as prayed.

Given under my hand and the seal of this court this 11th day of August, 2020.




 DEPUTY REGISTRAR

Extracted on: 11 /08/2020
Issued on:.....

Dar school gets modern fire-fighting equipment

By Guardian Reporter

A DAR ES SALAAM-based Hazina International Primary School has purchased modern firefighting equipment from Germany, a move aimed to ensure the safety of students and the school in case of fire incidents.

The school's Head Teacher, Omary Juma said the school management reached to the decision following frequent fire incidents that have been reported at different schools and institutions in Dar es Salaam and other regions.

He said the fire extinguisher ball bought from Germany is a new modern technology that will enable the school to quickly put off fire and protect students as well as school infrastructures.

"There have been several fire incidents reported across the country in recent years, in some incidents students have lost their lives. With this modern technology from Germany we are sure of student's safety," said the head teacher noting the equipment has been installed at different corners of the school.

"This fire extinguishing equipment looks like a ball, when fire erupts you just throw it where there is fire and it immediately bursts and puts off fire instantly. We thank the management for this decision to ensure safety of the school and its properties," he said.

In July this year, the police force said that it will take punitive measures against schools and institutions that will be discovered to violate provided guidelines on fire protection and

control.

The force called upon institutions and schools to follow the fire prevention guidelines to avoid possible effects that may appear during fire incidents. It said every school owner and management are responsible for the safety of their buildings by conducting frequent inspections by using qualified technicians specialized on electrical wiring of buildings.

In the same month, fire broke out at Ilala Islamic Secondary School in Dar es Salaam and claimed the lives of three Form One students.

The incidents which occurred on July 4th and 17th 2020 destroyed school properties resulting in huge losses.

Fire also broke at the Kinondoni Muslim Secondary School on July 18th 2020 where classes were completely damaged.



There have been several fire incidents reported across the country in recent years, in some incidents students have lost their lives. With this modern technology from Germany we are sure of student's safety



Hazina International School security officer Said Ramadhani briefs students yesterday on the use of fire extinguisher balls recently installed at the school, saying that they form an extra-efficient method of fighting fires. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent, Malinyi

MALINYI District in Morogoro Region is widely expected to start opening up economically following the presence of various opportunities including the discovery of gold mines at Misegese Village that has been wooing small miners from the country's various areas.

Malinyi District Commissioner

Malinyi District to open up after striking gold

Mathayo Masele in a visit to the new gold mining area directed the miners to conduct the activities in accordance with the guidelines of the Ministry of Minerals and the District Council.

The DC said this was another opportunity for the district's residents,

apart from rice farming that has benefitted them greatly.

However, he said the move by financial institution recently to open its branch in the district will be an opening for traders as well as farmers for more cash crop production.

The miners' supervisor Ismail Hanga said they have started mining activities in the area by blasting of rocks in more than 10 pits which in the short time have provided high hopes, adding that what remains was to begin drilling using appropriate mining equipment.

He said their biggest challenge was the lack of various basic services in the area including health and poor roads that makes it hard to transport mining equipment to the area, and appealed to the government for assistance in solving the challenges.

Malinyi District Development Director Hawa Mposi said all the money collected as levies from the mining area will assist in the construction of various infrastructures, a dispensary and water.



Elisha Nkwija (2nd-R), a lecturer with the Catholic University College of Mbeya, has a word in Dar es Salaam yesterday with students who visited the university's pavilion at the ongoing exhibition organised by the Tanzania Commission for Universities. With him is another don with the university, Tamilwai Janga. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

CCM aspirant solicits votes, citing govt's accomplishments in Mbeya constituency

CCM Parliamentary aspirant for Mbeya Rural Constituency Oran Njeza has begun his campaign to seek for votes, boasting of development projects implemented by the government during the last five years.

CCM election campaign for the constituency kicked off mid this week at Mahubiri grounds in Mbali Town attended by various regional and district party leaders.

Speaking at the rally, Njeza said during his five years as MP, the government built a big water project

which is expected to solve Mbali's long time water woes, including the entire Songwe Valley.

He said before the project, Mbali Town used to consume 40,000 litres of water per day from Mbeya City.

He said in the last five years, the government built the District Hospital including three big health centres alleviating inconveniences by the residents who had to walk long

distances to seek treatment.

"In 2015 you did not elect me because of my face, now you see what I have accomplished, I ask you to trust me again so that I request for more development projects from the government on your behalf," he said.

Mbeya Region's CCM Chairman Jacob Mwakasole appealed to the Mbeya Rural Constituency residents to elect CCM candidates this year for ease of

receiving development.

He said when President Magufuli came to power in 2015 he said he would be the President for the poor, adding that he has done all that he promised.

Mbeya Region's CCM Secretary for Mass Mobilisation Bashiru Madodi, who was the rally's chief guest appealed to the residents from all political parties to vote for Njeza on October 28 as he was an accomplished executor.

Dar university and Empower partner on new programme set to equip students with relevant skills via industrial exposure

By Guardian Reporter

THE University of Dar es salaam and Empower Limited have come up with a five years programme called Generation Empower (GenEm) to enhance synergy between academic institutions and the corporate world through effective coordination and implementation of a 21st century skills development programme.

The century skills development Programme will be implemented across all the university departments and colleges.

Speaking at the official launch of GenEm, the University of Dar es salaam's Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research) Prof Bernadeta Killian said the new partnership is aligned to the Tanzania economic transformation agenda and investment in human development.

Prof Killian said that the University of Dar es Salaam is excited to partner with Empower Limited for maximum impact in imparting 21st Century skills to 250 finest students.

"With their expertise in talent management and their extensive network of corporate clients; we urge all companies to play their part in supporting Generation Empower - the first cohort will be ready to hire in June 2021," she said.

Founder and Managing Director of Empower Limited, Miranda Naiman said: "Our work with Tanzanian youth over the last 11 years has culminated in this partnership; we are delighted to bring together all stakeholders to build our nation by investing in our future leaders." Naiman added that GenEm will work in tandem with UDSM's academic programmes to arm finalist students with relevant skills, industry exposure and connection to employment as they graduate.

She said that corporates can benefit from the best graduate talent who will seamlessly add value to their organisation.

GenEm is being facilitated by Empower's Youth Department in collaboration with UDSM's Directorate of Innovation and Entrepreneurship (UDIEC) who strive to be the leading centre in Africa for enabling entrepreneurship and innovation.

The first cohort will comprise 250 students from varying disciplines in the year-long GenEm Programme, allowing for a diverse and inclusive strategy for sustainable skills development.

Empower's approach to learning and development is participatory and practical in nature - GenEm participants will take part in interactive workshops, tutorials, fireside chats with industry leaders, culminating in a final group project.

UDSM and Empower welcome participation in GenEm from all stakeholders including the private sector, policymakers and donor partners to catalyse efforts towards providing skills development through a public private partnership (PPP) model.

This will be the first programme launched in Tanzania with this unique approach, aligning educational content of the university to industry requirements through customized modules developed and facilitated by Empower and validated by UDSM.

"Our work with Tanzanian youth over the last 11 years has culminated in this partnership; we are delighted to bring together all stakeholders to build our nation by investing in our future leaders."



Agricom Africa Company's acting general manager, Remmy Nindi, addresses leaders of Rukwa Region cooperative unions in Rukwa Region in Sumbawanga municipality yesterday at the launch of a programme aimed at imparting to farmers modern agronomic skills and practices meant to enhance productivity. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent,
Sumbawanga

Agricom Africa trains cooperative, staff for implementation of ASPDII

AGRICOM Africa Limited, a local supplier of farming machines and machinery in implementing the Agricultural Sector Development Programme (ASDP II), is training Rukwa Region cooperative cadres on use of tractors so that money that goes into farming is not lost.

The long-term training programme was launched here yesterday by the region's Assistant Regional Administrative Secretary, Ocrum Chengula, who welcomed the training programme saying it sought to put to gainful use 574,291 hectares available in villages, the key members of the primary cooperatives and the basic target of the ASPD II.

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, the region's literacy rate stands at 72 percent and maize is the region's dominant annual crop, followed by paddy, finger millet, sorghum, wheat and bulrush millet. Maize constitutes 73.6 percent of total

area planted with annual crops and tractors would increase maize and vegetable production in the region.

"We highly welcome this programme because most of our smallholder farmers use hoes or animal-drawn implements. This programme seeks to take tractors to these farmers; it is in reality a farming transformation programme. Under this programme farmers would be guaranteed of local and export markets," he said.

Some 303,393 ha are usually planted with annual crops and vegetables out of which 1,049 ha (or 0.3%) are planted during short-rain seasons and 302,345 ha (99.7%) are planted during long-rain seasons. The average area of annual crop and vegetable under irrigation is 41,089 ha or 9.6 per cent of the total area planted with crops, according to the National Bureau of Statistics.

Acting General Manager of the Agricom Africa Company, Remmy

Nindi, said their company believed Rukwa Region could produce more maize by using tractors because good arable soil was in hands of villagers who are members of cooperative societies. Tractors would be given to a cooperative society with 72 members and capable of paying for the tractors.

The company has offices in Morogoro, Mbeya, Dodoma na Kahama towns, he said.

Assistant Registrar of Cooperatives, Benjamin Mangwala, said primary cooperative would be responsible for safety and proper use of tractors in order to increase crop production at grassroots level.

"We are working on guidelines that would help cooperatives to use tractors profitably, transform villages and increase disposable income of smallholder farmers," he said.

The ASPD II was launched by President John Magufuli in 2018.

PCCB reclaims 199.5m/- via operations against graft in Singida Region

By Guardian Correspondent, Manyoni

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) in Singida Region has reclaimed 199,559,254/- through various operations in the fight against corruption for the period July 2019 to June 2020.

This was disclosed yesterday by the Minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) George Mkuchika when welcoming the outgoing Speaker of Parliament, Job Ndagui to inaugurate

the bureau's building in Manyoni District.

Mkuchika mentioned some of the areas the operation had aimed at as including ruinous loans whereby 58,150,000/- was reclaimed, and 44,623,254/- recovered from levies and royalties on minerals.

Other money reclaimed included 11,456,500/- income from auctions operations Tsh. 85,329,500/- reclaimed from members of the cooperative societies.

He said PCCB has opened "Anti-

Corruption" 234 clubs in schools and colleges and 225 seminars and public meetings were organised in sensitising the public against corruption.

Mkuchika also promised the outgoing Speaker Ndagui to build a PCCB office in Kongwa district following President John Magufuli's directives on 22 July this year at Chamwino.

The Manyoni District PCCB building is among seven buildings which President Magufuli was supposed to inaugurate together on July 22.

Microfinance firm inaugurates loan buyback scheme to help borrowers

By Guardian Reporter

THE Faidika Microfinance Tanzania has launched a new financial scheme that will help loan borrowers from other banks and financial institutions in return for low interest rates.

The firm's Chief Executive Officer, Baraka Munisi said all government employees with loans from other banks and financial institutions are qualified to access the newly established scheme with a very low interest rate and longer repayment tenure.

Munisi clarified on the new scheme and said, "Under this scheme, Faidika is intending to help borrowers to access much cheaper loans with longer repayment tenure whereby Faidika will buyback/takeover their expensive loans from other financial institutions

and provide them with additional loans"

"We have decided to give Tanzanians this opportunity which to a large extent is to relieve them with huge interest rates charged by other financial institutions in the country," Munisi added.

"We have decided to offer an opportunity of acquiring a loan at affordable rate to every civil servant who is being charged high rate. Faidika is one of the microfinance which offers low interest rates with longer repayment period in the country as compared to others lenders."

Munisi explained the loan acquisition exercise will be done quickly without delay. Faidika Microfinance issues loan from 200, 000/- to 70m/- and with

repayment period from six (6) months to 84 months.

Detailing on the criteria needed, Munisi explained that the process will be quick to a loan borrower who has to submit updated documents to Faidika Microfinance such as the certified settlement balance statement from respective bank or financial institution from where the loan was earlier acquired.

This must be submitted alongside one of the following, worker's identity card accompanied by either passport or voter's ID or driver's license as well as one passport photograph.

According to Munisi, a new loan borrower is also required to have one salary slip for the previous month's salary and two months bank's financial statements.

Kilimanjaro NGO equips farmers with modern agronomic practices

By Correspondent James Lanka, Rombo

AS part of efforts to alleviate hunger and poverty among farmers in Rombo District, a non-governmental organisation—Women against HIV/ Aids in Kilimanjaro (KIWAKUKI) has conducted a two-day capacity building training equipping farmers with entrepreneurship skills.

The organisation through its project—Rural Initiative for Participatory Agricultural Transformation (RIPAT) empowers farmers to be able to form groups and employ themselves.

Speaking to this paper in Moshi yesterday, the organisation's Executive Director Dr Adella Materu said they are training farmers on how to add value to their agricultural products so as to generate income.

She said farmers have been educated on how to use modern agricultural technologies to boost crop production.

Dr Materu called on farmers to be an inspiration to others who are not in the project so that they can also apply similar farming techniques to increase productivity.

She said increased productivity in agriculture is essential as the country strives to reach the middle-income status by 2025 through industrialisation. She said most of the established industries rely on locally produced agricultural goods as raw materials.

RIPATI project coordinator, Eglia Matechi said that her organisation has also supported farmers groups in Kimochi and Old Moshi wards in Moshi Rural District, Kilimanjaro Region.

She said they are conducting similar training to farmers in Mamsera ward in the district. She said trained farmers in Mamsera ward are expected to share knowledge with the fellows in Siha District.

Matechi noted that in Siha District, the project will cover two wards namely, Ivaeny and Kirua.

"The positive results of our training in previous wards have pushed us to conduct similar farmers' training to the two wards in Siha District," he said.

Matechi challenged farmers to ensure good quality of their products to be able to penetrate markets across the country.

She said the project is supported by the Danish-based organisation—Civil Society in Development (CISU) through their partners called PULS.

Government of The Republic of Malawi Government of The United Republic of Tanzania

SECRETARIAT OF THE JOINT SONGWE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
Songwe River Basin Development Programme

Date: 4th September, 2020
Grant No: 5550155001701
IFB No: S-SRBC/SRBDP/2020/2021/G/01

INVITATION FOR TENDERS

1. This Invitation for Bids follows the General Procurement Notice (GPN) for this project that appeared in the UNDB online Project ID: P-Z1-EAZ-054 of 4th March, 2020 on-line and on the African Development Bank (AfDB) Group's Internet Website.
2. The **Secretariat of the Joint Songwe River Basin Commission** has received a grant from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the African Development Bank towards the cost of the **Strengthening Transboundary Cooperation and Integrated Natural Resources Management in the Songwe River Basin (STCINRM-SRB) Project**. It is intended that part of the proceeds of this grant will be applied to eligible payments under the contract executions for supply of the following goods:

S/N	DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITY	TENDER NUMBER
1.	Supply of nine (9) Motor cycles	SRBC/SRBDP/2020/2021/G/01
2.	Supply of two (2) Motor vehicles	SRBC/SRBDP/2020/2021/G/02
3. The Secretariat of the Joint Songwe River Basin Commission now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the above mentioned tenders.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain tender documents from the office of **The Secretariat of the joint Songwe River Basin Commission (S-SRBC), P.O. Box 300, Kyela, Tanzania at former Water Department Building (Idara ya Maji), Kalumburu Area, near Kyela Resort Hotel** from 08:30 hrs to 15:30 hrs (EAT) from Monday to Friday inclusive except on public holidays.
5. A complete set of Tender document(s) in English language may be purchased by interested Bidders on submission of a written application to the address given under paragraph 4 above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **USD Fifty (USD 50)** for bid documents. The method of payment will be either by Bankers cheque or TISS, payable to:

Bank Name : **National Microfinance Bank;**
Bank Account Name : **Joint Songwe River Basin Commission – GEF;**
Bank Account Number : **60910016707;**
Bank Branch : **Kyela NMB;**
Swift Code : **NMBTZT.**
6. Tendering will be conducted through the **National Competitive** procedures specified in the United Republic of Tanzania Public Procurement Regulations, 2013 – Government Notice No. 446 as amended 2016 and are open to bidders as defined in the Regulations unless otherwise stated in the **Tender Data Sheet**.
7. Bids must be delivered to the above mentioned office on or before 14:00 Hours (EAT) on 18th September, 2020 and must be accompanied by an Unconditional Tender Security in an acceptable form in the amount of not less than **two percent (2%)** of the Bid Price.
8. Tenders will be opened promptly thereafter in public and in the presence of Bidders representatives who choose to attend in the opening at 11:30 Hours (EAT) on 18th September, 2020 at the office of **The Secretariat of the joint Songwe River Basin Commission (S-SRBC), P.O. Box 300, Kyela, Tanzania at former Water Department Building (Idara ya Maji), Kalumburu Area, near Kyela Resort Hotel**.
9. Late tenders, portion of tenders, electronic tenders, and tenders not received, tenders not opened and not read out in public at the tender opening ceremony shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstance.

ACTING EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,
SONGWE RIVER BASIN COMMISSION
P.O. BOX 300,
KYELA, TANZANIA,
(AT FORMER WATER DEPARTMENT BUILDING (IDARA YA MAJI), KALUMBURU AREA, NEAR KYELA RESORT HOTEL).

For further information: Email: info@songwerbc.org
Telephone number: +255 754 832484; or +255 25 2957412
Fax number: +255 25 2957413.

The Guardian

www.ippmedia.com

FRIDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Innovation necessary for us to survive global depression

STAKEHOLDERS in the country have been making spirited efforts to increase production through more efficient use of resources, this especially in the wake of the Covid-19 treacherous moment in the country's economy.

While there is a fleeting perception that the country's economy has been hit hard by the outbreak, there is no denying that the amount of real suffering here has been much less than elsewhere.

It means that the work our public and private sector stakeholders need to do to return to normal isn't insurmountable. What is likely to be more difficult is to adapt to trends that are seen in world economy.

This is particularly in terms of what they represent for local and wider demand, since the country's economy isn't self-reliant on what it needs and what we produce.

Rather, plenty is dependent on what the outside world needs or doesn't need, can buy or cannot buy, and implicitly the same also applies to local markets, though in a different context. The bottom line is that wider global trends determine the usefulness or appropriateness of local initiatives.

One particularly unnerving aspect in global economic trends is that many countries are experiencing a drop into depression, which means intense decline of economic activity registered over a short period, for instance two successive quarters of intensely negative data trends.

A number of large economies like India, South Africa and Brazil, which along with Russia and China were at some point forging an economic consultation group, have registered a decline of between 15 per cent and 25 per cent in economic activity owing to extensive lockdowns induced by Covid-19.

We need to remind ourselves that it is to these very countries that our exports are geared and from which we expect to

get tourist flows, etc.

This implies that the situation is by and large unpredictable and, without doubt, the various sectors won't all succeed in their objectives like those which shall encounter fewer obstacles to realising export or other foreign-based inputs.

All these shall need the broad attention of policy makers as to what they can do to put things right, in what really is uncharted territory.

The government remains the key instrument in outlining what is expected in economic trends and the adaptations to make. Still, it is vital that different sectors read the signs of the times and, where needed, take appropriate steps to introduce corrections.

However, it isn't always easy for heads of public organisations to stand up and admit that much of what they are doing is immersed in obstacles owing to declining demand and ought to be shifted to something else - say, another product line.

Such difficulties once characterised our country's economic thrust, thought problems in relation to the wider atmosphere of resource allocation and accountability were different from what we have at present.

Corporate bodies continued to climb a steep hill of production objectives in total absorption from the input and output factors in what they were doing. In fact, time came when the breadth of the public sector immersed in production had to be liquidated, minus a few rather valuable firms.

We still have a strong presence of public sector productive entities remain, which calls for a lot more than a simple push for more production for those entities to remain afloat - and relevant.

How we make them move in the days, months, years and decades ahead will have to be appropriately calculated, with present-day realities and demands carefully considered and therefore providing lessons we have to learn from.

Indeed, tailor-made participatory aid programmes deliver more efficiently

ONE of the most debated issues in international economic experience is whether aid is effective and delivers results or merely adds to stratification, momentary alleviation of poverty and diseases but practically leaves the recipient countries where they stood.

What can be said is that aid has often had to be assured and continuous, as disruption tends to restore the previous situation and the gains are rapidly eroded.

That is why such instances are better avoided than accepted and then corrective or remedial measures taken. While aid generally bolsters resources available in a country, disruption usually leaves a yawning gap to be filled.

A contributing factor to what is at times known as aid fatigue is that aid was traditionally being handed to government departments and agencies, most self-accounting entities, rather than directly controlled by some top ministerial officials.

What the ministry generally does is coordinate activities of public servants and parastatal organisations, but the day to day conduct is a matter of habit and general guidelines, not day to day intervention.

Some aid agencies have thought up methods of working with the government through networks of experts that they trust and are largely accountable to the respective funding organisations, as in the case of aid administration with regard to HIV/AIDS.

While making an announcement for a consulting firm to design a gender and equality policy framework for its Tanzania outlet, Baylor (T) Ltd - an NGO attached to the Baylor College of Medicine Children's Foundation - has indicated how this is done. Its statement of intention says that the local franchise is a locally registered NGO since 2009

mainly funded by USAID Tanzania.

It said that Baylor (T) works in partnership with the Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children to improve the provision of services for HIV and AIDS as well as other health challenges affecting children in the Lake Victoria and southern Highlands zones.

Baylor (T) is affiliated with the Baylor College of Medicine-centred International Paediatric AIDS Initiative (BIPAI) network, itself part of a wider network of expertise and resources. The college has links with the Houston-based Texas Children's Hospital. Experience is channelled from these sources.

There is an additional note that Baylor (T) has two centres of excellence, both working on preventing paediatric HIV and other diseases as well as caring for those afflicted - including running treatment facilities.

The goal is to reduce HIV/AIDS-related morbidity and mortality among infants, children and adolescents in our country, although it focused on two heavily impacted zones at the time of its inception.

