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TANZANIA

SATURDAY 8 MAY, 2021

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Samia: Major reforms coming



President Samia Suluhu Hassan addresses elders - and the nation - in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: State House

By Henry Mwangonde

PRESIDENT Samia Suluhu Hassan yesterday said her administration is set to make major changes in laws and institutions of governance so as to enhance good governance, human rights and economic growth.

Addressing elders in Dar es Salaam, the president said her government respects freedoms and rights of the people including the right of association, media freedom and privacy.

The president spoke of fake water bills saying this must stop and that she will fire everyone who will do that but urged Tanzanians to pay proper bills at the right time.

On improvement of service delivery, the government will continue with the free education policy as well as working on loans for more higher education students.

On the building of the national economy, the Head of State said it is the work of every Tanzanian to help build the nation, hinting that in her appointments she will not look at party loyalties but "anyone who is capable will be brought in."

She touched on the rising scourge of thefts of motor vehicle spare parts, warned those engaged in the malpractice to stop immediately as she will not sit and watch, directing In-

spector General Simon Sirro to ensure the malpractice is dealt with accordingly.

She called upon Tanzanians to return to traditional child upbringing which was helpful in maintaining good behavior among the youth, while noting that the government has been taking various initiatives to care for elders but the bigger role should be in the hands of families and the society.

As for economic empowerment of elders, she referred to the work of the Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) for poor families which include elders, but acknowledged the need for minimum pensions for elders irrespective of whether they earned terminal benefits in their working days or not.

She asserted that the government was aware of the challenges that elders face, lamenting however that financial drawbacks arising from the coronavirus pandemic make it difficult for the government to take up the matter at present.

The country's economic growth has declined from nearly seven-percent to 4.5 percent and we have huge projects which it is a must to be finalized," she specified, asking for time to work on the issue.

She made reference to the technical team formed to advise the government on how to handle the Covid-19 threat,

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Constitution, party minutes to decide fate of 19 'MPs' - Ndugai

By Guardian Reporter

NATIONAL Assembly Speaker Job Ndugai yesterday said that he can only purge the 19 main opposition Chadema legislators on the Special Seats ticket if the party furnishes him with some key documents that could effectively confirm that they are no longer party members.

Ndugai wants the party to submit a letter attached with two key documents namely the party constitution and minutes of the meeting that expelled the MPs from the party.

The Speaker made these remarks in the legislature after the routine question and answer session, making some procedural precisions, saying that there were key issues to be considered in evaluating the demand to sack the MPs.

He said the issue has legal procedures as it touches the rights of people, so if Chadema wants the MPs to be expelled, then it should adhere to the requirements and show satisfactorily how and why it expelled the members from the party.

"Before expelling the MPs from Parliament, I have to make sure that I receive and be satisfied with all documents and attachments. I have talked

“ Party secretaries should learn to write to me. You can't write me a piece of paper like this and then you expect me to fire 19 MPs; that's not my job at all. You MPs continue to work because you are in safe hands

about this several times and some people think that I am joking but get to know that I am here to supervise principles, regulations, the constitution and the country's laws," he declared.

Speaker Ndugai said the requirements are not only confined to Chadema but will apply to any other party which wants to expel MPs elected or appointed from that party.

He said that if a party writes to the Speaker on such an issue it should also remember to copy the demand to the Registrar of Political Parties.

"By doing so, it will facilitate the effort to conduct follow-ups because while working on the concerns I have to consult the registrar, get satisfied if the whole process taken by the party to expel its members was fair before I take any further decision," the Speaker intoned.

He however acknowledged to have seen a letter from Chadema which he cited as a 'piece of writing' which had nothing to verify the demand to expel the MPs.

"For the office of the Speaker to make a rule on a serious matter like this, then the responsible political party must also be serious, attach everything which is needed. Why are they hesitating to attach the documents? It is a very simple thing to do so as to enable me to do my job," he explained.

Early this week, Speaker Ndugai said that he is not obliged by any law to state when he will expel the 19 Special Seats MPs contested by the leading opposition party.

Ndugai called on 19 Special Seats MPs to continue with their work be-

cause they are in safe hands, despite calls for them to leave Parliament as they were ostensibly expelled by their party.

"Party secretaries should learn to write to me. You can't write me a piece of paper like this and then you expect me to fire 19 MPs; that's not my job at all. You MPs continue to work because you are in safe hands," he further stated.

However, he said the MPs were yet to be heard by the party's general assembly, and therefore, he cannot expel people who were yet to defend themselves.

Chadema secretary general John Mnyika has several times been quoted saying that he did not sign the document bearing the names of 19 Special Seats MPs as required and wondered how the names reached the office of the Speaker who administered the oath.

In his twitter account yesterday, Mnyika wrote complaining that the National Electoral Commission (NEC) hasn't responded to a letter he wrote five months ago seeking an explanation on who submitted the list of the 19 MPs as well as who signed the form to verify the nominations.



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Busisi bridge: Police hold eight over 19 beams, bolts

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

POLICE in Mwanza Region are holding eight suspects found with materials taken from the Kigongo-Busisi Bridge project which is under construction.