In that case, the NGO easily coordinates with partner organisations and healthcare providers to ensure delivery of quality services and empowerment of healthcare workers, strengthening the health system where it operates.

Thus, even when Baylor Tanzania sets out to find a consulting firm with which to develop a gender and equality policy cadre, there are accepted international standards observed at the highest level, as named in the parent organisation.

This is different from merely delivering a sum of money to the ministry, which then draws up guidelines on how a specific project or disease management drive is to be conducted. Such methods are welcome because they ease the fatigue, making aid effective.

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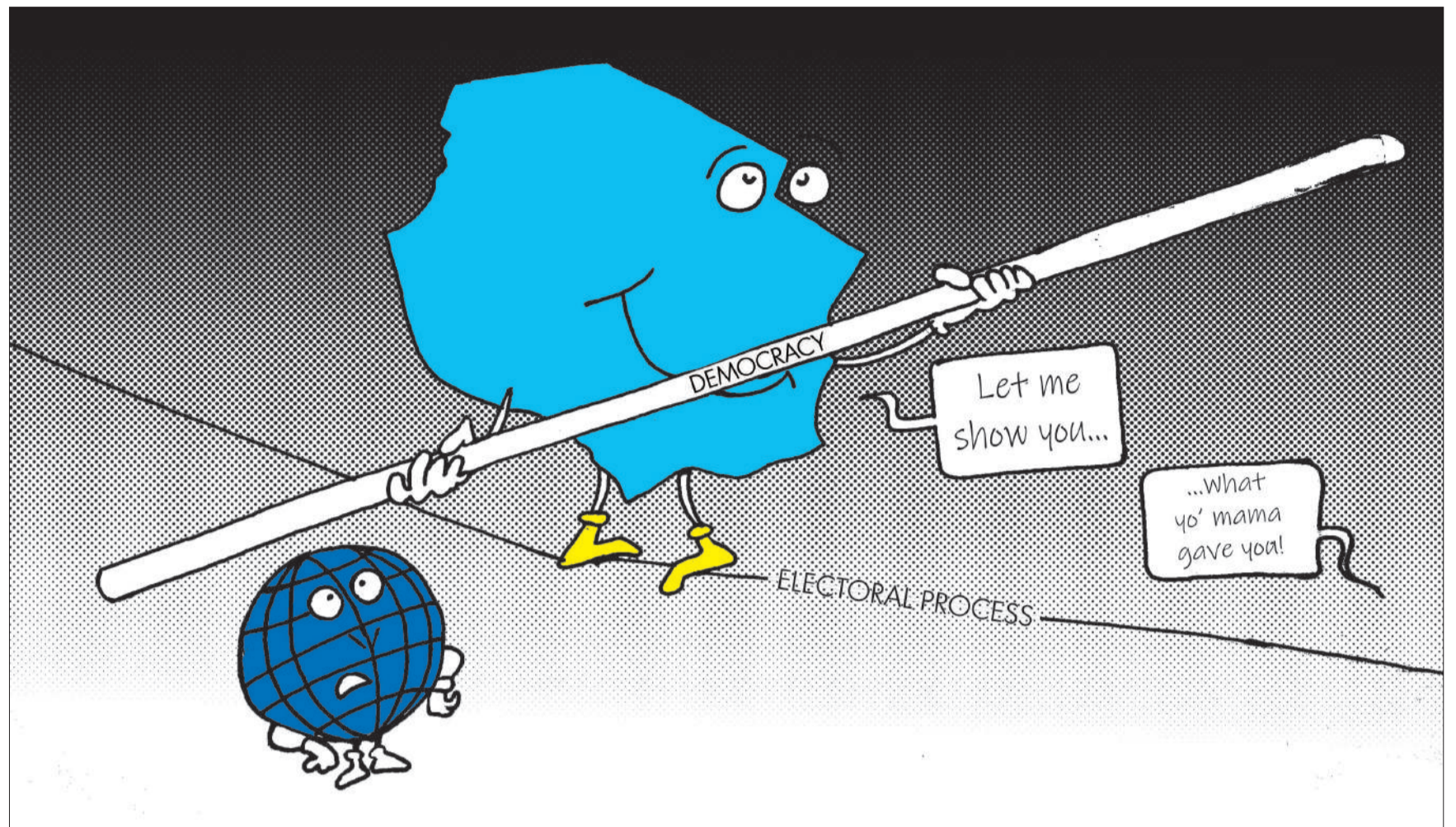
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By Patricia Geli

JUST over five months ago, the first case of Covid-19 (coronavirus) was confirmed in Africa, raising concerns about the continent's readiness to handle an outbreak. On August 7, Africa's case-count crossed one million. What do we know about the response thus far, and what lies ahead?

The economic impacts of Covid-19 lockdowns and border restrictions have been severe, exacerbating the gravity of poverty and other socio-economic challenges.

Compared with pre-crisis forecasts, Covid-19 could push 71 million people into extreme poverty this year. More than one-third of the projected poor will be in a sub-Saharan Africa facing its first recession in 25 years.

As African nations ease their lockdown restrictions, health systems are bracing to prevent further spread of the pandemic. But limited infrastructure, critical fiscal positions and insufficient technical capacity are hampering the response efforts.

The consequences of the pandemic will be long lasting, while resources are limited. So, regional approaches and resource sharing are more important now than ever before.

Africa's leaders have risen to the challenge, breaking down geographical and political barriers that previously prevented rapid response efforts.

A continental strategy

As the first reports came from China in December 2019, Africa's Centre for Disease Control (Africa CDC) - an African Union (AU) agency launched just three years ago - began preparing for a potential outbreak.

As the first case reached Africa in mid-February, African health ministers agreed on an Africa Joint Continental Strategy for Covid-19. Along with the AU's Covid-19 Response Fund, which was established soon after, the strategy underpinned African leadership in responding to the outbreak from the very beginning. Leaders also stood united in their global appeal for funding, deferral of debt repayments, and medical procurement assistance.

Through the Response Fund, the Africa CDC is determined to raise an initial US\$150 million for immediate needs and US\$400 million for the procurement of medical supplies, deployment of rapid responders, and provision of socio-economic support to the most vulnerable populations.

Pooling resources through collaboration

The continental strategy has demonstrated massive economies of scale in disease prevention and control efforts. An Africa Taskforce for Coronavirus (AFTCOR) was set up to provide technical assistance on case detection and containment. In collaboration with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the West

Africa CDC and prevention's Covid-19 response: A united, continental strategy



John Nkengasong, Director of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC)

Africa Health Organisation (WAHO), AFTCOR helped increase the number of African laboratories with Covid-19 testing capability from two to 43 by mid-March.

Leveraging Africa CDC's convening power with weekly webinars, some 300 clinicians from across the continent can exchange valuable technical knowledge in real time.

To limit further spread of the pandemic, Africa CDC rolled out the Partnership to Accelerate Covid-19 Testing (PACT): Test, Trace, and Treat to strengthen testing capacity and test at least ten million Africans over the next six months.

Africa CDC also launched the Africa Medical Supplies Platform, in partnership with the African Export-Import Bank, to facilitate country-level procurement of critical medical and laboratory supplies from certified suppliers.

Expanding technologies cutting-edge

The Chairperson of the African Union, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa, has aptly noted that "success in developing and providing access to a safe vaccine requires an innovative and collaborative approach, with significant local manufacturing in Africa".

A new Consortium for Covid-19 Vaccine Clinical Trial is focusing on securing sufficient vaccine supplies and removing barriers to vaccine rollout.

Africa CDC is also expanding the continent's ability to sequence - or to "decode" - the viral genome with unprecedented speed.

Genome sequencing is important for tracking mutations of the coronavirus and identifying the origin of the virus,

clusters of cases, and community transmission. Any significant mutation in one part of the world could render vaccines, drugs or diagnostics developed using data from another part of the world ineffective.

Sophisticated health infrastructure including those for genome sequencing requires large upfront investment outlays and must consistently operate at close to full capacity in order to be cost-effective.

Rather than setting up facilities in every country, countries can send their samples to a regional lab for genomic sequencing. This allows countries to contribute to, and benefit from, locally relevant assays, therapeutics and vaccines.

This is being facilitated by the Pathogen Genomics Intelligence Institute, which Africa CDC - with foresight - launched in December 2019. This initiative also helps connect research centres conducting genomic sequencing with public health institutes, while also removing potential 'stumbling blocks' between national initiatives as the continent faces a singular disease threat.

Using these cutting-edge approaches, an African Centre of Excellence for Genomics of Infectious Diseases in Nigeria sequenced the first genome of SARS-Cov-2 within 72 hours of receiving the sample. This clearly demonstrates the continent's contribution of crucial data in the global fight against Covid-19, and to the field of genomics.

Challenges ahead

These achievements are remarkable given Africa CDC's short existence as an institution. But the centre will continue to face challenges to deliver on its broader mandate beyond the emergency response. These include

countries' fragile health systems, limited funding, recurrent disease outbreaks with late detection, and sometimes slow national response measures.

While more than 80 per cent of member states have done joint external evaluations, action on the resulting recommendations, including development of multi-hazard, multi-sectoral national action plans for health security, funding of such plans, and the conduct of public health simulation exercises at recommended intervals, is very limited.

Progress in these areas will be critical to deliver on the longer-term vision of Africa CDC: to act collectively and become self-sufficient in responding to future public health emergencies.

The World Bank is supporting the Africa CDC in its long-term vision, with the board having approved a new project in December 2019. This was indeed timely, coming as it did just before the Covid-crisis hit.

The bank has long committed to continuing to help strengthen continental, regional and national infectious disease detection and response systems during Covid-19 and beyond.

When it comes to pandemics, there's an historic cycle of panic and neglect, with efforts having often ramped up when there was a serious threat, and then having been quickly forgotten when the threat subsided. Africa CDC may be the turning point, bringing sustained future investment in pandemic preparedness.

• Patricia Geli is a senior economist/public health specialist with the Africa Region of the World Bank.

Creativity robbed away

SUCCESS depends on our ability to be creative. Happiness, on the other hand, depends on our ability to have high-quality time with the people around us. These are two aspects of life, success, and happiness; I yearn to achieve every day. However, both of these things have a common enemy. I believe that smartphones are the one thing robbing us of creativity and quality time. We are spending so much time using these smartphones to access social media instead of engaging in actual communications physically.

A few days ago, I came across a group of campus students on a bus, and all of them were glued to their phones. The chances are that those in the same class or from the same neighborhood were exchanging messages in WhatsApp groups they had in common, yet they were seated inches apart. What happened to old fashioned communication, talking and sharing ideas verbally?

I have nothing major against smartphones apart from their role in reducing our creativity and the quality time we spend with people around us. It makes them the one thing robbing us of these fundamental aspects of life.

Reducing Creativity

We spend so much time on the phones that we at times clog our minds with ideologies/thoughts I call irrelevant. Irrelevant because most of times, they prevent us from harnessing our creativity. You might follow like-minded people online, but more often than not, some content that upsets your creative balance is bound to be on your timeline.

What this does is that it distracts you from high-quality thoughts in the context of what you were doing. This reduces the quality of your work and compromises your results.

Ask yourself this, how many times have you been kicked off balance by something on your timeline or newsfeed? I'm almost sure that each of us has experienced this.

Now, do you agree with me that it is the one thing robbing us of creative potential?

The solution is simple; have a designated time to catch up with pals online. It will help you focus on work, harness your creative power and achieve success.

You see, most of the successful careers depend on our ability to identify a problem and come up with a viable solution. Unless you embrace your creativity, you are very likely never to achieve this.

Compromising Quality Time

We make life worthwhile by having people around us and spending quality time with them. Most of us refer to this as making memories. But what happens in most of our get-togethers?



We are on our phones checking out memes and other stories online rather than catching up. Most times, I look around me, and everyone is on their phone. Families now have WhatsApp groups that have replaced conversations in the sitting room.

We are hurting inside, and some of us are suffering from depression, but we all seem okay. It's because we rarely speak. We don't know our pal's or family member's character because we rarely talk.

We are all victims of this menace if I

can call it that. I am a victim also, but I live each day struggling to make physical contact with the people in my circle. It is a tough fight, but for the sake of living a worthwhile life, it's worth the struggle.

I think we should all attempt to put

the phone away and make physical contact. Crack verbal jokes, laugh together. Hug a friend, know how they act when happy, and vice versa. Kiss them if they allow you to do that haha lol. At least we owe ourselves that.



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Six must-know hints to ensure investigative journalists work faster and more efficiently

By Carla Nudel and Nicole Martin

THESE days it is common for journalists to be overwhelmed searching for relevant and reliable sources online. Although it sometimes feels harder than finding a needle in a haystack, there are many free digital tools that can make the process easier. We have six tips can help journalists be more effective in their investigations - the first relating to the need to use advanced search to find quality sources.

Investigative journalism requires on-the-record sources to back up our claims and give context to our findings. For this reason, our references should be diverse, trustworthy and balanced in every way. However, when using a search engine to look for the right sources, unverified publications often get in the way. One way to make this easier is using advanced search operators. For example, by adding "filetype" to our query, we can search for specific formats like PDFs or Excel spreadsheets.

For example, if we're looking for statistics on poverty, we can add "filetype" to our query by typing, "poverty statistics filetype:xls". We will quickly find the specific files we need without spending time going through irrelevant results.

Another key search operator is "site", which lets us look within a particular domain or website. For example, if we want to find the last Covid-19 situation report published by the World Health Organisation, we can try searching "covid site:who.int". In the event we don't know exactly where the information is, we can search by just a domain suffix. For example, to look for official sources on poverty published by a governmental entity in Mexico, we can use "poverty site:gob.mx" to make our search more effective. Second: Check and double check. When approaching a research topic, we'll find data, claims, images and documents that may not necessarily be accurate or true. For this reason, it is very important to verify the information both at the beginning and at the end of the investigation.

If we see a phrase that looks suspicious and want to check whether it has been published in the past, we can search it between quotation marks to see other places where those exact words appear

on the web. For example, if we want to verify if Sherlock Holmes ever said, "elementary, my dear Watson", we can use quotation marks to search the phrase inside Google Books. The search engine will scan Arthur Conan Doyle's complete work, and we will realise that it was never exactly said in one of his publications.

We can use a similar strategy if we see a sentence or paragraph that we'd like to have more context about or that looks like plagiarism. We can search the phrase between quotation marks to see if it was published on another website in the past.

Also, if we want to check whether a politician or public figure has used a phrase on social media or want to track down a particular tweet, we can combine that phrase with the operator "site" to make our query more precise. This might look like: "Earth is square" site:twitter.com/"username".

If a false claim spreads, such as "WHO recommends not wearing masks in public", we can search different combinations of that phrase to see where it appeared first. To assess the origin and validity of pictures, we can use reverse image search. You can search a photo to find similar results and see a list of websites where it has been published before. This method is always the first step to the bringing of context to any visual piece of information. To reverse image search, either right click over an image and select "search Google for image" on Google Chrome, or directly upload the image to Google or other search engines.

Third: Search for context to find the angle of the story

When starting a research project, we should ask ourselves what exactly we expect to find out. Broad topics are often tempting, but they're impossible to cover. It's critical to narrow down the scope of the story. If we try to find out how one country's health system works, for example, we likely are not going to find something worthy of being published. However, if we are guided by an editorial line - in the case of Chicas Poderosas, underrepresented stories with a gender perspective - we can find a more specific angle to our story. One example might be HIV-positive people's access to healthcare between the ages of 20-29 in Mexico.

Fourth: Set up alerts to discover

updates

It's important to never miss updates on the subject we are researching. A key tool for that is Google Alerts, which scans every publication on the web related to a given keyword, and sends an email daily, weekly or instantly with a summary and links to new results.

Alerts can be set to monitor specific people or topics so that we can follow new publications that reference a given source until the end of our investigation. For example, if we want to keep track of every new publication related to gender-based violence, we can set alerts for "femicide", "intimate partner violence", "gender microaggressions" or other relevant keywords. When setting an alert, be precise. To make our alerts more accurate, we can apply the search operators mentioned above. For example, if we want alerts to return information published by social organisations in PDF format, we would add, "filetype PDF site:org".

Fifth: Turn images into text

In your search, you might find useful tables with data, but not necessarily in the format you need. This is common, as many reports are published as PDFs or illustrative graphics. A manual transcription of the data would take too long, but there's another way.

First, upload the picture or PDF to Google Drive. Then right click over the file and select "Open in Google Docs." Google will create a document with the image, but also with a text transcription below.

Sixth: Consider "Iceberg Theory"

After a long investigation, we have to leave out part of our work in order to make the final product attractive, simple and clear to the average reader. According to Ernest Hemingway's iceberg theory, if an investigation is well done, only 25 per cent of the findings are visible in our final story - just as only the tip of an iceberg is visible, and the rest is hidden underwater.

What we place under water and what we decide to let our readers see will depend on our journalistic criteria. This includes not only teasing out which elements add new information to public discourse but also choosing the most important angles for our society.



Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

NOTICE OF SALE OF USED VEHICLES AND GENERATOR

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), Tanzania Country Office offers for sale the item(s) listed below:



No	Description	Chassis/Serial Number	Condition	Transmission Type	Engine Type	Date Purchased
1	VEHICLE, TOYOTA LAND CRUISER 200, MODEL: VD1200R-GNMNZ-0101	JTMHV09J-504066990	Running (Covered 202,580 kms)	Manual	6 Cylinder - Diesel	03/05/2012
2	VEHICLE HYUNDAI - SONATA	KMHEB41CLDA511958	Running (Covered 32,777 kms)	Manual	4 Cylinder Petrol	01/03/2013
3	GENERATING SET "PERKINS", DIESEL ENGINE, 1X100KVA, MODEL 1006TG2A	1006TG2A	Running		Diesel	18/12/2001

General Conditions:

- Bids should be submitted using the Bid Submission Form which can be obtained at FAO Office or can be sent by email upon request by the bidder through email TZ-Procurement@fao.org with subject "FAO Vehicles/Generator Bid Form Request"
- The item(s) will be awarded to the highest bidder.
- Late bids will be rejected.
- Bids below the minimum amount will be rejected.
- Bids to be submitted in Tanzanian Shillings.

Terms of Sale:

- Upon notification, the successful bidder must pay within three (3) working days by direct deposit in cash to the FAO Representation Bank Account or by Telegraphic transfer to FAO Account. Should the successful bidder fail to arrange payment within three (3) working days, the item(s) will be offered to the second highest bidder.
- The item(s) will be handed over to the purchaser after payment is received in full.
- Payment of any transfer fees, sales taxes, import duty, insurance or any other such cost shall be at the expense of the purchaser. The Vehicle(s) will not be released with UN markings, logos and license plates. All security and radio equipment will be removed at FAO's expense.
- FAO reserves the right not to accept any offer if bids do not meet the minimum bid price (Ref. Bid Submission Form)
- Item(s) must be collected from FAO premises not later than **16th October 2020** at the buyer's expense.

- FAO will issue a receipt (Bill of Sale) to the buyer.
- A FAO Property Transfer Form must be signed by both Parties.

Warranty:

All item(s) are offered for sale on an "AS IS WHERE IS" basis, and without recourse or warranties of any kind.

Inspection & Questions:

The items can be viewed during working days at the FAO Offices - Ada Estate SIDA House H, Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road from **7th September to 2nd October 2020 between 09:00 hrs to 15:00 hrs.**

Interested bidders must submit their sealed bids, in an envelope clearly marked "Bid for Purchase of Vehicles/Generator". Bids can be submitted by hand not later than **4th October 2020** to:

**FAO Representative,
SIDA House H, Ada Estate Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road,
Dar es Salaam.**

From The City Centre take first turn left after Tunisia Street before St. Peter Church Junction.

For direction Assistance call: 0755 540 702

OR

Electronically to the email: TZ-procurement@fao.org.

Bids Closing date is 4th October 2020 at 24:00hrs

The number of Covid-19 cases in Kenya is rising fast – and we don't know why...

By Special Correspondents

THE number of Covid-19 cases in Kenya has been accelerating rapidly. The number of new cases has increased by 300 per cent month-over-month since April, while global and regional media have reported on the economic toll of stringent lockdown measures and heavy-handed government practices.

In previous posts, we explored how Africa and the rest of the world have struggled to understand the full extent of the pandemic on the continent.

Until now, there is no comprehensive analysis of how the crisis is playing out in sub-Saharan Africa and, thus far, the global community has been guilty of using limited data (cases and deaths) in most analyses – presenting a lopsided and incomplete picture of the pandemic in Africa.

To address this gap, we have developed a bespoke analysis that integrates typical epidemiological datasets with population mobility data from Google Mobility reports and policy data from Oxford.

We explore these data sources separately and in combination with one another through an illustrative use case for Kenya. We then go a step further by comparing these data sources to a recent pre-print seroprevalence study, which adds deeper dimension to testing positivity and antibody presence in Kenyan populations.

For the first part of this analysis, we used three publicly-available datasets to construct a composite snapshot of the Covid-19 pandemic within Kenya from February 10 through August 10.

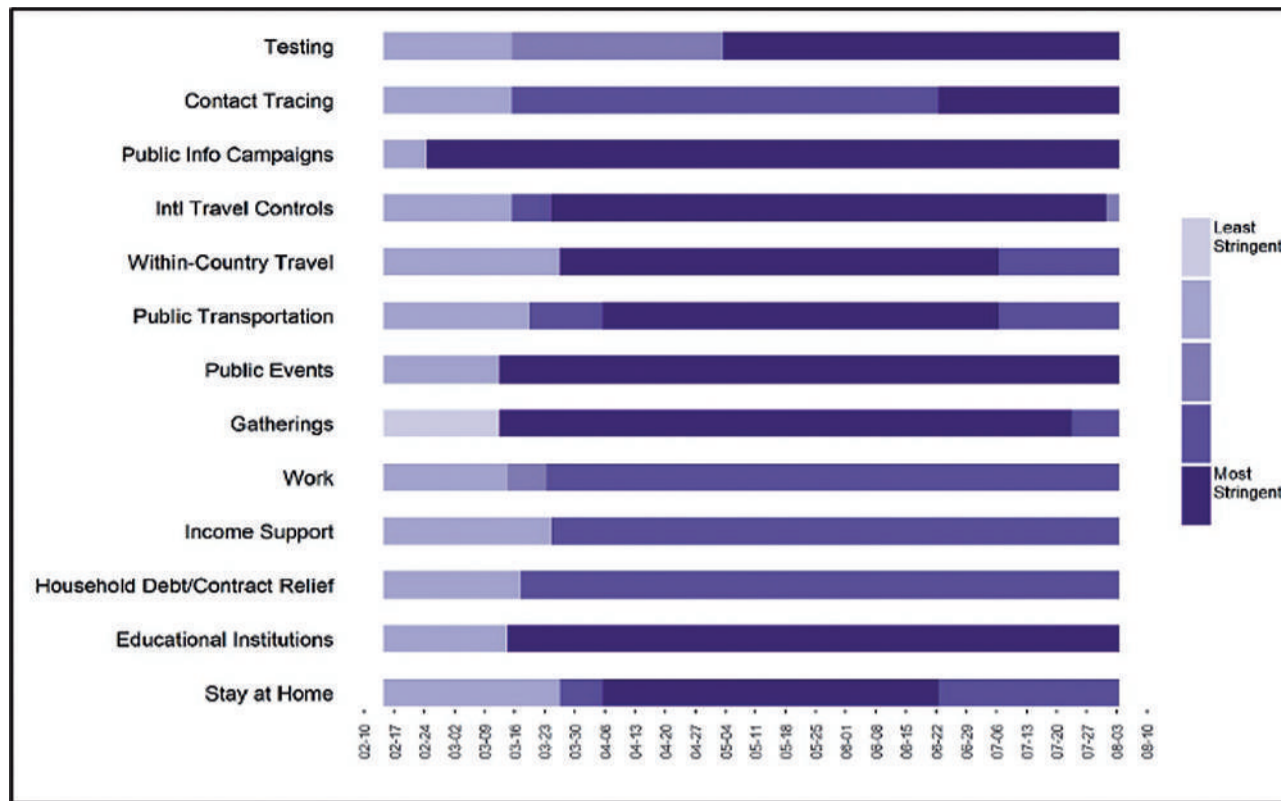
Comparing these data side by side, we found – first – that government policies only restricted daily movements for a short time and Kenyans continued to go to work.

When restrictions on things like public events, gatherings and educational institutions were implemented in early March, data showed a decline in mobility to grocery stores and pharmacies, parks, retail and transit stations.

In June, there was a gradual return to baseline mobility while many restrictions were still in place. Comparable rise in mobility for residences is not observed around the same period (early March).

Instead, the rise in mobility for places of residence is much more gradual. This may be due to non-residence locations such as grocery stores and parks being easier to identify using mobile phone data compared to an individual's "home".

There is also a cyclical pattern for workplace mobility, indicating that many Kenyans were not working from home, likely because their jobs were not con-



diverse to remote work.

Another possible explanation is that, while the Kenyan government provided some financial relief, it may not have been sufficient to fully supplement Kenyans' financial requirements.

Second: Daily new cases and deaths are rapidly rising – but so is the number of tests.

Throughout March and April, daily new cases in Kenya remained extremely low until roundabout mid- to late-May when they began to rise. The incidence of Covid-19 deaths was also generally low until June when it began to rise.

Notably, up until June, 60 per cent of days did not have a single Covid death. However, since June 1, there has not been a single day without a Covid-19 death – and August saw average daily deaths in the double digits.

What, however, was the testing capacity during this time period and how could it have changed over the past few months? We see that the pattern of new daily Covid-19 tests follows a very similar pattern to that of both cases and deaths. While there are some missing testing data in the early months, there is a clear association between increasing case and death detection on the one hand and tests done on the other.

Three: Despite stringent policies initially implemented by the Kenyan government, after a short lull, the number of cases continues to rise.

Another critical insight for understanding a nation's Covid-19 response is the policy landscape. The Oxford Covid-19 Government Response Tracker systematically collects, analyses and pre-

sents policy responses over time, in countries around the globe, across several indicators.

From these data, we can see that public information campaigns were the first policy tool implemented in Kenya in February, suggesting that the government acknowledged the threat of the pandemic early on.

The next wave of policies came into play on March 14 – the date of Kenya's first confirmed Covid-19 case. On that date, we see sweeping regulations on international travel, public events, gatherings, workplaces and schools.

Viewing policy data compared against testing data, we see that more liberal testing policies were put in place the first week of May. In April, the average number of new daily tests was about 650 and, after testing policy expanded, average new tests in May tripled to nearly 1,900.

We can see an additional surge in the number of new daily tests from June to July when contact tracing policies intensified, resulting in an increase from 3,000 to 4,300 new tests per day on average.

Finally, we draw attention to the stay-at-home policy, gradually enacted in late March with a full lockdown in place by early April – lasting through June 22.

From Google Mobility data, this policy coincides with a nearly 50 per cent reduction in mobility during roughly the same time period. Notably however, mobility began to decline well ahead of a stay-at-home order and began returning to normal levels before the lockdown was truly lifted.

This indicates that public information campaigns and individual behaviours were critically important early in the epidemic, while the economic demand to return to work and normal life activities led to more mobility in June and July – despite policies recommending otherwise.

Four: A new seroprevalence study shows rising levels of SARS-CoV-2 antibodies. Data on mobility, new cases, deaths, tests and policy are readily available, on average, but understanding the true underlying epidemiology of Covid-19 remains elusive. This is given severe limitations in testing and potential biases arising from who gets tested, who has severe disease and who dies.

New data from a preprint – that is not yet peer reviewed – study on the seroprevalence of anti-SARS-CoV-2 IgG antibodies in Kenyan blood donors may provide clues as to the true trends of the

incidence and prevalence of Covid-19 in Kenya.

A seroprevalence study uses serology tests to identify people in a population that have antibodies against an infectious disease in order to estimate the percentage of the population that may have been infected. In addition, it shows how an infection progresses through the population over time.

In Kenya, the study population's seroprevalence hovered around 5 per cent throughout May and has been slowly rising since early June.

Similarly, Kenya's test positivity rate – that is, the percentage of all tests conducted that come back positive – was also increasing in early June. The test positivity rate remained below 10 per cent until early June and increased dramatically in early July.

Combining our four data sources including the seroprevalence data indicates that Covid-19 incidence has been rising in Kenya since as early as May. However, stay-at-home orders were not lifted until the end of June. So, why did Covid-19 begin spreading so early and so rapidly?

One explanation is that stay-at-home orders and bans on social gatherings have an impact on mobility – but so do individual behaviours.

Stay-at-home orders and restrictions on social events and gatherings likely had a significant impact on population mobility. There was also a clear return to more normal mobility before lockdown was lifted and even while social distancing recommendations remained in place.

The likely explanation is that people needed to meet their subsistence and household income needs and economic support from the government wasn't enough. To sustain individual behaviour change over periods longer than a month, countries must provide adequate and effective economic and psychosocial support if maintaining limited contact is a priority.

Two: Government policies on testing are critically important. The expansion of testing and contact tracing policies resulted in drastic increases in average daily testing levels, increasing capacity by thousands of tests per day.

This highlights the importance of government action in procuring commodities and supporting supply chains to ensure the availability of treatments, hospital supplies and infrastructure and personal protective equipment.

Three: Testing rates and test positivity increased. Although testing rates did increase dramatically over the time period, we also saw that test positivity increased, suggesting that the increase in tests alone

did not account for the increase in cases.

Along with the trending seroprevalence data, it is safe to assume that underlying incidence was – and still is – on the rise. Only by taking each data source into consideration simultaneously can we draw accurate conclusions about the epidemiology of Covid and inform policy accordingly.

Overall, we saw that increased mobility, despite stringent country policies or increased testing, is likely the primary reason for the increase of Covid-19 cases in Kenya.

Renewed focus on policies which mitigate economic and psychosocial harm, while enabling responsible and safe behaviour, will be key to sustaining a long-term response to the crisis.

So, what's next for Kenya? Our goal with this analysis was to identify underlying epidemic patterns from atypical combinations of publicly available data sources. In doing so, we reveal a data-driven, multidimensional view of Kenya's experience with the Covid-19 pandemic.

As a global community, we have a mandate to think of fresh questions, hypothesize answers and generate new leads that may help slow or stop the ongoing crisis. In a previous post, we outlined a balanced approach that may offer another way to slow the spread of Covid-19 across the African continent.

Kenya could benefit from implementing hyper-targeted, data-driven strategies that take into account their population's response to top-down policies.

Knowing the location and frequency of population movement, combined with regular review of seroprevalence rates and typical testing data, could lead to clearer informational campaigns, informed placement of testing sites or public-safety strategies in key areas.

Data constitute our most powerful tool against Covid-19. By leveraging its data, Kenya can implement better and more proactive policies and strategies to gain an edge against the pandemic.

A dispatch by Cooper/Smith, which uses hard data to increase effectiveness and efficiency of health and development programmes worldwide. This analysis was led by Cooper/Smith resident interns Nathali Gunawardena and Deborah Chan and supervised by Dylan Green of the University of Washington's Epidemiology Department. Nathali holds a BS in Biomedical Science with a minor in Psychology with extensive research experience on maternal and child health in Africa. Deborah is joint researcher and clinician as a nurse with quantitative research interests in global health.

How Belt and Road helps global recovery amid COVID-19 pandemic

BEIJING

AS the COVID-19 pandemic is dragging the global economy into a deep recession, the Belt and Road Initiative, with the participation of overseas Chinese enterprises, have rekindled some hope.

Serving as an international platform for cooperation, the Belt and Road has played a vital role in assisting the fight against the pandemic and stabilizing global supply and industrial chains. Workers of overseas Chinese enterprises and their local counterparts are busy resuming production while taking strict protective measures.

In a phone conversation held in March with Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, Chinese President Xi Jinping said China is willing to work with Italy in global efforts to combat the epidemic and create a Silk Road of Health. On April 14, a China-Europe freight train loaded with much-needed medical and industrial supplies arrived in the western German city of Duisburg.

Noting the difficulties facing German citizens because of the pandemic, Transport Minister of the German State of North Rhine-Westphalia Hendrik Wuest said the goods transported from China, especially medical materials, were of vital importance. In the first half of 2020, China-Europe freight trips rose 36 percent year-on-year to 5,122, transporting 3.67 million pieces and 27,000 tons of anti-pandemic materials to European countries, including Italy, Germany, France, Spain, Poland and Hungary.

Complaining about the massive disruption of the supply chains caused by COVID-19, Michael Schumann, board chairman of the German Federal Association for Economic Development and Foreign Trade, said "in this sense the Belt and Road Initiative can of course make an important contribution to the future." The ancient Silk Road has become both a cargo lifeline and a bond of solidarity.

Soon after Iraq reported its first COVID-19 case, a Chinese medical team consisting of seven experts arrived in the Iraqi capital of Baghdad on March 7. Days later, a Chinese-built lab for coronavirus testing was inaugurated in the war-torn country. "The Chinese experts are very supportive and helpful," lab director Mohammed Ghanim Mahdi said. "When they were here, they gave us all the technical training we need. This can be a treasure for us."

Keshmeer Makun, a lecturer at the University of the South Pacific, said the pandemic has strengthened, not restrained, cooperation under the Belt and Road framework.

The World Bank Group predicted that the global economy will suffer the deepest recession since World War II with a 5.2-percent drop in GDP this year, a figure that highlights the urgent need for the resumption of production.

With strict protective measures, overseas Chinese workers are



Chinese and Sri Lankan staff members conduct maintenance work at Lakvijaya Power Station in Puttalam, Sri Lanka, April 11, 2020. Photo: Xinhua

joining hands with their local colleagues to speed up the construction of landmark projects across the world. Since being discharged on Aug. 22 from a 14-day quarantine after their arrival, over 140 Chinese workers have been devoted to the construction of Peljesac Bridge, the biggest infrastructure project in Croatia. Construction of the bridge, once delayed by the pandemic, is set to pick up speed, thanks to the

output of those welders. "We can't emphasize more on the significance of the bridge to the Croatian people and also to us," said Lu Shengwei, representative of the Chinese construction team. "Everyone knows that the EU-funded bridge that links Croatian territories has been entrusted with a Chinese company."

In Cambodia, despite all the obstacles brought by the pandemic, Chinese and Cambodian workers are forging ahead with the construction of the

country's first expressway. Connecting the capital city of Phnom Penh and the deep-sea port province of Preah Sihanouk in southwestern Cambodia, the 2-billion-U.S.-dollar Chinese-invested expressway is expected to become the artery of Cambodia's economy.

Cambodian Prime Minister Samdech Techo Hun Sen said that this thoroughfare will become an important strategic road, and will contribute to boosting Cambodia's economic growth. "We understand the significance of this expressway and clearly know our responsibilities," said Xu Song, foreman of a construction team of 280 workers on the project. "During this special period, applying strict measures to prevent COVID-19 and advancing the construction steadily are our priorities."

In Sri Lanka, a Chinese operation and maintenance team has been doing its utmost to ensure the normal operation of Lakvijaya Power Station, a Chinese-built power plant that provides about 40 percent of the nation's electricity supply. Pang Tusheng, a technician of the team, said he planned to return to China to attend his daughter's wedding, but the pandemic changed his plans. "Under such circumstances, we should stick to our posts because it's a significant task to maintain the smooth operation of the power station," said Pang.

Following the epidemic, China has rushed to the rescue of those in need, upholding the vision of a community with a shared future for mankind. "The right approach to tackling global crises and realizing long-term development is through greater connectivity, openness, and inclusiveness," Xi said on June 18 in a written message to the High-level Video Conference on Belt and Road International Cooperation. China will work

with its partners to develop the Belt and Road into a model of cooperation, a model of health, a model of recovery, and a model of growth, Xi said.

China's vision for a shared future and its proposals to jointly build the Belt and Road have been welcomed by experts around the globe. World Health Organization Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said the Health Silk Road and Digital Silk Road put forward by China highlight the importance of innovative forms of cooperation to tackle the challenges we collectively face.

Charles Onunaiju, director of the Center for China Studies in Abuja, Nigeria, said Xi's remarks have given African countries full confidence in defeating the pandemic.

"The Belt and Road, in which Africa is considerably engaged, will play a pivotal role in global recovery" in the post-pandemic era, said Onunaiju. Pavle Basic, member of the Serbia National Council for Coordination of Cooperation with Russia and China, said Serbia has given its full support to the Belt and Road. "We deem the initiative as one of the most significant initiatives on the global arena, which will contribute to the creation of worldwide partnerships in all areas," said Basic.

Yu Xiong, professor with Surrey Business School at the University of Surrey, said "in the current complex international environment, China's clear layout of future plans brings strong confidence to people at home and abroad who are concerned about China's development." "Many countries share the vision that, China, whose economy has begun to steadily recover, can lead them to develop and face the next challenges together," the professor said.

Xinhua

AU mulls guarantee scheme for small businesses to spur economic transformation

By Special Correspondent

THE African Union (AU) is planning to put in place a guarantee scheme for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSME) to speed up the continent's economic transformation, an official has said.

Director in charge of delivery program and coordination at the African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), Amine Idriss Adoume, told a virtual meeting that one of the biggest impediments for the expansion of small businesses in Africa is the lack of affordable finance.

"The scheme will be developed jointly with partners and seeks to unlock access to affordable finance for the continent's small businesses," Adoume said during the launch of the Pan-African MSME Academy for Kenya.

The academy plans to launch across Africa with country-specific content in line with local business environments.

Adoume said the academy has been positioned to enable small entrepreneurs to achieve sustainable growth as they emerge through the COVID-19 pandemic.

The AU is prioritizing development of MSMEs because of their significance in the region, he said.

There are currently between 95 million and 100 million MSMEs in Africa, employing some 300 million people, Adoume said.

"They are therefore a key driver of economic growth and employment in the continent," he added.

The AU official said the credit guarantee scheme will be designed to provide comfort to banks so that they can extend loans to MSMEs.

Adoume noted that commercial banks shy away from providing credit to small businesses because they are perceived to have high default risk.

Betty Maina, cabinet secretary at the Kenyan Ministry of Industrialization, Trade and Enterprise Development, said Kenya is also developing a credit guarantee scheme that will support commercial banks to extend financial support to small businesses.

MSMEs are a critical part of Kenya's economy as they constitute over 90 per cent of all businesses and provide 30 per cent of all employment opportunities, she said.

The Kenyan government has also established a list of goods that will be procured by public entities and supplied by local MSMEs, Maina said.

According to the ministry of industrialization, Kenya has so far launched three rounds of economic stimulus packages to cushion businesses and households against the effects of restrictions imposed to curb the spread of COVID-19.



Centre for women-led climate adaptation breaks ground in Uganda

By Zak Derler and Climate Justice Resilience Fund

A community hub for East African women to lead on solutions which address climate change has laid its foundations in the eastern Ugandan town of Tororo.

Women's Climate Centers International (WCCI), a network of organisations that recognises the importance of physical spaces to enable women to participate in climate change adaptation and mitigation activities, developed the project.

Comfort Mukasa, WCCI's lead administrator and founder of Uganda Women's Water Initiative (UWWI), sees the climate centre as an "opportunity to tap

into low cost indigenous climate solutions."

She added: "A physical space fosters community participation in climate solutions thus fostering ownership. The end goal for WCCI is to create a one-stop climate solutions center for local, national, and international learning."

Rose Wamalwa, WCCI's East Africa coordinator and one of the network's founding members, stressed the value of community hubs for women in the climate sphere.

"As an African woman, I believe it is important to have a physical space to address climate change because it will promote equity and inclusion, and that means it will encour-

age community engagement in decision making processes," she said.

"Globally we know that women's environmental leadership has proven time and again to be one of the greatest leverage points for increasing our collective environmental and climate resilience initiatives," she added.

As well as working to establish women's climate centres at WCCI, Wamalwa is also the founder of Women in Water and Natural Resources Conservation (WWANC); a non-profit in western Kenya that promotes women as agents of change within their communities.

Having grown up in a male-dominated environment, Wa-

malwa felt motivated to create a platform for women's voices in the area of climate resilience and environmental protection and conservation. After carrying out a survey in the region and finding that many rural women held similar desires, she and her colleagues set up WCCI.

"We want the women to be involved," she said, "not just as beneficiaries of climate change projects, but as planners, decision makers, and managers, and we feel that through this approach of climate centres they will have a voice and platform where they can raise their issues."

As a coalition of leaders from a number of sister organisations, the WCCI has a flat struc-

ture with NGO founders from North America and Africa. This gives the group a dynamic and participatory North-South collaboration, shifting away from the historical norms where power is concentrated in northern countries.

Currently, the Tororo project has built the foundation for its central office and meeting hall and constructed a wash station as per the community's request - but WCCI is aiming for a much larger reach.

"We hope to establish a thriving centre in Tororo by 2023 and build one more either in Northern Uganda or Kenya by 2025 using the communities where our East African partners are already established as our

guide," said Tracy Mann, WCCI's United States coordinator and project director of Climate Wise Women. "We believe the Center model will serve women's organisations and communities beyond East Africa but will use these first ones to demonstrate our work and to provide a training ground for other women wishing to build climate centres in their own communities," she explained.

During Covid-19, Mann and her colleagues have noted the principles of community resilience among issues related to the pandemic and climate change are alike.

"The same problem-solving abilities women employ to address climate change impacts

are vital in a time of Covid-19," Mann said, emphasising the need for women's climate centres to address both immediate and long-term issues.

WCCI has large ambitions and hopes to use the first few climate centres it establishes as a model and catalyst for community hubs that empower women to be at the forefront in addressing climate change across the world.

"Women have the solutions, they have the power, and they have the potential, so as WCCI we are creating this platform and calling upon all local and international stakeholders to join us in pushing this initiative," said Wamalwa. "we want to see women climate centres in all countries."

Sweden commits funds to IFAD in bid to avert COVID related famine

By Guardian Reporter

THE Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), has pledged funds to help avert a potential food crisis in some of the world's most vulnerable rural communities in the wake of COVID-19, the UN's International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) announced today.

SEK 50 million (approximately US\$5.7 million) will be committed to IFAD's Rural Poor Stimulus Facility which was launched in April by IFAD's Goodwill Ambassadors, Idiris and Sabrina Elba. The Facility is supporting small-scale farmers and rural producers to continue to grow and sell food despite COVID-19 restrictions in movement and trade, by providing timely access to agricultural inputs, information, markets and liquidity.

"We would like to thank Sweden for its commitment to achieving a world without poverty and hunger," said Gilbert F. Houngbo, President of IFAD. "The funds will assist rural producers, particularly women, to continue making food available on the markets, ensuring that the COVID-19 pandemic does not escalate into a lingering food crisis."

"In the midst of the pandemic, we need to support sustainable food production to reduce poverty and achieve Zero Hunger by 2030. Small-scale farmers are in the frontline and they need assistance now," said Carin Jämtin, Sida's Director-General.

Sweden also committed SEK 40 million (approximately US\$4.6 million) to IFAD's Financing Facility for Remittances. This will help maximize the impact of remittances and



diaspora investment on rural development, accelerate the transformation of remittance markets through new technologies, and promote financial inclusion so that families receiving remittances use their funds productively.

Remittance flows, often a lifeline for rural families in the developing world, are projected to decline by about 20 per cent this year due to migrant workers' loss of employment worldwide, and reduced access to transfer operators caused by the

COVID-19 restrictions.

About 80 per cent of the world's poorest and most food-insecure people live in rural areas. Around 135 million people were recently categorised as facing acute food insecurity and malnutrition. It is estimated that this number could nearly double before the end of the year due to the impacts of COVID-19.

Movement restrictions to prevent the spread of the virus left many small-scale producers without access markets to sell

produce or to buy seeds or fertilizer. Transport and border closures adversely affected rural areas and disrupted food systems. The most vulnerable include daily labourers, small businesses and informal workers, mostly women and young people.

Sweden is a founding member of IFAD and is one of the 36 members of IFAD's Executive Board. It has committed more than US\$471 million to the Fund. With a specific focus on helping small-scale farmers adapt to climate change, Sweden has contributed

substantially to building the resilience of more 30 million rural people.

IFAD invests in rural people, empowering them to reduce poverty, increase food security, improve nutrition and strengthen resilience. Since 1978, we have provided US\$22.4 billion in grants and low-interest loans to projects that have reached an estimated 512 million people. IFAD is an international financial institution and a United Nations specialized agency based in Rome - the United Nations food and agriculture hub.

Novartis, AMSP collaborate to supply Covid-19 medicines to AU

By Special Correspondent

NOVARTIS and the African Union (AU) through the Africa Medical Supplies Platform (AMSP) yesterday announced a new collaboration to facilitate the supply of medicines from the Novartis Pandemic Response

Portfolio to the AU member states and Caribbean Community (Caricom) countries.

The collaboration aims to help alleviate supply and logistical constraints in the AU member states; portfolio of 15 generic and over-the-counter (OTC) medicines from Sandoz divi-

sion will be sold at zero-profit to governments through AMSP to 55 African and 15 Caricom eligible countries; the AU through the AMSP has integrated vetted medical suppliers to ensure rapid access to affordable Covid-19 related supplies.

"Our collaboration with AMSP

is a continuation of our efforts at Novartis to combat Covid-19 across the world," said Vas Narasimhan, CEO of Novartis.

"Together, we are aiming to accelerate and expand access to affordable essential medicines in Africa to meet the very urgent patient needs across the conti-

ment as it continues battling this pandemic."

The AMSP portal is an online marketplace that enables the supply of Covid-19-related critical medical equipment in Africa. It was developed under the leadership of the AU special envoy

Strive Masiyiwa and powered by Janngo, on behalf of Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The platform was also developed in partnership with African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA).

"Following the successful listing of test kits, personal protective equipment, and clinical management devices, the African Union Chairperson has expanded our mandate to include groundbreaking medicines to treat Covid-19 patients in Africa," said Masiyiwa.

The mystery of why so many 100-year-olds are surviving Covid-19

By Mariana Lenharo

MARÍA Brnyas, 113 years old and believed to be the oldest woman in Spain, had only mild symptoms of Covid-19. In New Jersey, US, Governor Phil Murphy praised Sylvia Goldsholl for beating the novel coronavirus at the age of 108.

Connie Titchen, 106, meanwhile received a round of applause from doctors and nurses as she was wheeled out of Birmingham's City Hospital in the UK. She said she felt very lucky to have fought off the virus.

One of the established facts about Covid-19 is that it hits older people hardest, which is why stories of centenarians beating Covid-19 piqued the curiosity of geneticist Mayana Zatz.

According to the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the risk of dying due to Covid-19 is 630 times higher in people over the age of 85 as compared to young adults ages 18 to 29. So, how come some of the oldest of the old are surviving Covid-19 unharmed?

Zatz, who directs the Human Genome and Stem-Cell Research Center at the University of São Paulo, in Brazil, has a hunch that sheer luck is not enough to explain it. She has always been intrigued by how certain seniors seem to effortlessly overcome all kinds of health issues.

In the past few years, her team sequenced the whole genome of 1,170 people over 60. One goal of the project, which is the largest genome study of older adults in Latin America, was to identify genetic traits that may contribute to healthy aging. Zatz was in the process of writing the results when the pandemic hit.

Now focused on those older than 95 who defeated Covid-19, Zatz is already recruiting and collecting blood samples from people in that age group who were either diagnosed with Covid-19 or were in very close contact with symptomatic Covid-19 patients.

"When people ask me why these people are surviving, I usually answer that it's probably precisely because they are centenarians," Zatz says, adding: "Apparently, these people have a huge resistance to any challenge coming from the environment, including Covid-19."

Through whole genome sequencing, she hopes to identify possible genetic mutations associated with Covid-19 super-resistance. "We suspect it's not a single gene, but a combination of genes," Zatz notes.

And if such mutations exist, she wants to know what they do. Are the mutations responsible for altering the function of a certain protein that might contribute to the body's defence against the virus, for example?

If scientists can find a way to trigger that same effect in people without such mutations, that could be a po-



tential new treatment strategy to be explored.

Another step of the research is to use the centenarians' blood cells to generate other types of cells in the lab, such as cardiac, respiratory or nervous cells, and watch how they respond to Covid-19 compared to the cells of people with the disease who developed severe symptoms.

In the lab, it is possible to reprogram blood cells into the so-called induced pluripotent stem cells (iPSCs). These cells behave just like certain cells in a human embryo that are able to grow into different types of tissues. Observing how the virus behaves in the centenarians' tissues may also open new avenues for treatments, Zatz says.

So far, her research center has enrolled six volunteers, all women, ages 98 to 106, who had only mild symptoms of Covid-19 or no symptoms at all, despite being in close contact with someone diagnosed with the virus.

One of the volunteers is 98-year-old Carmen Ferri. Her 72-year-old son, Antonio, had flu-like symptoms in March. Through an online doctor's appointment, he was misdiagnosed with a sinus infection and treated with antibiotics at home, where he lives with his wife and Carmen.

For about ten days, Antonio continued to have close contact with his mother. As one of Carmen's main caregivers, he helps her get around the house and use the toilet. These were the early days of the pandemic in Brazil, and no one in the house wore masks. When Antonio's symptoms worsened, his son-in-law took him to the hospital, where he was diagnosed with Covid-19 and spent 15 days at the semi-intensive care unit. "We thought

it was very curious that my grandmother didn't get sick after having such close contact with my infected father," says Adriana Ferri, a former genetics researcher and Carmen's granddaughter, adding: "I believe there is something different about her. Maybe it is a protective gene or a strong immune system. I am very curious to see what this research will find."

To broaden her quest for a resistance gene, Zatz included another group of people in her research: couples where only one of the two got infected with Covid-19.

People who managed to escape the virus despite sharing the bed with a symptomatic partner are also potentially resistant, and the scientist hopes their genomes will help answer some of her questions.

Studying these people might also lead to an assessment of how much of the population is naturally resistant to the virus. "Most studies estimate the number of people infected at a given population by looking at the percentage of those with antibodies," Zatz says, adding: "But we have no idea how many people, despite not having antibodies, are resistant to the virus."

Looking at the other outliers

Just as there are centenarians surviving Covid-19, there are, unfortunately, young people without any underlying conditions being defeated by the disease.

Zatz's lab partnered with another team of researchers at the University of São Paulo's Medical School who are conducting minimally invasive autopsies on people who died with suspected Covid-19. Her team will select young people who died with the disease and

no comorbidities and will sequence their genome from skin samples.

In this case, the goal is to look for vulnerability genes. Zatz's research center is collaborating, alongside several institutions around the world, with an international consortium called the Covid Human Genetic Effort to find the genetic basis of severe coronavirus infection in young people.

In a recent article, the team described the hypothesis that severe cases in the young and healthy are due to what's referred to as "monogenic inborn errors of immunity", single genes that disrupt the person's immunity to certain pathogens. The group has recently submitted their first results, still unpublished, to the journal *Science*.

The idea that there is an interplay between a person's genetics and how vulnerable they are to a certain pathogen has been around for a while.

Long before genome sequencing was made possible, this relationship was explored through twin studies, which are good for revealing if genes are playing a role in a certain disease. A 1943 twin study revealed, for example, that genetic factors may account for a vulnerability to tuberculosis.

Thanks to modern gene sequencing techniques, the search for resistance and vulnerability genes is now possible, and genetics may be the key to solve the mystery of why Covid-19 is so devastating for some people but not for others.

A report originally published in *Elemental*, a Medium publication about health and wellness. Mariana Lenharo is a science and health journalist with a special interest in evidence-based medicine and epidemics.

US party conventions sound horn for final sprint in 2020 election

WASHINGTON

THE 2020 Democratic and Republican conventions concluded successfully in last two weeks, where presidential nominees respectively rolled out their visions for the United States, while adding fuel to political rhetoric against each other.

The conventions came at a time when the coronavirus pandemic is still raging in the country, with the economy struggling to recover, and calls for racial justice growing stronger. The events have set the stage for the final sprint in the presidential election that is saddled with uncertainties and challenges.

-DIFFERENT VISIONS

During the finale of the Democratic National Convention (DNC) on Aug. 20, former U.S. Vice President Joe Biden accepted the party's presidential nomination in a speech swiping at his Republican rival, sitting President Donald Trump.

From a stadium in Wilmington in the eastern state of Delaware, Biden accused Trump of "cloaking" America in darkness for much too long and causing "too much anger, too much fear, too much division," while presenting himself as a unifying force to restore "the soul of the nation" and "an ally of the light."

The 77-year-old moderate political veteran, who has also enjoyed support from the party's liberal wing, went on to promise to address the pandemic from day one since taking office, rebuild the economy, strengthen the health care system, deal with racial injustice, and tackle climate change.

In his acceptance speech from the White House South Lawn Thursday night, Trump fought back by going after Biden on topics ranging from the economy to foreign policy and sought to draw a contrast between himself and the former vice president, alleging that "there has never been such a difference between two parties, or two individuals, in ideology, philosophy, or vision than there is right now."

Notably, Trump brought to the fore his "law and order" message, as public anger has erupted after 29-year-old African American Jacob Blake was shot seven times in the back by a white police officer during an arrest in Kenosha, Wisconsin a week ago, leading to massive protests and violence at times.

The president, however, didn't address the shooting or racial justice in his speech. Instead, he touted job numbers for African Americans, and doubled down on his support of police.

To make his case for reelection, Trump also touted what he believes were accomplishments of his first term, made promises for the next four years, and tried to reshape the narrative of his administration's handling of the pandemic, which has infected nearly 6 million people and killed more than 182,000 in the United States.

"Democrats basically argued Trump is incompetent and completely mismanaged COVID and the economy... Republicans are focused on law and order and say Biden will be an ultra-liberal who will take America in a dangerous direction," said Darrell West, vice president and director

of Governance Studies at the Brookings Institution, a Washington, D.C.-based think tank.

UNCONVENTIONAL CONVENTIONS

Traditionally, party conventions are aimed at building momentum for presidential nominees in the months leading up to the election day, with tens of thousands of delegates, politicians, lobbyists, and reporters gathering for the quadrennial, fanfare-rich assemblies.

This year, the pandemic has largely put in-person campaign activities on hold. While all events of the DNC were held virtually, hundreds of Republicans met in Charlotte, North Carolina to renominate Trump and Vice President Mike Pence for the party's 2020 ticket. Besides, both Trump and Pence addressed a live audience while accepting the renomination.

The Trump campaign said the Republican National Convention (RNC), which ran from Monday to Thursday, brought in more views across television and online than the DNC's, while the party's fundraising arms raked in 76 million U.S. dollars during the period, also higher than the DNC's. But Trump's acceptance speech drew fewer audience members than Biden's, according to Nielsen Media Research.

Trump got a boost from the RNC. A new Morning Consult poll conducted on Friday that asked more than 4,000 likely voters which candidate they would pick found Biden leading Trump by 6 percentage points, 50 percent to 44 percent. But on Aug. 23, Biden led 52 percent to 42 percent.

"In the particular case of the post-RNC polls, I'd say the small Trump bounce in polls so far is about what you might have expected and shouldn't change your view of the race much," Nate Silver, founder and editor-in-chief of FiveThirtyEight, a U.S. website on opinion poll analysis, politics and economics, tweeted on Saturday.

According to the RealClearPolitics polling average, Biden still leads Trump by 6.9 percentage points nationally and 2.7 points in top battleground states, as of Saturday night, but both numbers have shrunk.

RESTARTING CAMPAIGNS

Immediately after the acceptance speech, Trump returned to the campaign trail on Friday by holding a rally in Londonderry in the northeastern state of New Hampshire. Separately, Pence made campaign stops in Michigan and Minnesota, both critical battleground states, on Friday.

The states appear to be vital to Trump's reelection bid as his campaign has limited options compared to the electoral map from 2016 and has found itself on the defense in a number of states that the former businessman and television celebrity carried in his race against then Democratic presidential nominee and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Campaign officials have identified New Hampshire and Minnesota as flip opportunities after Trump narrowly lost them four years ago. He won Michigan by only 0.3 percentage point at that time but polls have showed him trailing Biden in the "Great Lakes State."

Xinhua

US testing laboratories are running out of monkeys

By Summer Anne Burton

ACCORDING to a recent report by Sarah Zhang, as published in *The Atlantic*, the US is "facing a monkey shortage". The piece explains that laboratories racing to develop Covid-19 vaccines and treatments are "competing for a limited pool of monkeys" following to an increase in demand for - and the shut-down of - exports from China.

Before the coronavirus pandemic, US laboratories were already increasing their use of primates compared to other animals - in 2017, the country used 74,498 non-human primates for research, a record number - and now they want more.

Monkeys are integral to the vaccine process as we know it because they are typically used in the final stage of testing for human safety. That's because non-human primates and human primates are so closely related that our immune systems and antibody reactions are likely to be nearly identical.

It stands to reason, and is clearly apparent to anyone who has observed these animals, that our primate cousins are also equally capable of both suffering and yearning, and that they would prefer to be free to do what comes naturally in a place that feels natural.

Instead, we have consigned each of these beings to an artificial life devoid of joy or pleasure. At best, they will be

caged indoors, constantly tested and prodded, and eventually killed - in some cases, for decades. Those are the lucky ones, while others will suffer from more intense pain and disease.

Not only do we expect animals-that-are-not-humans to suffer and die by the thousands (primates) or millions (rodents) for our own health and safety (or for lipstick or for an ingredient that makes fake meat bleed like real meat), but we don't even treat them well in exchange.

Even at prestigious universities, animal in laboratories suffer not only from being constantly infected and observed under fluorescent lights but also from a lack of basic welfare.

Last December saw David Grimm ask for Science: "Should aging lab monkeys be retired to sanctuaries?" The story tells of a 23-year-old arthritic macaque named Bush, whose entire life was spent in an indoor cage being repeatedly tested, before he was released to Peaceable Primates sanctuary for the last bit of his life.

The Princeton researchers, who tested on Bush for most of his life and then partnered with a primate sanctuary for his "retirement", come across as major softies in comparison to other scientists interviewed for the story.

Those who object to Bush's retirement say that these monkeys should really be used for human ends, such as suffering diseases that often afflict the elderly - up until their last mo-



ments of life. Others worry about the sheer logistics of finding homes for the thousands of monkeys sitting in cages in US labs.

Grimm reports that critics also fear that the very idea of retirement will plant a seed that will lead to monkeys being phased out of research, like chimpanzees have been. Amanda Dettmer, a Yale primate researcher, is quoted as saying: "We're not just concerned about the welfare of animals. We're concerned about the welfare of society."

I checked in on how Bush is doing at Peaceable Primates - he likes celery, flirting with his next-door neighbour, and seems to be soaking up the sun.

I wrote back in March that I believe animal testing is ethically indefensible, even if it saves human lives. It seems to be radical to believe that humans don't simply deserve to survive and thrive forever at the expense of countless others suffering, and it's unsurprising that scientists who specifically see their role as improving "the welfare of society" would disagree.

It does sometimes feel cruel to question the cost of any research that would limit or end the immense human suffering that the Covid-19 pandemic has caused. There's little that I want more than a vaccine that allows life to return to joyful, and which spares as many of us as possible from further grief.

It is very normal and very comfortable to adhere to an ethical framework that only prioritises human society and human suffering. But is it right?

There's refreshing moral clarity in simply treating animals as what they are: feeling beings. They are not objects. They are not capital. They can't - and don't - consent to suffer and die in captivity because we want them to, and they don't deserve to be hurt just because humans don't want to be.

Summer Anne Burton is Editor-in-Chief and Founder of Tenderly.

TPDC CHIEF SAYS TALKS WITH LNG ENERGY INVESTORS TO START SOON

By Property Watch Reporter

NEGOTIATIONS between the government and international oil companies on revenue sharing from the US\$30 billion liquefied natural gas project in Lindi Region will restart soon.

Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation's Managing Director, Dr James Mataragio said in Dar es Salaam last week that the host government agreement talks with the consortium of IOCs led by Royal Dutch Shell and Equinor will pave way for a final investment decision.

"We are making progress because we have just completed land acquisition after compensating all affected people in Lindi Region," Dr Mataragio noting that progress has been made with TPDC paying over 5.4bn/- compensation to villagers in Lindi Region the pave way for the gigantic project.

"We are preparing to resume HGA negotiations that will lead us to FEED. The HGA negotiations are due to start any time from now," the TPDC Head added. FEED stands for Front End Engineering Design.

In June, Energy Minister, Dr Medard Kalemami told parliament that, "Construction of this project is expected to start in 2022 and will be concluded in 2028. The project will have capacity to produce 10 million tonnes of LNG a year."

In his budget speech for 2020/21, Dr Kalemami noted that the government has been holding individual talks with the oil companies to agree a "host government agreement" since last year with reported deadlocks on how to



An artist's impression of a modern LNG plant.

share revenue from the exports.

Commenting on progress being made in implementing the LNG project, Equinor ASA Press Spokesman, Erik Haaland said for the LNG project to proceed, it will depend on having a solid framework in place. The key project agreements are the production shar-

ing agreement and HGA, together because they form the framework for the investor to mature the project towards a final investment decision.

"Any delay in agreeing and establishing these agreements, will result in postponement of the project start-up. Equinor believes

there is a good opportunity for the parties to negotiate a framework that will benefit Tanzania, Equinor and the other partners in the project," Halaand stated.

The entire oil and gas industry, including the LNG markets, has gone through turmoil these last months, however, Equinor believes

in a long term sustainable LNG market. Other members of the consortium led by Equinor along with Royal Dutch Shell are Exxon Mobil, Ophir Energy and Pavilion Energy.

Seconding Equinor's position, Shell Tanzania's External Relations Manager, Patricia Mhondo said the company is keen to move forward with the HGA discussions and look forward to government's guidance and clarity on how and when that process will recommence.

"The HGA is an important milestone as it seeks to establish a clear legal, fiscal and commercial framework for the LNG project. The completion of this required project framework will provide a clear milestone towards maturation," Mhondo said.

She further noted that Shell Tanzania which is a subsidiary of Royal Dutch Shell currently the world is facing a challenging macroeconomic environment particularly due to the dual challenges of low energy demand as a result of the global impact of the novel coronavirus outbreak as well as the oversupply of oil and LNG in the market.

"Most international oil and gas companies and their shareholders are increasingly scrutinizing their global project portfolio. With an increasingly cash and capital constrained world, only the best and most competitive projects will get funding going forward," she alerted.

"We look forward to work with the government of Tanzania to make the project competitive within the global market environment," the Shell Tanzania External Relations Manager added.

Shell and its partners have so far invested over US\$2 billion in exploration and appraisal in the country and are keen to develop and commercialize the gas in blocks 1 & 4 offshore Lindi and Mtwara Regions.

Drones open new opportunities for African women entrepreneurs

JOHANNESBURG

WHILE unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), or drones, have been around in one form or another since the 1920s, it's only in the last decade or so that they've become more mainstream and used in industries other than defence.

Until recently, this versatile and agile technology was limited to privileged hobbyists and a few specialist businesses, but drones are now used across commercial, scientific, engineering, agriculture and recreation industries with great success.

This means that the demand for skilled pilots is on the increase, creating a new pathway into aviation for those passionate about flying but who, for whatever reason, may seek an aviation career outside of the norm of being an aircraft pilot.

Refilwe Ledwaba, a fixed wing and helicopter pilot, flight instructor, women's rights advocate and the founder of The Girls Fly Programme in Africa (GFPA), says that being a drone pilot is an exciting career opportunity for women, adding that qualified drone pilots who are knowledgeable about the legislation surrounding this emerging industry are increasingly in demand.

"The huge popularity of the Girls Fly Programme in Africa Aviation and Space Camps shows just how passionate young women are about careers in aviation - and how many are seeking new and exciting ways to enter the sector," she says.

"Drone aviation offers a whole new world of career opportunities for young women. While achieving all the necessary certifications to fly drones professionally is onerous and expensive, doing so is more affordable than the qualifications required to fly commercial aircraft, making the industry more accessible."

With the drone industry worldwide expected to grow by 51.1% over the next eight years, research shows that 62% of drone services providers are self-employed, with service providers only able to make a success of their business if they're driven by an entrepreneurial passion and the skills to run their own company.

Teaching SME-level drone businesses these valuable skills was the driving force behind the recent drone accelerator programme run by Mzansi Aerospace Technologies in partnership with Royal HaskoningDHV, which set out to show qualifying businesses how to drive the adoption of drone



A drone is airborne.

technology in South Africa, and harness its potential to create jobs and boost employment.

The programme was hosted at the Centre for Entrepreneurship Rapid Incubator (CfERI) at the Ekurhuleni West TVET College in Katlehong, and was supported by partners including the Small Enterprise Development Agency (SEDA), the City of Ekurhuleni, the National Youth Development Agency and United Drone Holdings.

"We want to address two main challenges: the fact that most start-ups fail because there is no market demand for their product, and that, of the 60 licensed drone operators in South Africa, only one is

black owner managed," explains Victor Radebe, Mzansi Aerospace Technologies Founder. "The programme aimed to help start-ups to refine their innovations, to help them gain traction in the marketplace or service that solves specific challenges in various industries." Among the 13 companies participating in the incubator project were four woman-owned businesses, operating in industries as diverse as defence, security, law enforcement and infrastructure surveillance, as well as construction and building maintenance, civil engineering services, and built environment project management.

"This first drone business incubator highlighted the fact that drone pilots and businesses that offer drone services are increasingly in demand across South Africa, and well beyond the main centres - emphasizing that careers as drone pilot - unlike conventional aviation skills - are not just linked to cities with airports," says Ledwaba.

"Piloting drones is a career that can be taken anywhere across industries and countries, whether flying a survey aircraft across a remote mining site, or supporting asset management strategies for multinational corporates," adds Gideon Treurnich, Strategic Business Development Manager at Royal HaskoningDHV South Africa.

GBCSA awards Equator the Belt Factory 5-star Green Star certification

DURBAN

THE Green Building Council of South Africa has awarded Durban-based belt manufacturer Equator the Belt Factory a five-star Green Star Certification for Existing Building Performance.

The rating focuses on energy use and water efficiencies, waste management and peoples' working environments - all factors that were not priorities, in a different era, when the factory was initially built by the then Frame Textiles in 1967.

Equator - the Belt Factory purchased the former textile mill in 2017 and has invested in implementing a number of sustainability interventions and initiatives. These include rainwater harvesting and water-saving fittings, energy-efficient fittings and systems, waste management systems (including reduction, recycling and composting), improved indoor environmental quality through the use of double-glazing, non-toxic paints and finishes, the use of second-hand and upcycled furniture, employee training and operational initiatives to improve efficiency, material offcut donations, and small business and employee development.

Managing director Leon Buhr says that it now requires less energy to make a belt from start to finish than it takes to make a cup of tea. He says that, while this significant five-star Green Star certification marks a notable milestone for the local belt manufacturer, this is just part of a long-term journey.

"For us, sustainability is a company-wide, all-encompassing effort that is becoming deeply ingrained in the company culture. The Green Star certification is an important and credible marker of our progress and has taken a great deal of effort, says Buhr.

"It is said there is no destination for a sustainability journey - just daily improvement. But if one could define sustainability goals, it would be a circular economy and carbon neutrality. So we use those as our guiding lights in terms of decisions and choices we make and innovations we implement."



Durban-based Belt Factory.

Cement consumption defies Covid curbs to hit 3.4m bags

NAIROBI

CEMENT consumption in the first seven months defied effects of the coronavirus pandemic pointing to stable activity in the construction sector despite the restrictions imposed in March to curb spread of the disease.

Data from the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) show that consumption rose 4.5 percent to 3.59 million tonnes in the period from 3.44 million tonnes posted first seven months of last year. The sector remained relatively unaffected by restrictions on movement into and out of Nairobi and Mombasa, dusk to dawn curfew and bans on public gatherings that hit most sectors of the economy.

Cement consumption rose month-on-month from April before it fell in July when Kenya announced phased re-opening of the country including resuming movement into and out of Nairobi and Mombasa.

"Following the lifting of the cessation of movement order we have seen a slight recovery of up to 10 percent largely driven by sales beyond the Nairobi Metropolitan area...all indicators are positive that a steady recovery will be achieved in the medium term," Savannah Cement chief executive Ronald Ndegwa said. Consumption was 551,914 tonnes in March, fell to 505,958 tonnes in April and rose to 506,728 tonnes and 508,298 in May and June, respectively.

But cement use in the three months to June during the peak of the restrictions, remained higher compared to the same period last year. This contrasts with other indicator in the property market like rent, home prices and land costs - which have been subdued by the reduced economic activities in the wake of the pandemic. Rent prices in Nairobi and the neighbouring counties of Kiambu, Kajajo and Machakos dropped 0.2 percent in the three months to June compared to a 3.6 percent growth in a similar period last year. HassConsult, which conducts a quarterly property pricing index in Kenya linked the fall to an oversupply of homes amid reduced demand related to the Covid-19 economic fallout.

TREASURY REGISTRAR: WE'RE FOLLOWING UP PERFORMANCE OF TAHI PRIVATISED HOTELS

By Property Watch Reporter

THE Treasury is closely following up performance of accommodation facilities under the defunct state owned Tanzania Hotels Investment Limited with the possibility of repossessing them if investors are not adhering to agreed benchmarks.

The Treasury Registrar's spokesman, Anthony Mkuti, said in Dar es Salaam this week that currently they are conducting investigations relating to the privatised enterprises many of which have been abandoned by their new owners.

"We are on alert and following up what is happening of the ground relating to the privatised TAHI hotels," said Mkuti when responding to reports that four properties which were privatised to Mauritius based Hotels and Lodges Limited are currently dilapidated with little semblance of new investment being injected.

When HLL bought TAHI's Ngorongoro Wildlife Lodge, Seronera Wildlife Lodge, Lobo Wildlife Lodge and Lake Manyara Lodge in early 2000, the investor had pledged to spend US\$20 million in upgrading and modernizing them.

The Mauritius based HLL paid US\$28 million to the then Presidential Parastatal Sector Reform Commission, to acquire the state owned lodges located in the Northern tourist enclave including Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater.

Early this year, Deputy Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Constantine Kanyasu warned private owners of TAHI hotels and lodges who have failed to implement key privatization benchmarks of the dan-



A bird's eye view of Seronera Wildlife Lodge in the Serengeti National Park.

ger to lose them to Treasury.

On a visit to Arusha Region, Kanyasu said the once state-

owned hotels and lodges have been operating below standards with poor quality servic-

es reminiscent with the days when they were under TAHI.

"The government will repos-

sess these hotels and lodges and give them to other investors who are ready to invest and

revive so that tourism can be promoted," he said adding that the Treasury Registrar is already working on such failed privatized

Kigali City Market passes Covid-19 test, re-opening

KIGALI

THE Kigali City Market, located at the heart of Kigali was set to re-open yesterday, following a thorough inspection by a coronavirus taskforce. The market was shutdown for two weeks after recording multiple cases of Covid-19.

A delegation from Nyarugenge District, the City of Kigali and the Police inspected the market on Wednesday to verify that the recommended safety measures were in place, and upon completion of the exercise, the delegation gave the green light to re-open.

The Nyabugogo market also known as Kwa Mutangana, which was closed at the same time as the City Market, will remain closed following the spike in Covid-19 infections. It is yet to be fully under control.

The always busy City Market that is usually busy has been a deserted place the last couple of weeks, with police officers protecting the areas. The New Times visited the market yesterday and found newly installed four handwashing sinks at one of the entrances.

The inspectors, however, urged management of the market to install automatic water taps and soap dispensers to limit surface contact. In front of all the market's twelve entrances are floor guidelines to ensure the one-meter physical distancing recommended by health experts.

Among the changes is designating one-way entry and exit gates. Inside, in the foods section, some market stalls have been closed to ensure the distance between the traders. There are also yellow lines traced on the floor indicating the distance the client must keep from the seller.

The Nyarugenge District Executive Administrator



Kigali City Market.

Emmy Ngabonziza who led the delegation commended the changes and improvements made so far. "We asked them to extend different signs in proportion to the number of clients.

There are some in place, but they are not enough," Ngabonziza said. The inspection team also required the market management to have an updated list of all the shops as well as the names and contacts of their attendants to ease tracing should the need

arise. "We have alerted them that in case of any non-compliance or failure to implement any of the recommendations we have given them, the specific traders or shops cannot be reopened," Ngabonziza noted.

With all preventive measures respected, the official assured that clients will be safe when visiting the market. The market has the capacity to host 3,200 traders, according to the management. Now, the number has been slashed to about 1,100 people. In

the underground section, the number was brought down to 70 from 242 traders.

"We've made a lot of changes, especially in the vegetable section," said Edwin Musonga, Managing Director. "We've given most attention to social distancing and handwashing facilities. And that was one of the strongest recommendations by the inspectors." An estimated 7,000 people enter the city market daily.

Côte d'Ivoire approves €400m project to create West African port hub

ABIDJAN

WORK is set to begin on the expansion of the port of Abidjan in the Côte d'Ivoire after an agreement was signed between French logistics company Bolloré, Dutch port operator APM Terminals, and China Harbour Engineering Company (CHEC), the contractor that will carry out the work.

The €400m project will add a second container terminal to Abidjan on reclaimed land. This Côte d'Ivoire Terminal (CIT) is scheduled to be complete by the end of next year, after which the developers will run the port during a 20-year concession period before transferring ownership to Abidjan Port Authority.

The expansion is expected to add 1.2 million containers a year to the port's capacity, lengthen its quays by 1.1km and dredge an 18m-deep shipping channel, sufficient to accommodate ships with a carrying capacity of 14,000 containers and 350m in length. The present port has a depth of 11.5m.

West African economies are experiencing an economic boom, and GDP in Côte d'Ivoire is presently growing at around 7% a year. However, their connection to global markets is impeded by inadequate port services. In particular, most of the region's harbours are unable to accommodate the huge container ships now favoured by shipping lines that are anxious to cut costs in a highly competitive logistics market.

Pyramids of Giza to act as setting for 2021 art show

CAIRO

THE millennia-old Pyramids of Giza will be the site of a contemporary art exhibition planned for October 2021.

Titled Forever is Now, the exhibition will focus on the influence of ancient Egypt on today's artists. It will feature an art trail of works by Egyptian and international artists installed across the Giza Plateau.

The company behind the initiative is Art D'Egypte, which is known for organising annual art shows at Egypt's various heritage sites. Speaking of Forever is Now, Art D'Egypte founder Nadine Abdel Ghaffar told The Art Newspaper: "This exhibition is a token of hope for humanity and a humble tribute to a civilisation that stands the test of time."

To put the show together, Abdel Ghaffar is working with independent curator Simon Watson to select the artists and Egyptian archaeologist Zahi Hawass to plot the trail. In 2017, Art D'Egypte put on its first art exhibition Eternal



A tourist and his guide at the Giza pyramids plateau overlooking the Giza necropolis on the southwestern outskirts of the Egyptian capital.

Light at the Egyptian Museum in Tahrir Square. It juxtaposed the museum's artefacts with contemporary works by regional artists.

The same concept has been replicated in their other shows, including 2018's Nothing Vanishes, Everything Transforms, held at the 19th-century Manial Palace and Museum. The building is known for its unique combination of Rococo styles with Ottoman and Persian architectural motifs.

Last year, Art D'Egypte presented Reimagined Narratives along Al Muizz street in the Unesco World Heritage Site of Historic Cairo, known as Islamic Cairo. The upcoming show at the Pyramids of Giza, which is also a Unesco World Heritage Site, is supported by Egypt's national commission for Unesco and the country's ministry of tourism and antiquities.

Meanwhile The Grand Egyptian Museum, an ambitious \$1 billion project that will house the largest collection of artefacts from ancient Egypt, is set to be completed by the end of 2020.

The confirmation comes from Major General Atef Mofteh, who is also an engineer and was tasked by Egyptian president Abdel Fattah el-Sisi to lead the endeavor in 2016. Located on the Giza plateau, the archaeological museum will measure nearly half a million square metres is now "96.5 per cent" complete, says Mofteh.

The museum will contain around 100,000 artefacts that will be installed over a period of months before the official opening in 2021. Its construction has been stalled for decades. Plans for the project were first announced in 1992, and the museum was meant to open in 2011, but efforts have faced numerous setbacks. Even the 2021 schedule is the result of a recent delay after el-Sisi halted construction activities across Egypt in April due to the coronavirus pandemic.

What to expect when it opens
 Designed in 2003 by Heneghan Peng, an architecture firm from Dublin, the museum will feature a triangular wall motif, much like its neighbouring structures the

TECHNOLOGY

HOSPITALITY COMPANIES REMAIN KEEN ON SAUDI ARABIA'S \$20BN DIRIYAH PROJECT

RIYADH

SAUDI Arabia is in the final stages of confirming operators for 21 of the 30 proposed hotels at its 75-billion-riyal (\$20bn) Diriyah Gate project.

Despite the impact of Covid-19 on the hospitality industry, global hotel chains remain keen on their involvement in the project, Jerry Inzerillo, a hospitality industry veteran who is the chief executive of the Diriyah Gate Development Authority, told The National in an interview. Some operators, however, have delayed decisions on whether to take equity stakes in hotels as they look to rebuild their revenue streams as pandemic-related restrictions ease.

"Prior to [Covid-19] in March, we had very substantial interest from most of the luxury hotel operators around the world - including equity positions. With Covid... we haven't lost any of the global operators from their intention to build or operate within Diriyah," said Mr Inzerillo.

"This is the good news. But what I'm hearing from several of the [chief executives]... is 'I need six months before I even know what kind of shape my company is in.'" Diriyah Gate is a 7-square-kilometre site with the At-Turaif Unesco World Heritage Site at its core.

At-Turaif was founded in the 15th Century and became the main seat of power for the kingdom's ruling Al Saud family in the 18th and 19th centuries. It is one of several mega-projects being undertaken to drive the kingdom's goal of growing tourism's contribution to 10 per cent of gross domestic product by 2030, up from 3 per cent.

The ambitious plan to redevelop the site centres around the creation of a cultural and tourism hub capable of attracting 25 million visitors a year. It involves the building of 12 galleries, 30 hotels and the restoration of the 3-square-km Wadi Hanifah that traditionally supported activity in the area.

A ground breaking ceremony took place at the end of June on a district known as Bujairi that will contain res-



A rendering of the restored Diriyah project.

taurants, the Diriyah Art Oasis contemporary gallery and the 142-room Samhan heritage hotel.

The global tourism industry has taken a massive hit from Covid-19. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said on Tuesday the pandemic has led to \$320bn in lost export revenue in the first five months of 2020 and put 120 million jobs in the industry at risk.

However, the backing that Diriyah Gate has from the Saudi government and from Crown Prince Mohammed Bin Salman, who is chairman of the authority's board, means it will continue as planned.

It will negotiate with international hospitality companies about the structure of their deals - whether they own, part-own or just operate hotels - at a later date, Mr Inzerillo said. One thing that has not changed is "the desire from the Saudi entrepreneurs who want to be owners but may not necessarily want to be operators."

In the last two months, Saudi conglomerates and Saudi entrepreneurs have approached the authority, expressing interest in picking up equity stakes if the international management companies opt out, Mr Inzerillo said. He said there was "big time" interest in investors from other parts of the GCC, including the UAE, who recognise the growth potential of the kingdom's tourism sector.

Potential investors can tap the kingdom's new \$4bn tourism fund for subsidised loans and the DGDA is looking into setting up its own fund to finance investments, chief corporate finance officer Faisal Faruqi, said.

"We are planning to have joint ventures, [property] funds and potentially structuring project finance from regional banks [for investments in commercial elements]," Mr Faruqi said.

"We're beginning to see there is good appetite, especially given that Diriyah... is very strategically located in Riyadh. So those specific third party investors who might be looking at getting into a specific property like commercial

offices or hotels, we are exploring how we can facilitate," Mr Faruqi said.

Covid-19 has not slowed progress on the project's development, which, like other key tourism projects aligned to the kingdom's Vision 2030, is progressing as planned, Mr Inzerillo said. "There is no change in three major commitments - no change in terms of financing, in terms of timetable and holding the ministers and [chief executives] accountable in terms of the delivery of those timetables," he said.

"Even with Covid-19 having a profound effect on global economies, construction schedules, curfews and moratoriums, we've navigated our way very efficiently through it," he said. He said that the authority's 400-strong team had recently returned to offices after several months of remote working.

The most difficult part has been dealing with international design firms working on three separate masterplans - the 7-square-km Diriyah Gate, 3-square-km Wadi Hanifa and a wider 60-square-km site containing luxury residential projects that Mr Inzerillo says is intended to be "the Beverly Hills or the Bel Air of Riyadh." "Where it's been challenging is that a lot of the international design firms and consulting firms disbanded their teams," Mr Inzerillo said.

"It took a lot to get people to understand that we can't have that with Diriyah." There are currently about 2bn riyals worth of construction tenders in place covering primary infrastructure, excavation works and work in the Bujairi district, Mr Faruqi said.

The pace of contract awards is set to accelerate in the coming months, Mr Inzerillo said.



Moscow's skyline showing some residential apartments

Apartment prices increase in Russia on the back of mortgage subsidies

MOSCOW

MORTGAGE subsidies introduced in Russia this year to stimulate the economy have fuelled a surge in apartment prices even as incomes plunge to the lowest level since 1998.

Real estate developer PIK said it has seen a surge in demand right across the nation of 147 million after new government mortgage subsidies were introduced in April. In Moscow, prices have jumped 10 per cent in the past three months, according to Andrey Ryabinsky, a co-owner of MITS, a Moscow-based group of construction and real-estate companies.

The subsidies were introduced, alongside interest rate cuts, to try to inject some life into an economy that had already suffered years of stagnation before the global pandemic and slump in demand for oil, Russia's big export earner.

But the lower rates have fuelled demand even as the supply of new housing isn't growing, thus pushing up prices. With incomes unlikely to recover soon, that could leave borrowers stuck with loans they can't afford.

"The authorities think that if they pump subsidies into mortgages, it will revive the economy," said Oleg Vyugin, a professor at Moscow's Higher School of Economics, who warned a bubble is already forming. "It won't work. To revive the economy, we need an increase in incomes."

The concerns have reached the Kremlin, with a top official reassuring President Vladimir Putin in a televised meeting this week that the government is working to boost new construction so prices don't take off further.

Central bank interest rate cuts

pushed average mortgage lending rates down to 7.5 per cent in June, the lowest level in recent Russian history, according to real estate researcher Cian. A government-funded programme that will run until November gives all Russians access to a 6.5 per cent mortgage if they are buying a new apartment.

Subsidies from before the pandemic that offer lower rates to families and 2 per cent mortgages for citizens of the country's sparsely-populated Far East will remain in place beyond November. The number of mortgages issued in the first half in the Sverdlovsk region jumped 12 per cent compared to a year earlier, and 8.4 per cent in Novosibirsk region, according to Cian.

The stimulus has created "explosive" growth in lending and could create a housing bubble because some people aren't solvent enough to repay their loans, deputy finance minister Alexei Moiseev said last month.

About one-third of the 277 billion rubles (\$3.8bn) in mortgages that banks lent in June were subsidised, according to real estate research house Dom.rf. Housing loans grew 29 per cent in June from a year earlier.

In wealthier parts of the country, such as Moscow, the price surge has also been aided by an increase in savings as border closures limit travel abroad. Meanwhile, 250 basis points of interest rate cuts in the past year have increased demand for alternatives to bank deposits.

"People whose incomes remained intact and who had savings are propping the market up right now," said Oleg Repchenko, an expert from the Moscow-based researcher IRN.ru. "But overall incomes have fallen, so it's not sustainable."

Contractor pays out \$1.25million to settle harassment case at Apple headquarters

SAN JOSE

A CALIFORNIAN contractor that worked on tech giant Apple's new campus in Cupertino, Apple Park, has agreed to pay \$1,250,000 to eight African-American former employees in settlement of a racial harassment lawsuit.

The action was brought against Air Systems Inc, a San Jose-based electrical specialist, by the US Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC).

The EEOC's suit said the harassment included swastikas and racial epithets drawn on the walls of the portable site toilets, as well as a noose at the worksite hung next to a scrawled note containing other epithets and a threat of lynching.

In addition, the company failed to act when notified by two African American employees that a white colleague had taunted them using racist language. William Tamayo, director of the EEOC's San Francisco district, said: "This case should send a clear message that whether an employer is a subcontractor or the general contractor, all employers have a duty to take prompt, effective action to stop harassment and hate speech in the workplace."

"In this period of national reckoning on the persistence of racial discrimination, we're glad that Air Systems agreed to settle this matter and provide significant relief to these workers." Art Williams, president of Air Systems, is reported to have said in a statement that the company treated employees with "fairness, equality and



Apple's new Cupertino campus.

respect," and had "a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination and harassment."

He added: "We are satisfied to have reached a resolution with the EEOC and will use this experience as an opportunity to reaffirm our values, enhance our anti-discriminatory policies and practices, and ensure every employee feels welcome at Air Systems."

The 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits racial harassment in the workplace and requires employers to take prompt action to investigate and stop it after they receive complaints.

The EEOC took the company to the US District Court for the Northern District of California after trying to reach a pre-litigation settlement

through conciliation.

Air Systems, which employs some 500 workers, will now provide \$1,250,000 in damages to the former employees and hire a consultant to help implement the decree's terms. ASI will also review company policies and train all employees, including supervisory staff, on preventing and reporting racial harassment.

The company will also work with the consultant to develop policies and procedures to facilitate discussions with potential subcontractors, general contractors and unions about how to best monitor, prevent and remedy harassment and racist graffiti at worksites and develop proposals to incorporate such terms into contracts.

How UK house prices defied the odds for an all-time high

LONDON

UK house prices soared to a record high in August, fuelled by the government's stamp duty cut and pent-up demand from months of lockdown. The surge marks an extraordinary reversal of fortunes for an earlier in the year, when the property market was effectively closed down for April and May.

All of the losses suffered then have now been completely eradicated. This chart shows how average prices rebounded from £216,403 in June to reach £224,123 in August. And this chart shows the monthly percentage change in house prices, which rose by an average of 2 per cent between July and August.

"The bounce back in prices reflects the unexpectedly rapid recovery in housing market activity since the easing of lockdown restrictions," said Robert Gardner, chief economist at Nationwide Building Society, which generated the data.

Mr Gardner did not attribute the resurgence to Chancellor Rishi Sunak's stamp duty cut or pent-up demand. "Behavioural shifts may also be boosting

activity as people reassess their housing needs and preferences as a result of life in lockdown," he said.

Nationwide research in May indicated that 15 per cent of people were considering a move, and subsequent events have proved it to be accurate. House sales reach a 10-year high in July, property website Rightmove said. But the good times for the retail property market may well prove to be short-lived.

This price to earnings chart gives a clue as to why, with the ratio at 6.2, only two away from its October 2007 low. As the UK furlough scheme tapers down to its October end, and with unemployment rising, property experts are predicting an end to the mini house-price boom.

"In the final months of the year we will start to see a reversal in the current rate of house price growth, as the true impact of Covid-19 on the economy shows through," Andrew Montlake, of mortgage broker Coreco, told The Telegraph. With stamp duty also set to return in April 2021, the sword hanging above the market bubble is looking ominously sharp.



UK housing estate in London.

WORLD

Trump says people in North Carolina should vote twice

WASHINGTON

U.S. President Donald Trump suggested on Wednesday that people in

the state of North Carolina should vote twice in the November election, once in person and once by mail, although doing so is a crime.



"Let them send it in and let them go vote," Trump said in an interview with WECT-TV in Wilmington, North Carolina, when asked about the security of mail-in votes. "And if the system is as good as they say it is then obviously they won't

be able to vote" in person.

Voting more than once in an election is illegal. "President Trump outrageously encouraged" North Carolinians "to break the law in order to help him sow chaos in our election," state Attorney General Josh Stein said in a tweet. "Make sure you vote, but do NOT vote twice! I will do everything in my power to make sure the will of the people is upheld in November."

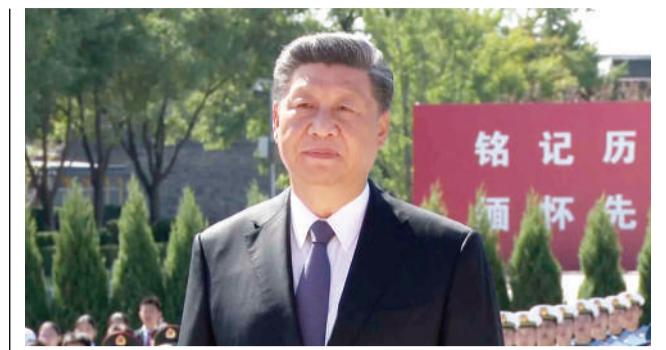
U.S. Attorney General William Barr told CNN that Trump "was trying to make the point that the ability to monitor this system is not good." Told that voting twice is illegal, he said, "I don't know what the law in the particular state says."

Barr said mail-in ballots for the Nov. 3 election could be vulnerable to fraud, echoing an argument Trump has made to denounce the use of voting by mail.

Trump has previously said the voting method is susceptible to large-scale fraud, although experts say voter fraud of any kind is extremely rare in the United States.

Voting by mail is not new in the United States - nearly one in four voters cast presidential ballots in 2016 that way.

Agencies



Chinese President Xi Jinping attends the commemoration for the 75th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War in Beijing yesterday. (Photo/CGTN)

Xi pays tribute to veterans during commemoration of anti-Japanese war victory

BEIJING

CHINESE leaders led by President Xi Jinping yesterday morning attended a commemoration in Beijing for the 75th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War.

The other leaders included Li Keqiang, Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji, Han Zheng and Wang Qishan. The event was held at the Museum of the War of Chinese People's Resistance Against Japanese Aggression near Lugou Bridge, also known as Marco Polo Bridge, in the western suburb of Beijing.

It was also attended by representatives from all walks of life, including veterans who took part in the war, relatives of military officers and martyrs who fought in the war, and relatives of foreign friends who contributed to the victory of the war.

The commemoration started at 10 a.m. All participants sang the national anthem and then paid a silent tribute to those who sacrificed their lives in the war.

After the mourning, 14 honor guards laid seven flower baskets, with characters "Eternal Glory to Martyrs Who Died in Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression" on their red ribbons, in the entrance hall of the museum.

Xi and other leaders ascended the steps and stopped in front of the flower baskets.

Xi straightened the ribbons on a basket.

Then, other senior officials and representatives from all walks of life presented bouquets of flowers to martyrs.

Xi, who is also general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, stressed at a symposium commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Chinese People's War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression and the World Anti-Fascist War held yesterday, that we should carry forward the great spirit of resisting aggression in the new era and strive to achieve national rejuvenation.

Xinhua

Kremlin sees no reason to blame Navalny incident on Russia

MOSCOW

THERE is no reason to blame Russia for what happened to blogger Alexei Navalny, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters yesterday.

"I would choose words carefully when speaking about accusations against the Russian state because there are no accusations at the moment and there is no reason to accuse the Russian state," he pointed out. "We aren't inclined to accept any accusations in this regard," the Russian presidential spokesman added.

Peskov said that he did not see people and forces in Russia that could benefit from the suspected poisoning of Navalny.

"I cannot answer your question who could benefit from that person's poisoning. As a matter of fact, I don't think that anyone could stand to gain from that, if one just takes a sober look at things," Peskov said.

"We certainly would not like our partners in Germany and other European countries to jump to conclusions and make assessments," Peskov noted, adding that Moscow would like to maintain the dialogue on the issue with them.

No information from Germany

Peskov expressed hope that Germany would share its findings on the Navalny case with Russia.

"We are undoubtedly interested in determining the cause of what happened to the Berlin patient. Our investigative agencies conduct all necessary inspections. The information from Germany would definitely help those inspections. So far, we have received no information but we hope that this will happen shortly," Peskov said.

Agencies

FAO: World food price index rises for 3rd month

ROME

WORLD food prices rose for a third month running in August, led by coarse grains, vegetable oils and sugar, the United Nations food agency said yesterday.

The Food and Agriculture Organization's food price index, which measures monthly changes for a basket of cereals, oilseeds, dairy products, meat and sugar, averaged 96.1 points last month versus 94.3 in July.

The Rome-based FAO also said in a statement that worldwide cereal harvests remained on course to hit an annual record in 2020.

The agency's cereal price index rose 1.9 percent in August from the month before and 7 percent above its value a year earlier.

Among the major cereals, sorghum, barley and rice prices rose the most, FAO said. Maize also climbed strongly,



A farmer (center) negotiates prices with traders at a wholesale vegetable market in Hyderabad on Monday. AFP

pushed up by concerns over US production prospects following recent crop damage in Iowa.

The vegetable oil price index climbed 5.9 percent month-on-month, returning to around the levels registered when the coronavirus crisis hit the world at the start of the year.

Palm oil was buoyed by expected output slowdowns in major producing countries, which, combined with firm global import demand, were expected to result in lower inventory levels. Average sugar prices rose 6.7 percent from July, reflecting forecasts of a reduction in production due to unfavourable weather conditions in the European Union and Thailand. Strong import demand in China also helped push prices higher.

By contrast, the dairy index was little changed on the month, with falls in cheese and whole milk powder offset by stronger butter and skim milk quotations.

The meat index was also largely steady, with bovine and poultry prices in retreat while pig meat prices rose after four consecutive months of declines, as Chinese imports jumped.

FAO revised down its forecast for the 2020 cereal season by 25 million

tonnes, largely due to expectations of a lower maize production in the United States.

However, despite this reduction, the agency still expected a record harvest this year of almost 2.765 billion tonnes, up 3 percent on 2019 levels.

"Record maize harvests are forecast for Argentina and Brazil, while global sorghum production is expected to grow by 6 percent from the previous year. Worldwide rice production in 2020 is also expected to reach a new record of 509 million tonnes," FAO said.

The forecast for world cereal utilisation in 2020/21 hit 2.746 billion tonnes, up 2 percent on the 2019/20 level. The estimate for world cereal stocks by the close of seasons in 2021 was 895.5 million tonnes, down 33.4 million tonnes since July.

Agencies

US court: Mass surveillance programme exposed by Snowden was illegal

WASHINGTON

SEVEN years after former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden blew the whistle on the mass surveillance of Americans' telephone records, an appeals court has found the program was unlawful - and that the U.S. intelligence leaders who publicly defended it were not telling the truth.

In a ruling handed down on Wednesday, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit said the warrantless telephone dragnet that secretly collected millions of Americans' telephone records violated the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act and

may well have been unconstitutional.

Snowden, who fled to Russia in the aftermath of the 2013 disclosures and still faces U.S. espionage charges, said on Twitter that the ruling was a vindication of his decision to go public with evidence of the National Security Agency's domestic eavesdropping operation.

"I never imagined that I would live to see our courts condemn the NSA's activities as unlawful and in the same ruling credit me for exposing them," Snowden said in a message posted to Twitter.

Evidence that the NSA was secretly building a vast database of



U.S. telephone records - the who, the how, the when, and the where of millions of mobile calls - was the first and arguably the most explosive of the Snowden revelations published by the Guardian newspaper in 2013.

Up until that moment, top intelligence officials publicly insisted the NSA never knowingly collect-

ed information on Americans at all. After the program's exposure, U.S. officials fell back on the argument that the spying had played a crucial role in fighting domestic extremism, citing in particular the case of four San Diego residents who were accused of providing aid to religious fanatics in Somalia.

U.S. officials insisted that the four - Basaal Saed Moalin, Ahmed Nasir Taalil Mohamad, Mohamed Mohamad, and Issa Doreh - were convicted in 2013 thanks to the NSA's telephone record spying, but the Ninth Circuit ruled Wednesday that those claims were "inconsistent with the contents of the classified re-

cord."

The ruling will not affect the convictions of Moalin and his fellow defendants; the court ruled the illegal surveillance did not taint the evidence introduced at their trial. Nevertheless, watchdog groups including the American Civil Liberties Union, which helped bring the case to appeal, welcomed the judges' verdict on the NSA's spy program.

"Today's ruling is a victory for our privacy rights," the ACLU said in a statement, saying it "makes plain that the NSA's bulk collection of Americans' phone records violated the Constitution."

Agencies

WHO roots for equitable access to COVID-19 vaccine in Africa

NAIROBI

THE World Health Organization (WHO) said yesterday that donors and industry should allocate sufficient resources to ensure that African countries have access to a safe and efficacious COVID-19 vaccine.

Richard Mihigo, Programme Area Manager of Immunization and Vaccine Development of WHO, said the needs and aspirations of African countries should be at the heart of the ongoing global efforts to develop vaccines against the pandemic.

"Africa has often ended up at the back seat of vaccine development but this must not happen as the fight against COVID-19 pandemic enters a critical phase," Mihigo (pictured) said during a virtual briefing in Nairobi.

"We must secure enough doses and give priority to the frontline health workers, the aged and people with underlying conditions in the continent," he added.

The WHO official said that all the 54 African countries have signed up to COVAX, an initiative fronted by



WHO in conjunction with the Vaccine Alliance (GAVI) and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) that aims to secure about 220 million doses of COVID-19

vaccine for the continent.

Mitoha Ondo' O Ayekaba, vice minister for Health and Social Welfare, Equatorial Guinea, said that COVAX provides innovative financing options to ensure the COVID-19 vaccine is readily available in Africa.

"We believe that through this initiative we can access successfully tested vaccines in a timely manner and at a lower cost," said Ayekaba.

He said that Equatorial Guinea is among eight African countries that have agreed to self-finance their COVID-19 doses under the COVAX

Facility. Richard Hatchett, CEO of CEPI, said that two COVID-19 candidates, supported by COVAX initiative, are already undergoing clinical trials in South Africa, to help ascertain their efficacy and safety.

"Testing vaccines on the continent ensures that sufficient data is generated on the safety and efficacy of the most promising vaccine candidates for the African population so they can be confidently rolled out in Africa once vaccines are approved," said Hatchett.

Xinhua

COVID-19 corruption plague spurs political shake-up across Africa

By Bloomberg

AFRICAN countries have generally handled their coronavirus response better than many experts feared, except for one detail: Managing corruption.

Kenya is the latest African nation to have its politics shaken by allegations of graft in handing out pandemic-response contracts. It follows South Africa, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Uganda, which have all been rocked by scandals of their own.

Preliminary investigations show officials who've illicitly benefited largely adopted similar

methods: Awarding contracts to companies owned by relatives or friends to supply medical equipment and services to the state at inflated prices in exchange for kickbacks. The relaxation of tender and procurement rules as governments rushed to prepare health systems for an anticipated influx of patients made it easier for funds to be misappropriated.

"Massive, and often yet-to-be-borrowed, funds have fallen prey to entrenched patronage networks," said Robert Besseling, executive director of political risk advisory firm EXX Africa. "The implications of COVID-19-relat-

ed state corruption may outlive the pandemic, as many African countries that are already struggling to repay or refinance loans have lost the confidence of investors and lending partners."

With probes ongoing in several countries, the extent of the plunder is still unknown, but is set to amount to hundreds of millions of dollars. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, the director-general of the World Health Organization, articulated the public outrage that the profiteering has elicited in an online briefing last month.

"If health workers work without personal protective equip-

ment, we're risking their lives and that also risks the lives of the people they serve," said Tedros, a former Ethiopian health minister. "It's criminal and it's murder and it has to stop."

30,000 deaths

Africa has had more than 1.2 million confirmed coronavirus cases so far, while more than 30,000 of those diagnosed with the disease have died, data from Johns Hopkins University show. Inadequate testing capacity on the world's poorest continent means the actual tallies are likely far higher.

In South Africa, the authorities are probing suspect contracts worth almost US\$300 million - some awarded to companies established shortly after the outbreak of the disease and owned by high-profile politicians' relatives. President Cyril Ramaphosa has likened those who had illicitly profited to hyenas and vowed to hold them account, but no-one has been convicted so far.

In Kenya, President Uhuru Kenyatta this week followed Ramaphosa's lead in ordering details of all virus-related contracts to be published online after irregularities were uncovered at

the Kenya Medical Supplies Authority.

In Zimbabwe, Obadiah Moyo was sacked as health minister in July after being charged in connection with the unlawful procurement of US\$75 million worth of medical equipment. Virus-related scandals have also cost health officials in Botswana, Somalia and Uganda their jobs, and have implicated cabinet ministers in Malawi and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

There may be genuine reasons why spending controls may be too lax, including the need to take decisions and buy equipment

quickly, but there's also a risk that corrupt officials and suppliers could exploit the situation and get away with it, said Liz David-Barrett, director of the Centre for the Study of Corruption at the University of Sussex in the UK.

"The difficult part about a crisis is that it is much harder to differentiate corrupt behavior from the results of genuine mistakes and rushed decisions," she said. "The most important thing a country can do is to make contracting transparent so that the people can still hold governments to account."

Agencies

China International Fair for Trade in Services to be held in Beijing

By Zhu Jingruo and He Yong

THE 2020 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS) kicks off today at the China National Convention Center in Beijing.

At present, posters and banners have been set up at the China National Convention Center in Beijing to welcome guests from home and abroad.

So far, 141 international organizations, embassies in China, chambers of commerce, business associations and institutions confirmed their participation in this year's CIFTIS.

More than 2,000 domestic and foreign companies are attending the event, during which more than 100 forums and discussions will be held. Pavilion construction, guest reception, and epidemic prevention and control are currently being advanced under high standard.

Formerly known as China (Beijing) International Fair for Trade in Services, the China International Fair for Trade in Services took its new name in 2019.

One year later, the shortened name for the event was changed from "Beijing Fair" to "CIFTIS".

The CIFTIS (including the former Beijing Fair) has successfully held six sessions, attracting 184 countries and regions, nearly 300 international organizations and overseas business associations and more than



Photo taken on May 28, 2019 shows visitors tour the exhibition area of China Unicom, one of the country's largest telecommunication carriers, during the 2019 China International Fair for Trade in Services. (Photo by Pang Zhengzheng/ People's Daily Online)

10,000 companies, and achieving an accumulated intended transaction amount of \$529.33 billion.

It is one of the three major exhibition platforms for China's opening-up, with the other two being the China Import and Export Fair (Canton Fair) and China International Import Expo (CIIE).

Considering the global COVID-19 pandemic situation, the CIFTIS this year will be hosted through both online and offline channels.

Overseas guests and exhibitors will mainly participate in online exhibitions while domestic entities in offline activities. The fair will set up virtual 3D exhibition booths to provide more intelligent experience for visitors.

Through technical means like 5G, live-streaming, video conference, online translation, it will allow participants from various parts of the world to communicate smoothly during online and offline confer-

ences and forums.

By employing tools such as instant messaging, video negotiation, online translation, and intelligent customer service, it intends to build virtual negotiation rooms for participants. Besides, the fair will also broadcast summits and forums through omnimedia.

The CIFTIS this year is more diversified compared with the previous sessions as it has integrated contents of China (Beijing) International Cul-



Photo taken on May 29, 2019 shows visitors at a smart living room prototype during the 2019 China International Fair for Trade in Services. (Photo by Chen Xiaogen/People's Daily Online)

tural & Creative Industry Expo (IC-CIE), China International Tourism Commodities Fair (CITCF), Beijing International Finance Expo (BIFE), World Winter Sports (Beijing) Expo as well as World Robot Conference (WRC) and has innovated a new model that is characterized by one selected exhibition area, eight featured exhibitions and several functional service areas.

The selected exhibition area includes the preface hall, public

health and epidemic prevention zone, national, provincial, regional and municipal zone, and enterprise zone for twelve major fields of the service trade.

It will mainly display the latest trends, technologies, products in the development of domestic and foreign service trade as well as Chinese solutions.

Eight featured exhibitions vary from culture services, financial services, winter sports, tourism

services, service robot, educational services, sports services to 5G communication services.

Besides, the fair will establish some functional service areas to provide supporting services for exhibitors, such as negotiation, experience and catering.

The selected exhibition area and eight featured exhibitions are speeding up inviting exhibitors and products. (Online registration portal: <https://en.ciftis.org>)

Foreign investors hold stable expectations of Chinese market

By Luo Shanshan

FOREIGN direct investment (FDI) into the Chinese mainland, in actual use, expanded by 15.8 percent year on year in July, according to data from the Ministry of Commerce (MOC).

Foreign investors' expectations of and confidence in the Chinese market have been stable while signaling sound momentum of growth, suggested the data.

Against the backdrop of the globally spreading COVID-19 epidemic and gloomy transnational investment, the performance of FDI inflow in July was particularly precious.

The great growth in actually utilized FDI in China couldn't have been realized without the strong resilience and huge potential of the Chinese economy.

"We will further increase our investment in China and open more stores steadily. We will do all we can to bring the number of our stores in China to over 3,000 by the end of 2020," said Zhang Sheng, vice president of Lawson (China) Holdings Inc.

Due to the epidemic, Lawson stores in some office buildings and scenic spots have seen a decrease in their passenger flow, yet sales in stores located in communities have still grown rapidly, Zhang disclosed.

"With the store being located 100 meters away from my home, I can now buy daily necessities conveniently," said Huang He, a resident in Yuzhong district, southwest China's Chongqing municipality, while waiting in a line for payment before the checkout counter of a newly opened Lawson store.

Three stores of the Japanese convenience store chain were opened in Chongqing on July 15 alone.

At present, the Chinese economy is showing a steady recovery, with the decline in total retail sales of consumer goods narrowing significantly while online retail sales of physical goods growing at a relatively fast pace.



Chinese and German technicians test products together at Joma Polytec Plastic Parts (Kunshan) Co., Ltd. in German Industrial Park located in Kunshan, east China's Jiangsu province, August 3. (Photo by Hua Xuegen/People's Daily Online)

China's manufacturing purchasing managers index (PMI) rose to 51.1 in July, which, while being 0.2 percentage points higher than that in the previous month, indicated that the result has remained above the critical 50-point threshold that separates expansion from contraction for the fifth consecutive month.

As facts have shown, China is still an appealing investment destination, and the country's efforts to promote all-round opening-up have made it more attractive to foreign investors.

AstraZeneca Plc, a British-Swedish multinational pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical company, has recently put into operation an international life science innovation campus in Wuxi, east China's Jiangsu province.

AstraZeneca (Wuxi) International Life Science Innovation Campus, the innovation campus, which was jointly established by AstraZeneca, the Wuxi municipal government and Wuxi National Hi-Tech District, has attracted 17 domestic and foreign companies including Japanese electronics manufacturer Omron Corporation.

China has been committed to opening its door wider to the world, which generates new opportunities and platforms for the development and innovation of foreign enterprises, according to Leon Wang, executive vice-president, international and China president with AstraZeneca.

The company will continue to cultivate the Chinese market, and create an open and innovative health ecosystem, Wang noted, adding that



Photo shows the main venue of the 2020 China International Fair for Trade in Services (CIFTIS), the China National Convention Center. Sub-venues of the event are located in the Olympic Green, an Olympic park in Beijing's Chaoyang district along the central axis of the Chinese capital, including 30 exhibition halls of tourism, culture and education services. Photo from the Publicity Department of the CPC Beijing Committee

AstraZeneca will build regional characteristic innovation centers in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hangzhou, Chengdu and other cities of China. Since the beginning of this year, China has continued to show its strong determination to adhere to opening-up to the world with practical actions.

The country has promoted the construction of the Hainan free trade port, held the China Import and Export Fair online and is making preparations for the 3rd China International Import Expo to be held in November.

The more open China has become a good destination for the investment and businesses of global companies.

Sixty-five percent of the surveyed members of the European Union Chamber of Commerce in China (EUCCC) consider China as the most important investment destination or one of the top three destinations for investment in the world, suggested a report released by the EUCCC on June 10.

The country has also continuously improved its business environment to attract more foreign investors.

Thanks to an innovative mode enabling online cross-border transfer of registration documents, some foreign shareholders have registered a company in China without leaving their own country.

China's new development pattern to infuse impetus into world economy

By He Yin

THE new development pattern proposed by China has become a buzzword of the international community in reading the Chinese economy, and the world is generally optimistic about the vitality of Chinese economy carried by the new development pattern.

In response to markedly mounting instabilities and uncertainties, China brought to the table the new development pattern whereby domestic and foreign markets can boost each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay.

It is believed that China's new development pattern has combined its own reality and the trend of economic globalization and heralds new hopes and benefits for enterprises.

Gathering pace in creating such a new development pattern, China will generate strong endogenous driving forces for its high-quality economic development, bring more opportunities for the development of other countries, and give fresh impetus to world economic recovery.

As a Chinese saying goes, a wise man changes as time and event change. As the world economy encounters a deep recession, global trade and investment shrink

sharply; international financial market is thrown into turmoil; international exchanges are restricted; economic globalization runs into countercurrents; protectionism and unilateralism prevail in some countries; and geopolitical risks rise, China has to seek development in a more unstable and uncertain world.

It has become quite clear to the world that China has always been determined to accurately recognize changes, respond to changes in a science-based manner and actively seek changes.

No matter faced with what difficulties or obstacles, it has been able to pool national strength and manage its own affairs well, effectively dealing with external uncertainties with its own certainties.

After promptly containing the COVID-19 epidemic at home, China has been promoting the resumption of work, production, business and market comprehensively, leading the way in both epidemic response and economic recovery.

China's economy grew by 3.2 percent year-on-year in the second quarter. Its manufacturing purchasing managers index (PMI) rose to 51.1 in July, expanding for the fifth consecutive month (a reading above 50 indicates expansion).



Photo taken on August 5 shows visitors at a well-designed booth of a wine company from southwest China's Sichuan province during the 8th China (Nanjing) International Wine & Food Fair. (Photo by Wang Luxian/People's Daily Online)

Facts have shown that China has seized the initiative in development and the Chinese economy boasts strong resilience.

China's new development pattern has demonstrated once again the country's determination to open up to the world.

One of the advantages of Chinese economy is a huge domestic market. China has the largest industrial system in the world with the most complete categories, strong production capabilities,

complete supporting sectors, over 100 million market entities and a talent pool of more than 170 million people, as well as a super-large domestic market of 1.4 billion people, including over 400 million middle-income earners.

Therefore, the country is fully capable of adding momentum to the Chinese economy by stimulating the huge domestic market.

Taking the domestic market as the mainstay is absolutely not an operation behind closed doors. China will release the potential of

its domestic demand, better connect the domestic and international markets, and make better use of the two resources, to realize robust sustainable development.

The practice of China's reform and opening-up over the past 40 some years has shown that openness brings progress while seclusion leads to backwardness.

China's economic growth over the past 40 years was achieved with a commitment to opening-up. In the same vein, high-quality development of China's economy

in the future can only be guaranteed with greater openness. China's door will never be closed; it will only open still wider.

The truth is China has managed to speed up opening-up even amid the COVID-19 epidemic. It has taken a series of measures, such as hosting the 2020 China Import and Export Fair online, releasing the Overall Plan for the Construction of Hainan Free Trade Port and shortening the 2020 negative list for foreign investment, showing the world the huge potential of China for continuously sharing its opportunities and driving world economic recovery through its own development.

China's new development pattern will surely provide more opportunities for cooperation and create more development dividends.

China has made great achievements in advancing reforms to delegate power, streamline administration and optimize government services as well as in improving the business environment, according to a report on China's success in doing business issued recently by the World Bank.

As the Chinese economy thrives, more and more foreign companies have expanded their business to China.

According to a recent survey

conducted by the Ministry of Commerce, 99.1 percent of foreign-funded companies will continue to invest and operate in China.

The U.S.-China Business Council's latest survey of some 150 companies also shows that China's measures to further open up and optimize its business environment in the past few years have created convenience for foreign companies' production and operation in China, and the US companies are still upbeat on the Chinese market.

Companies from the European Union (EU) remain confident in their development in China and hope to become part of China's development story, said Joerg Wuttke, President of the EU Chamber of Commerce in China.

China is preparing the 3rd China International Import Expo (CIIE) to be held this November, where the average exhibition area for the Fortune Global 500 companies and industry leaders will increase by 14 percent from last year.

Foreign investment in China has been rising steadily since January and global investors are more optimistic about China than ever before, as pointed out by Fortune magazine.

SPORT



Dar es Salaam's Lions Club of Amani new board members pose for picture after they had taken oath at a ceremony, which took place in the city on Wednesday evening. The members will serve for two years. Lions Club, known worldwide as a charity club, is much active in Tanzania. The club's slogan is 'Help the Needy'. Director General of Lions Club Tanzania's, Moiz Bakari, was the ceremony's guest of honour. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Rockets edge Thunder to win wild Game 7, move on to Lakers

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla.

JAMES Harden couldn't get his shot to fall all night, so the scorer turned stopper.

In this wild Game 7 that took one strange turn after another in the final seconds, the biggest play came when a guy known almost entirely for his offense turned up the defense.

Harden made up for a miserable shooting night with a big blocked shot. Russell Westbrook scored 20 points against his former team and the Houston Rockets edged the Oklahoma City Thunder 104-102 on Wednesday night to win the first-round series.

"It was one of those nights offensively so I just wanted to change the game defensively and I think I did that," Harden said.

The Rockets pulled out a tense final game of the first round that lasted long past the final basket as replays and fouls were sorted out.

"I've been around a long time and just at the end it was a little crazy," Houston coach Mike D'Antoni said.

In the end, Houston prevailed to set up a second-round matchup with the Los Angeles Lakers that begins Friday despite Harden, the NBA's leading scorer, going 4 for 15 from the field. "These are the games, you want to win a championship or win playoff games, you've got to do it with your heart," D'Antoni added.

The frantic final seconds of a game that was tight throughout had Houston take the lead for good at 103-102 when P.J. Tucker scored with 1:25 remaining. After changes of possession, the Thunder got the ball to Lu Dort, who attempted a 3-pointer that Harden blocked with 4.8 seconds left.

Robert Covington made a free throw with 1.4 seconds to go and Harden was whistled for fouling Danilo Gallinari before the ball was inbounded, giving the Thunder one free throw and the ball. But Gallinari missed the free throw and the Thunder turned it over on the last inbounds pass.

Westbrook helped defend that, perhaps remembering some of his old coach's plays.

"I kind of know a little bit," Westbrook said.

Covington had 21 points and 10 rebounds, and Eric Gordon also scored 21 points for the Rockets. Harden finished with 17 points and nine assists. Dort scored a career-best 30 points for the Thunder. Chris Paul, swapped for Westbrook over the summer, had 19 points, 12 assists and 11 rebounds.

"It's a tough one. It's tough," Paul said. "We fought hard all year. Honestly, a lot of people doubted us, but we didn't doubt ourselves. We didn't give a damn about anybody's predictions going into any series."

It was a wild conclusion to a strange series in which the Rockets won Games 1 and 2 handily and Game 5 by 34, the biggest margin in franchise postseason history, but hadn't come through in the close ones. Oklahoma City took Game 3 in overtime by outscoring Houston 15-3, the largest overtime point differential in NBA history, and pulled out Game 4 by three points and Game 6 by four.

The Rockets had no chance of winning this one in a rout thanks largely to Harden's struggles. He missed 10 of his 12 shots through three quarters but they were ahead 85-80 behind a strong performance from Westbrook, who missed the first four games of the series with a strained right quadriceps.

Covington then hit a couple key 3-pointers in the fourth and Harden made two of his three shots in the period, including a basket that snapped a 99-all tie. The Thunder closed the first quarter with a 10-2 spurt to take a 30-29 lead. Then it was Dort with a 12-point second quarter, hitting three 3-pointers to continue a

remarkable turnaround from Game 5, when his 3-for-16 night included going 0 for 9 behind the arc. He bounced back with 13 points in Game 6. "It was one of the most impressive things I've seen out of a player that young," Thunder coach Billy Donovan said.

One of his 3s gave the Thunder a six-point lead, but Houston closed strong to lead 61-59 at the break. Houston got the final five points of the third on a basket by Westbrook and a 3-pointer by Jeff Green, another former Oklahoma City player.

Meanwhile, Jimmy Butler loves soccer, and the final scene from Game 2 of the Eastern Conference semifinals resembled a penalty shot in a shootout. Only there was no goalie.

This was just a free throw, no time on the clock, nobody else from the Miami Heat or Milwaukee Bucks standing along the lane. Game tied, two chances to make one shot, the outcome completely in Butler's hands.

"I wish I could kick it in there and say that's how I won it," Butler said.

Rattling home a free throw will have to suffice. Butler got the first one to bounce home, made a second one that was irrelevant, and the Heat grabbed control of their East semifinal matchup with a 116-114 win over the Bucks on Wednesday night -- becoming the first No. 5 seed to take a 2-0 series lead over a No. 1 seed.

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Butler was fouled by Giannis Antetokounmpo with no time remaining, the referees said, a call that was affirmed in a review after the initial whistle. The ball was out of Butler's hands when Antetokounmpo clearly made contact.

"I'd say we're disappointed with the judgment, the decision, the timing," Bucks coach Mike Budenholzer said.

Crew Chief Marc Davis said the foul call was correct. "He must be allowed the space to land and Giannis contacts him with his left hand on his torso and I felt like it affected his balance and did not allow him the space to land in a normal basketball position," Davis told a pool reporter postgame. "As a result I judged this to be a shooting foul."

It was a bizarre ending to, well, a bizarre ending. The Heat were up by six with 27 seconds left and frittered that away, Butler giving Milwaukee two points with a most ill-advised pass -- "a terrible IQ play," he acknowledged -- back toward the Bucks' basket that turned into a layup by Brook Lopez.

That got Milwaukee within two, and Butler made one free throw with 7.7 seconds left to get the lead back to three. Khris Middleton was fouled by Goran Dragic -- a call Miami argued to no avail, because the Heat unsuccessfully used their challenge on a foul of Lopez shooting a 3 in the first quarter -- with 4.3 seconds left, and the All-Star made all three free throws to tie it. Davis, in the postgame pool report, said Dragic was properly assessed a foul.

AP

Dar school establishes swimming programme

By Guardian Reporter

DAR ES SALAAM's newly established school, Latham, has expressed determination to support sports promotion in Tanzania by setting up development programs for variety of sports, which include swimming.

The new school, located along Sandvik Road in Masaki suburb, on a recently refurbished campus, contains a number of sports facilities, including a 25m swimming pool and multi-use sports courts.

Paul Page, the school's Principal, said he is certain that the quality of teaching and learning that will be on offer at the school will speak for itself.

He said the institution's other learning center, located at Bahari Beach, has for the past eight years been offering similar quality of teaching.

Page noted each student at Latham School, whether in Bahari or Masaki, can expect to receive a full day of learning from 7.30am till 3.15pm, complete with extension and enrichment activities included as part of the school day.

Activities on offer, according to him, include Tae Kwon-do, choir, debate, French Club, Swahili drama, football and roots & shoots.

He stated that both schools can boast of having strong swimming programs, backed by prominent swimming coaches.

The Bahari campus' swimming team, he said, is headed by coach Ferrick Kalengela of Tanzania Swim Club, whereas the Masaki campus is headed by Inviolata Itatiro, who is also Dar Swim Club's Manager.

Page, an experienced English and History teacher, believes that teaching is a noble art and he wakes up each day with a smile on his face, wondering what the day will bring and how he can generate the 'light bulb moments' for his students.

He comes with 23 years of teaching and leadership experience in



Dar es Salaam's Latham School student features in basketball training at the school's courts in the city recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Cambridge schools across the United Kingdom, South Africa, Zambia, Botswana and Romania.

He disclosed: "The Cambridge curriculum is a rigorous academic program that prepares students for success at university level, whilst developing character and confidence through its delivery by internationally experienced."

"Our teachers across both schools bring diversity and care to their classrooms, and are held to a high standard of performance."

Page pointed out Latham School prides itself on being one of the top international schools in Dar es Salaam, providing a fine international education aimed at inspiring all students to reach new heights.

The Latham School at Masaki, Page said, will have its first term starting this

month.

He disclosed admissions for the September, 2020 and January, 2021 terms are open, and classes are beginning to fill up.

The Latham School is a fully accredited CAIE (Cambridge Assessment International Education) school, located at Bahari Beach on 11 acres of purpose-built school facilities.

They include multi-use sports courts, 25m swimming pool, science laboratories, spacious classrooms and much room for expansion.

Page stated teaching is a combination of the Cambridge and the English national curriculum, to provide a balanced structure of learning, while emphasizing the work with children's interests and enthusiasms, making sure to meet the needs of every learner.

Waheeda Samji, the Business Director

of The Latham School, said that while demand for international education is on the rise, it is important to give parents different educational options.

He noted: "There is no 'one size fits all' when it comes to schools. Each family and child has different needs and expectations, and having the option to choose a school that fits them is important."

"Expanding our brand to a different area of the city gives more people more choices. We fully intend to keep both schools open, and able to cater to the different demographics of their locations".

Lawsuit seeks to ban Kanye West from Arizona ballot

PHOENIX

AN Arizona resident has asked a judge to bar Kanye West from appearing on the state's Nov. 3 ballot, accusing the hip hop artist of serving as an election spoiler and arguing that a law prohibits him from running in the state as an independent presidential candidate.

West's lawyer on Wednesday reported filing just under 58,000 signatures, well over the roughly 39,000 required for independent candidates to make the ballot.

Lawyers for resident Rasean Clayton said in a lawsuit filed Monday that independent presidential candidates can appear on Arizona's ballot if they aren't registered with a recognized political party and gather enough voter signatures to nominate them. But Clayton's lawyers say West, who paid top dollar to dozens of workers gathering petition signatures in Arizona, isn't qualified to be on the ballot because he's a registered Republican.

Even if West is found to have submitted enough signatures, the lawsuit said the hip hop artist's late-in-the-game candidacy would make no difference to his chances of winning the race.

"West will not be able to qualify for the ballot in enough states to muster enough electoral votes to prevail," Clayton's lawyers wrote. "West's minimal interest in playing a spoiler candidate on Arizona's ballot is not enough to outweigh the factors favoring emergency relief."

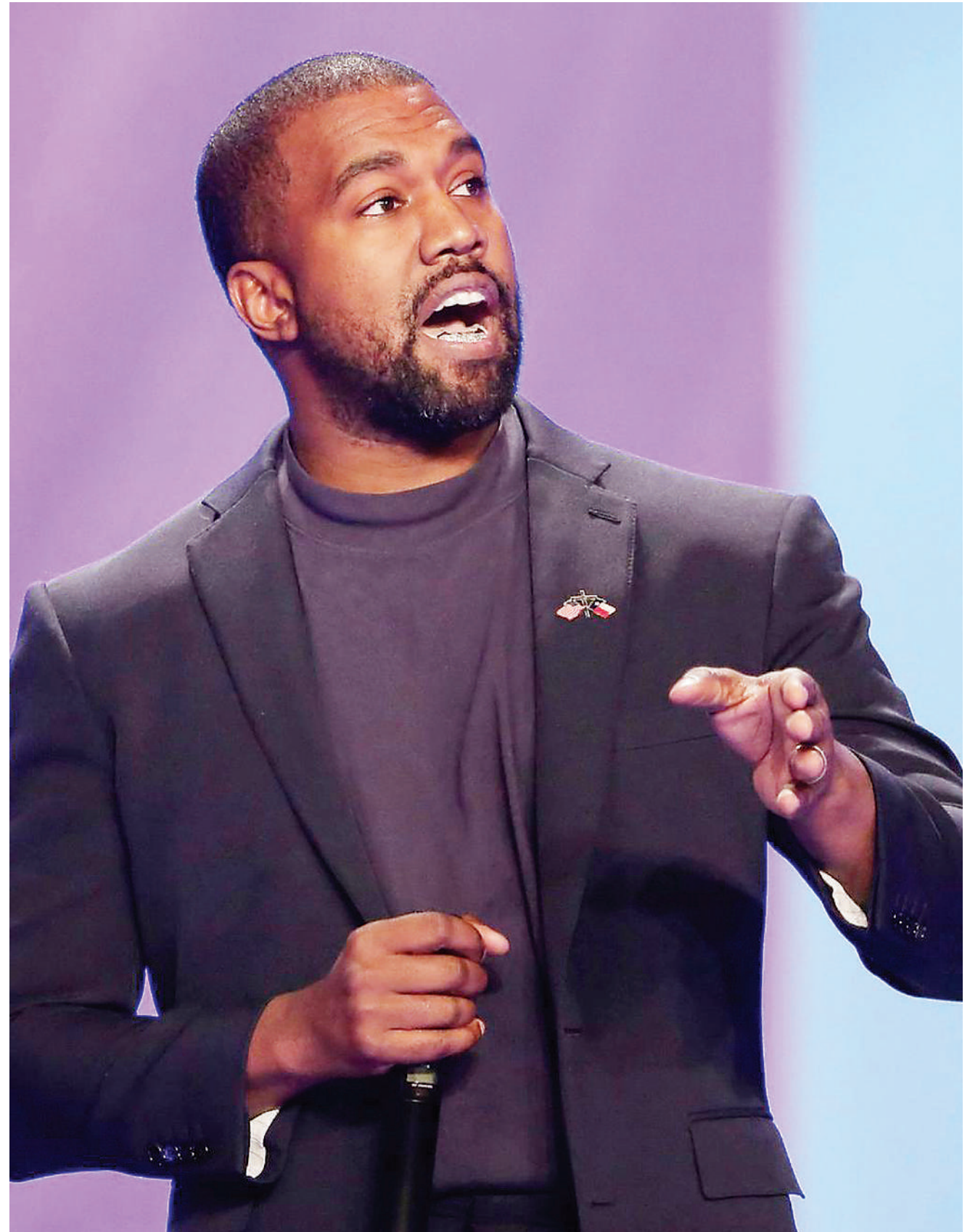
West has already qualified to appear on the ballot in several states, including Arkansas, Idaho, Iowa, Tennessee and Utah.

The rapper and music producer announced his intention to run for president on July 4.

A Maricopa County judge is scheduled to hear arguments in the legal challenge on Thursday afternoon.

Attorney Tim LaSota, who represents West in the Arizona challenge, described the lawsuit as a "last-ditch effort on the eve of the (signature filing deadline) to deprive voters of a choice."

LaSota brushed aside criticism that West is trying to be a spoiler aimed at hurting Democratic nominee Joe Biden's chances in Arizona. "That's just political hyperbole," LaSota said. "I don't want to get into the politics of it. But



Kanye West

obviously I think there is a lot to be achieved by someone else running for president."

Clayton's attorneys said the lawsuit must be resolved quickly because the deadline for Arizona's ballots to be printed is on Sept. 8 and 9.

In a statement, Clayton described himself

as a Navy veteran who cares about the November election.

"I filed this case because I don't want people to get confused voting on ballots that have disqualified people listed with everyone else who followed the law," Clayton said.

It's unclear if Clayton has any connections to the Arizona Democratic Party, which didn't return a call Wednesday seeking comment.

AP

No agreement in meeting between Barcelona and Messi's father

BARCELONA

LIONEL Messi's future at Barcelona looked no closer to being resolved after the first meeting between the player's father and club officials on Wednesday ended without an agreement, a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press.

The person said club president Josep Bartomeu met for more than 90 minutes with Jorge Messi to discuss the the Argentina star's request to leave the club, but that neither party made any concessions.

The official spoke on condition of anonymity because the person was not authorized to speak publicly about the private meeting.

Lionel Messi last week told Barcelona he wanted to leave the club and invoked a contract clause that allowed him to depart for free at the end of the season. But Barcelona claimed the clause expired in June and said he must see out his contract until June 2021, unless the buyout clause of 700 million euros (\$837 million) is paid.

Also in the meeting were Barcelona official Javier Bordas and Messi's brother, Rodrigo. A lawyer for the Messi family was also present. In what was described as a cordial meeting, all parts made their positions clear – Jorge Messi said the player wants to leave and Barcelona said it will not accept his transfer request.

No other meeting was immediately scheduled, and the next steps were unclear.

Barcelona has said it still hopes Lionel Messi could change his mind about leaving.

The player's representatives claim the clause allowing him to leave the club should still be valid because the season was pushed back by the coronavirus pandemic. Barcelona reiterated that they will hold the player to his contract.

Jorge Messi, who is also Messi's agent, was tight-lipped when he arrived in Spain from Argentina earlier Wednesday.

"I don't know anything," Jorge Messi said in brief comments after being questioned at the airport.

Spanish television station Cuatro later reported that Jorge Messi said it would be "difficult" for his son to stay with Barcelona. He did not elaborate.

Barcelona has been saying it will

not facilitate Messi's departure and will only negotiate a contract extension. The club has offered the Argentine a two-year extension that would keep him with Barcelona through the 2022-23 season.

In addition to meeting with Messi's father, Barcelona said it also wanted to meet personally with the player to try to change his mind about leaving. The club said it has been doing everything to try to convince Messi to finish his career at the club where he started nearly 20 years ago.

Lionel Messi hasn't met with club officials since announcing his decision to leave and hasn't said anything publicly since Barcelona's 8-2 loss to Bayern Munich in the Champions League quarterfinals on Aug. 14. The defeat that capped a difficult season for the club, its first without a title since 2007-08.

The 33-year-old Messi had been outspoken against club officials during the season and he hasn't shown up at the club since the squad returned to training on Monday. He also skipped the required coronavirus tests the team underwent on Sunday.

Barcelona did not say if it would take any action against the player because of his absence.

Real Madrid captain Sergio Ramos said Messi's decision isn't "something that concerns us," but he hoped the rival player would stay with Barcelona.

"He has earned the right to decide about his future," Ramos said. "I don't know if he will be doing it in the best way, but of course, for Spanish soccer, for Barcelona and for us, who like to win while playing against the best, we would like him to stay. It makes the league and Barcelona better, and it makes the 'clásicos' more beautiful."

Messi's Barcelona teammate Frenkie de Jong said he was in the dark like everyone else.

"It's a kind of chaos now, many things are going on," said De Jong, who is with the Netherlands national team. "But I didn't speak with Messi personally, nor with the club. I will see when I arrive after this week in Barcelona how things are going, and what is really happening. Honestly I don't know what will happen."

Barcelona is scheduled to begin its season against Villarreal in the Spanish league at the end of the month.

AP

Football must face stark realities after COVID-19 crisis

By Mark Ogden, Senior Writer, ESPN FC

FOOTBALL needs to take radical steps to avoid financial meltdown as a result of the COVID-19 crisis, pursuing a path of root-and-branch change in order to enjoy a viable future, a leading sports business expert has told ESPN.

With the 2020-21 season less than two weeks away in England, and other major European leagues also set to launch their new campaigns this month, football continues to be seriously affected by the coronavirus situation, which has created huge uncertainty across all areas of society for much of 2020. While the majority of the top leagues and UEFA club competitions were able to play the 2019-20 season to a conclusion – France, Scotland and the Netherlands chose instead to cancel their league competitions – the game is returning with stadiums still empty, or with just a handful of paying spectators in the stands. As preseason continues, positive COVID-19 tests among players – most notably Neymar and Paul Pogba – are becoming a regular occurrence.

Professor Chris Brady, director of Salford University's Centre for Sports Business and director of research at Sportsology, a New York-based elite sport advisory business, said he believes that the pandemic can ultimately be used as the starting point for football to redesign a failing model.

"Football sleep-walked into this current situation by assuming the future would be one of continual and unchallenged growth," Brady told ESPN. "Wrong. The main challenge now is to face up to reality and change the business model to ensure future viability."

"The greatest opportunity for all sporting organisations is the chance to engage in deep internal analysis around potential restructuring of the organisation, and the business model, that would ensure viability for the future after COVID-19. It is an opportunity to think in radical terms."

"As with many innovations, the 'burning bridge' is a powerful incentive. The prospect of a financial meltdown 10 times worse than that of the 2008 recession is such a burning bridge."

In England, Premier League clubs are each faced with having to pay back roughly £20 million each to the broadcast rights holders as a result of the disruption to last season's title race, while Manchester United and Liverpool are losing between £3m and 5m every time they host a competitive game without paying spectators. These seemingly small cash-flow problems are beginning to impact the transfer market, with Liverpool manager Jurgen Klopp citing COVID-19 as a key factor in the club's failure to strike a deal for Timo Werner before the RB Leipzig striker sealed a move to Chelsea.

Arsenal, meanwhile, announced 55 job cuts last month even though Mikel Arteta and his squad accepted 12.5% pay cuts over the next 12 months. Despite the Gunners' financial difficulties, they have nonetheless made big moves in the transfer market for the likes of Willian, Gabriel Magalhães and William Saliba.

Bayern Munich chief executive Karl-Heinz Rummenigge has warned of the financial impact all clubs are now facing, while Barcelona and Real

By Tor-Kristian Karlsen

EDITOR'S NOTE: Tor-Kristian Karlsen is a Norwegian football scout and executive and is the former chief executive and sporting director at AS Monaco. He will write regularly for ESPN on the business of soccer and the process of scouting. In his latest column, he looks at Donny van de Beek, the young Ajax attacking midfielder who has completed a move to Manchester United.

While all eyes have been fixed on Manchester United's efforts to sign Borussia Dortmund's Jadon Sancho, the Old Trafford outfit quietly landed one of the most promising midfielders in Europe. Last summer, the ex-Ajax midfielder was strongly linked with Real Madrid after an impressive Champions League run to the semifinals in 2018-19, which also saw him scoring in the knockout rounds against Juventus and Tottenham. The reported 45 million euro transfer fee seems relatively reasonable for a player who is already well developed yet still has sell-on value, and who appears perfectly suited to the Premier League.

The Dutchman, who has 10 caps for the orange shirts, offers Ole Gunnar Solskjær quality and quantity in equal measure. Predominantly a box-to-box midfielder – though he's also had stints as a "holding" player in front of the defense – Van de Beek features all the essential skills that make up a modern central midfielder. He is excellent on the ball, has an exceptionally well-developed footballing brain and boasts the ability to cover a lot of ground.

Being a product of the Ajax academy and spending five seasons in the first-team squad, it goes without saying that any rough edges to his game are already practically polished away. His touch on the ball is superb and the way he's able to turn quickly, often out of tight situations, while keeping possession is equally impressive.

Van de Beek is also very much a productive midfielder. In 135 appearances (Eredivisie and the Champions League) he has found the net 33 times and set up 27 goals. His trademark goal is the result of a late run, full of drive and purpose, into the box, more often than not cutting in from the left to finish in the far corner with his favoured right foot. While the overly critical may point out that his finishing skills still have room for improvement, his ability to



Madrid are both having to sell or loan players before making significant moves themselves. Meanwhile, the landscape threatens to be even bleaker in the lower leagues, with clubs desperate for fans to be allowed through the turnstiles once again to avoid the threat of bankruptcy.

The huge television deals commanded by the Premier League barely trickle down to the lower leagues, with clubs in League 1 and League 2 each banking less than £1.5m a year from the broadcast companies. League 1 and 2 clubs have just agreed salary caps in their respective divisions of £2.5m a year in League 1 and £1m a year in League 2, but without the lifeblood of gate receipts from paying spectators, many professional clubs in the lower leagues will face financial ruin.

"In the post-coronavirus era, money will be even more difficult to both generate and/or borrow," Brady said, "because it is unlikely that mass gatherings will be possible at previous levels, at least within the next 12 months, thus depriving clubs of a large chunk of one of their revenue streams." So why is football, not to mention most other major sports worldwide, facing such a moment of reckoning? For Brady, it is a result of too many years of spending beyond means, but also a result of poor planning and internal structure.

"It is clear that the business models of most sports in the UK, including more than 100 full-time professional football clubs, just do not work," he said. "Even before the pandemic, both rugby codes [league and union], athletics, cricket and many other sports were under severe financial pressure and those financial pressures will still be there after the pandemic, only magnified."

"But the major challenge facing them all is not simply to ride out the current situation: it's to use this time to restructure their organisations so they can prosper by this time next year, and the years to come thereafter. Brady, who co-authored

Carlo Ancelotti's book, "Quiet Leadership," and also contributes to the English Football Association's UEFA Pro-Licence Management course, says that life outside the Premier League offers little hope for some clubs unless they make tough, but obvious, choices.

"Below the EFL Championship, finances are even more precarious and the challenge for those clubs is clear – operate within their means," Brady said. "The demise of Bury last year, and other clubs that have been in and out of administration, are not accidents. They are the result of bad financial and operational management."

"Virtually every club that goes into administration does so owing back taxes and wages. A novel idea might be to pay taxes and wages on time. If that looks impossible, then either grow revenue or cut costs, ideally both."

Despite the worrying scenario facing many clubs, however, Brady believes that those teams who addressed the challenge early, planned for the future and realised that football would return, are the ones who will emerge the strongest. One example is Manchester United who, often derided for their aggressive pursuit of sponsorship partners across the globe, have been able to ride the storm of COVID-19 and plan for summer signings thanks largely to the guaranteed income from their many sponsors.

In 2019, United reported overall revenue of £627m and 44% of that (£275m) came from commercial income, including a £75m-a-year kit deal with Adidas and a £53m-a-year package with Chevrolet for shirt sponsorship. United also have in excess of 50 so-called territory-specific partnerships, which enable companies to link their brand to the club's for a small annual payment, but they all add up to a big number for the Old Trafford side.

United's approach has, therefore, made

them as insulated as they could possibly be from the worst financial effects of COVID-19.

"The smartest teams were the ones that hung their decision-making on one certainty: we will play again," he said. "All their efforts were, therefore, concentrated on being ready for whenever that day arrived. Many organisations were embarrassed to talk about competitive advantages in what were tragic times, but the best understood that life goes on."

"The post-pandemic environment may accelerate a departure of all sports away from an ailing, tradition focused sporting mindset that has remained stubbornly unwilling to embrace rapid change and innovation. There will be a clarity of competitive advantages with teams being deliberate about areas in which they want to build competitive advantage such as sports science, genuine, unique analytics and AI, player development and player acquisitions."

There will be a greater acceptance of the value of technology as a vehicle to enhance all aspects of the game. The work done by broadcasters to create "virtual fans" to fill the empty stands will lead to conversations about how significant fans are. There may be a realisation that the value of fans actually attending games is far greater than simple match day revenue. With ticket sales accounting for less and less of the overall revenue of the big clubs, it may be possible to reduce turnstile entry prices and increase the revenue generated by catering and other commercial revenue.

"In 10 years, the face of football will have changed irrevocably from its face today. Just as we knew in 1992 that the arrival of the Premier League would change the game forever so too will this period of disruption and the hopefully thoughtful introspection it encourages, change football."

"However, just as in 1992, we cannot be sure what that future looks like."

Bale accuses Real Madrid of making it 'difficult' to leave

LONDON

GARETH Bale has accused Real Madrid of making it "very difficult" to leave the Spanish club as the Wales forward looks to end his Bernabeu exile.

Bale is out of favour with Real manager Zinedine Zidane and played just 48 minutes of Madrid's 12 games when the Spanish season resumed after the coronavirus lockdown.

Zidane, who has feuded with Bale throughout his two spells in charge, said the winger did not want to play in last season's Champions League last-16 second-leg tie at Manchester City.

Bale has two years left on his Real contract, but there appears little chance he will force his way into the manager's plans.

The 31-year-old almost joined Chinese Super League club Jiangsu Suning in 2019 before Real pulled the plug on the deal, a decision that still irks Bale.

"I think the club needs to answer that question because I tried to leave last year. They blocked everything at the last second," Bale told Sky Sports.

"It was a project I was excited for last year but it didn't materialise. There's been other instances where we've tried to go but the club won't allow it or done something."

"So it's on the club, I can't really do anything. I have a contract. All I can do is carry on what I'm doing and hopefully something comes up."

"But as I said, it's in the club's hands. They make things very difficult to be honest."

Bale became the world's most expensive player when he joined Real Madrid from Tottenham for £85 million (\$113 million) in 2013.

He has won two La Liga titles and



four Champions League with Real, but his critics accused him of showing a lack of respect as his row with the Zidane intensified.

He was pictured pretending to sleep in the stands and using a roll of wrist tape as a telescope when he found out he was going to be an unused substitute.

"I want to play football and I'm still motivated to play football. I'm only 31 and feel I'm in great shape still," Bale said.

Bale has been linked with Tottenham and Manchester United and he will not rule out a return to the Premier League after seven years away if Madrid are willing to sell him.

"If those options arise then I'd look at it for sure. We have plenty of time in this transfer window and I guess a couple of others as well," he said. "Time will tell."

Bale is currently with Wales on Nations League duty and will captain the team in Finland on Thursday.

He insisted he remains unaffected by the controversy in Spain.

"Whatever goes on at Madrid goes on at Madrid. It doesn't really affect me," he said. "I've had plenty of experience to deal with it. It is what it is."

AFP

Why Van de Beek is perfect for Manchester United



Donny van de Beek

find space in the penalty area and anticipate the course of the ball is already at a remarkably high level.

Although technically gifted in position, van de Beek is by no means a "flashy" or extravagant player. On the contrary,

he's extremely practical: every finesse in possession tends to have a function and serves as a means to maintain the flow of the game. His brilliance comes into sharper focus when the pace of the game accelerates, too; there are few players better at successfully participating in quick combinations in and around the penalty area.

Whether it's a delightful touch to set up a teammate for a scoring opportunity or go for a goal himself, the execution is generally of a high standard.

To supplement his attacking prowess, the 23-year-old also has the body and the build to efficiently handle the less glamorous work in midfield. His height (6-foot) is relatively uncommon for such a dynamic and technically neat footballer, but he's also happy to do a shift defensively, track back and brush opponents off the ball.

Solskjær will also be well aware of having brought in a highly positive character. Despite his youth, van de Beek has already captained Ajax on occasions and is

a steady source of positive "signals" during a match – take the way he's quick to encourage and applaud his teammates, even when an attempted pass fails.

These little details might not seem important to some, but a player's body language, both during the match and in training, is something that is attracting growing emphasis among scouts and recruitment officials across Europe, who are increasingly analysing this aspect along with the more traditional player skills.

Not only have Manchester United captured a potentially influential midfielder, but they might even have a future club captain on their hands.

While the new arrival from Ajax is perfectly able to coexist with Paul Pogba and Bruno Fernandes – it's not unusual for an ambitious top club to have an extensive squad and competition for every spot – it's evident that United are making themselves less dependent on Pogba, whose contract with the club expires next summer.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



Simba SC coach lauds team cohesion

SPORT

Football must face stark realities after COVID-19 crisis

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Simba SC head coach, Sven Vandenbroeck.

Kings XI co-owner wants strict control of 2020 IPL bio-bubble

RIYADH

KINGS XI Punjab co-owner Ness Wadia on Thursday said the Covid-19 positive cases in the Chennai Super Kings contingent could have hit any of the eight franchises and wants only those people in the IPL bio-bubble who are "really required" to be with the players.

Thirteen members of the CSK contingent, including two players, tested positive for the virus last week, raising safety concerns for the tournament taking place in the UAE amid the pandemic.

"The CSK incident has taught us that it can happen to anyone even when the best of precautions are taken and therefore we must be more compliant and rigid on the bio-bubble protocols. We need to ensure only those who are really required to be with the players are part of the bubble," Wadia told PTI.

The franchisees' non-player and non-coaching staff includes team operations manager, and social media specialists. The cricketers are also required to spend time with the marketing staff during photo shoots which will be held closer to the IPL beginning September 19. The CEOs and owners, most of whom are yet to reach the UAE, are also allowed in the bio-bubble but any violation of the BCCI's Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) will send them into a seven-day quarantine.

"The number of staff outside of the teams and their support staff and the match officials should be limited to the absolute minimum," the BCCI SOPs say.

When asked if he would be travelling for the tournament, Wadia said: "I have not finalised my plans but I normally don't interact a lot with the players. I have spoken to Anil Kumble (head coach) twice so far just to check what is going on. I am very comfortable interacting on Zoom and other [online communication platforms]."

Wadia asserted that there is nothing to worry about in the wake of developments at Super Kings as positive cases have also been found in major European football leagues on resumption. Even NBA players have tested positive.

"The BCCI has put internationally established protocols in place," Wadia said. "If you look at the football leagues, there were cases in the beginning and the highest of precautions were taken. There are so many variables [in the current situation]."

I don't think people need to worry at all. Things will get better and smoother as we go forward."

The teams will have to cope with a financial hit as their share from the BCCI central revenue pool stands reduced after new title sponsor Dream11 paid nearly half (INR 222 crore) of what Vivo was paying. The teams will also lose out on the gate money with the tournament held overseas and in front of empty stadiums. Delhi Capitals chairman Parth Jindal has predicted a 30% drop in teams' revenues in case the BCCI doesn't compensate them.

Wadia said his team too is seeking compensation from the board but he also chose to look at the brighter side.

AGENCIES

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

SIMBA SC head coach, Sven Vandenbroeck, has said his relationship with his players is sound. Vandenbroeck yesterday posted on his club's official website that he can not use

more energy on issues he termed as useless and untrue. He insisted he does not know where the issues are originating from, saying he does not have any problems with his player Meddie Kagere and the player has no issues with him.

"I cannot use much energy on things which are useless, I don't know where they are coming from, I have no issues with Kagere and he has no issues with me, that is

what I can say," the coach said on the post.

The post moreover had a picture showing the tactician giving instructions to Kagere at the club's training. The coach's post comes after a section of social media had gone viral on Tuesday and yesterday morning, alleging that the gaffer and Kagere were involved in a training ground bust-up in Mbeya.

Before Vandenbroeck had issued the statement, Simba SC Manager Patrick

Rweyemamu, and the outfit's information officer, Haji Manara, denied the rumours. The two officials disclosed that the rumours are aimed at diverting the team from its preparations for the Mainland Premier League's clash with Mbeya's Ihefu FC, slated for Sunday at Sokoine Stadium.

"There is nothing like that, the atmosphere in our camp is very cordial, we are all focusing on preparing for our game against Ihefu FC on Sunday," Rweyemamu noted.

"All I can say is that such rumours are coming from people who don't wish us well." Manara in his post said the rumours are not true, he explained that Vandenbroeck had advised the players to rest.

"That is totally untrue. They say Meddie Kagere and Vandenbroeck were on each other's neck on

Tuesday, in fact on that day the team did not train as the coach advised that the players should rest," he noted. "Which training are they talking about?" he queried on his face book post. Social media and other people, who issued the information, failed to mention reasons for the incident.

Unconfirmed reports, however, say Kagere, the Mainland Premier League top scorer for two season in a row (2018/19 and 2019/20) scoring 22 and 23 goals respectively, is unhappy with the coach's decision to start the former on the bench.

It is said the fall-out started when Simba were winding up their participation in the 2019/20 Premier League outings and Azam Sports Federation (ASFC) games. Vandenbroeck is said to have been in favour a formation that has a lone striker upfront, who in most cases is John Bocco.

Vodacom Premier League wins many followers in Kenya, says Azam FC keeper

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

AZAM FC's newly recruited keeper, David Kissu, has disclosed many soccer players in Kenya are closely following Tanzania Mainland Premier League and are eager to feature in it.

Kissu, roped in by Azam FC from Kenya soccer big guns, Gor Mahia FC, noted the Mainland top flight is regularly shown by television stations in Kenya and that has boosted the country's soccer followers' enthusiasm for the competition.

The towering goalkeeper had also featured for Tanzania's Njombe Mji FC which was relegated to the First Division League (FDL) a few years back.

He pointed out the Mainland Premier League has lately become quite popular in Kenya because of the television coverage.

He said the Kenya Premier League

games are rarely broadcast in television, noting matches which attract big number of fans, are the ones shown regularly.

"A good number of soccer players in Kenya like this league, the tournament's games are broadcast in Kenya and that is why Tanzanian players are much popular there as compared to the country's players," he noted.

The shot stopper disclosed a Kenyan soccer player might be gifted but he may be less popular in streets.

He said the country's players are, to a great extent, known by avid soccer followers.

"A Tanzanian player in contrast will be easily noticed by soccer followers when he, for instance, move from Dar es Salaam to Mtwara, as he is regularly watched by the followers, when he takes part in duels," he disclosed.

"That is why Kenyan footballers want

to play in the Tanzania top flight."

Kissu moreover disclosed Kenya soccer clubs prefer a tough brand of football, as opposed to Tanzania's clubs, which mostly embrace tactics, with the squads mostly being made up of skilful players.

"Kenyan soccer followers are, though, way better than their Tanzanian counterparts when it comes to contributing for their outfits," he noted.

He pointed out when he was featuring for Gor Mahia, for instance, the side had at some point been banking on fans' contributions to settle the players' salaries and other entitlements.

"Our payments and other entitlements, at a certain point, were settled by our club's fans when the club was struggling financially,

Junior tennis players set for 2020 Eddies Kiddies tournament

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

THIS year's edition of Arusha's junior tennis tournament, known as 'Eddies Kiddies', has been slated to take place from September 12-13 at Arusha Gymkhana Club (AGC) courts.

Arusha's junior tennis coach, Goodluck Mollel, who is one of the competition's organizers, said it is scheduled to take place at the AGC courts with more than 70 junior players from across the country set to participate in.

He said there will be categories namely U-6, U-8, U-10, U-14, U-16 and U-18 for both boys and girls.

Mollel disclosed that Thursday next week has been set as the closing date for registration for the competition.

He also thanked the tournament's sponsor, Eddy Husslage, and disclosed that winners will be awarded medals.

Husslage, a veteran tennis player, is one of the AGC Tennis Section's respected members that are actively involved in tennis promotion domestically.

"We really thank our sponsor, Husslage, for backing this junior tournament, he has sponsored the competition for the 13th year in a row," Mollel noted.

"Our sponsor will, on top of handing over the medals, offer food and T-shirts to all players who will compete at the event," he said.

He said the Eddies Kiddies junior tournament is vital to the development of the sport in the country.

He pointed out the competition presents the junior tennis players with the opportunity to compete against each other.

"Eddies Kiddies junior tennis tournament is very important to the development of the sport in the country, it gives a chance for the juniors to compete," he disclosed.

"This year's tournament has come at a good time, given the players have been starved of events, following the sporting activities' suspension in the country from March to early in June due to Coronavirus outbreak."

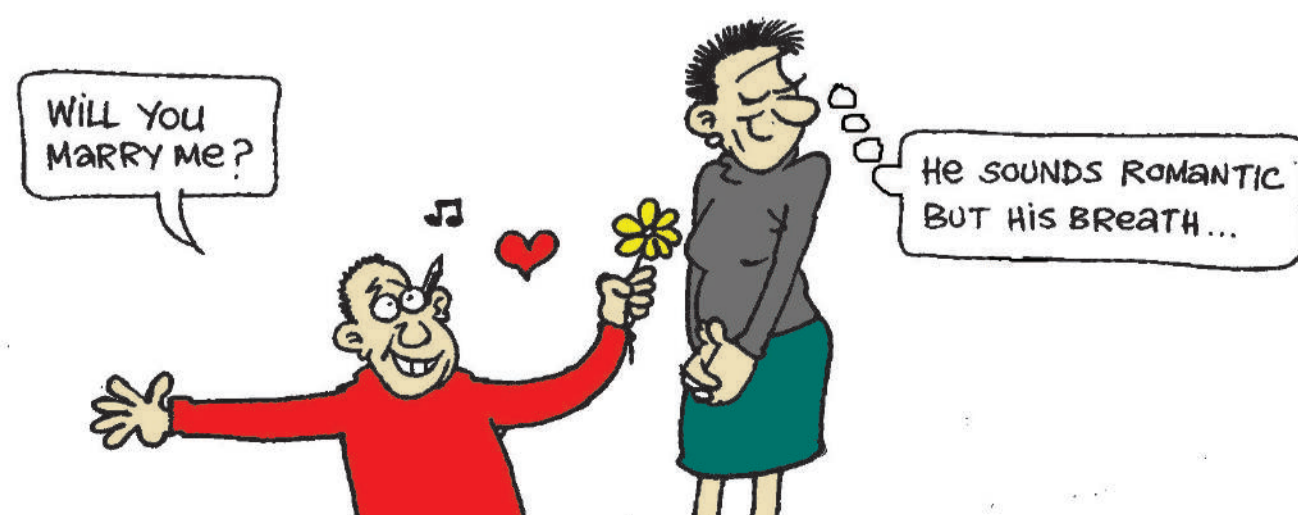


Azam FC keeper, David Kissu. PHOTO: COURTESY OF AZAM FC



Arusha's junior tennis players in a group picture shortly after taking part in a competition, which took place in the region recently. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT

Flexibles by David Chikoko



EATV FRIDAY

TONIGHT @ 9:00

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Mid Week Movie (r)
13:30 Kali Za Wana
14:00 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Wakilisha (r)
16:00 Ujenzi (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 S5ELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Skonga
19:30 EATV SAA I
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 Friday Night Live
23:00 Kurasa (r)

Friday Night Live The Weekend begins here! Listen to upbeat mixed music by the hottest Djs. Gossip, showbiz updates and exclusive interviews with celebrities from home and abroad. Don't you dare miss this.

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 Friday Night Live

88.1FM
DAR ES SALAAM