The strategic infrastructure connects Misingwi and Sengerema districts in Mwanza and Geita regions respectively, and is being rebuilt at a cost of 700bn/-, set for completion in two years time.

Regional Police Commander Muliro Ju-



manne (pictured) told reporters here yesterday that the eight suspects were nabbed with among other materials, 19 beams, 16 huge bolts and a welding machine that were taken from the construction depot.

He said the items were stuffed in a van with registration number T 610 DNV, where upon interrogation, the suspects said they bought the materials from some technicians at the construction site, he said.

The late president John Magufuli laid the foundation stone for the bridge early Decem-

ber 2019, billed to be the longest in East Africa and sixth-longest in Africa.

The 3.2 kilometers long and 28.45 meters wide bridge will facilitate trade with neighboring countries of Uganda, Burundi and Rwanda.

The 180-tonne capacity bridge will be able to carry 1,600 vehicles at a time and result in Mwanza becoming a zonal commercial hub for the Great Lakes

TURN TO Page 2



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa inspects 7.58-km Matemwe-Muyuni road in Zanzibar yesterday shortly before inaugurating its construction by the China Civil Engineering Construction Corporation - with African Development Bank funding. Story on Page 3. Photo: PMO

Major changes coming - Samia

FROM PAGE 1

saying that it is about to finalise its report, and it will also address issues affecting elders.

"I am also an elder I will join you soon so I will be failing myself if I don't make the right decisions now on elders," she said.

The reason I have chosen to speak to elders of Dar es Salaam is because the region has people of from different regions which gives me the courage that am speaking to almost all elders in the country.

President Samia said the decision to put on masks was to protect elders because the room was not enough to practice social distance, saying elders were an important part of the society and it needs attention.

"I have decided to meet this important group of the society so that I listen to you, hear what you say then and obtain wisdom on what we do to run the country," she said.

Health minister Dr Dorothy Gwajima said the ministry is working on reviewing the policy elderly part of society to make it suitable

for the group and formulate provisions in the laws to protect their interests, noting that the number of those over 60 years of age are estimated at around 2.5m at present

One such feature is having a group of healthcare providers serving elders when they visit health centres, the minister noted.

Dar es Salaam elders chairman, Salum Matimbwa, said elders fail to obtain treatment when they visit hospitals because insurance cards they hold can't be used in referral hospitals.

He said apart from the elderly policy of 2006, there is no law which specifically speaks about elders.

"We want a new law on the elderly which will take care of the population which is a great part of the society," he said.

"We want elders to get loans as given to other groups such as women and the disabled."

Elders in the Mainland want to be given pensions as it is the case to elders in Zanzibar but also be given seat priority in public transport, he added.

Busisi bridge: Police hold eight over 19 beams, bolts

FROM PAGE 1

Zone. The bridge will ease dependence on ferry transport connecting the shores, dramatically reducing transit time and improve regional trade. The project is being carried out by the China Civil Engineering Construction Group (CCECG) and China Railway and is entirely financed by budgetary funds.

Patrick Mfugale, CEO of the Tanzania National Roads Agency (TanRoads) said during the project launch, that the bridge is

scheduled for completion in July 2023.

At the ceremony, the late Dr Magufuli said the start of construction of the bridge is proof that Tanzania is not poor and that the bridge will accelerate trade between Tanzania and its neighbors.

Apart from the construction of the Kigongo-Busisi Bridge, other major bridge projects are: Wami (Coast), Magara (Manyara), Sukuma (Mwanza), Kitengule (Kagera), Primary (Singida), Ruhuhu (Ruvuma), and New Selander (Dar es Salaam).

'Govt will employ 10,467 servants in 2021/2022 FY'

By Guardian Reporter

THE government will in the 2021/2022 financial year employ 10,467 civil servants in the health sector including pharmacists and medical technicians, the National Assembly heard yesterday.

The new employments are meant to reduce the shortage of experts, said the deputy minister of State, President's Office Regional Administration (POLARG) and Local Government Dr Festo Dugange when he was responding to a question posed by Bukene Member of Parliament, Selemani Zedi (CCM).

In his basic question, the MP asked whether the government was

considering employing at least one pharmacist in every health center across the country to strengthen the availability of medicines.

Responding, Dr Dugange said according to the current guidelines, pharmacist should only be employed at hospital level.

The Deputy Minister said at the level of health centers and dispensaries, the guidelines directs that such health facilities should have assistant medical officer.

"These cadres are important at health care facilities as they help to strengthen the coordination and management of health products," he said.

Dugange told the House that from

May 2017 to February 2021, the ministry has employed 79 pharmacists, 313 pharmacologists and 160 assistant pharmacologists.

He said the civil servants who will be employed in the coming financial year will be distributed to all the councils countrywide.

In the supplementary question, the Bukene legislator wanted to know whether the government was ready to give permits to District Medical Officers (DMOs) and District Executive Directors (DEDs) to employ pharmacists on contract basis as they wait for the government to employ them.

Dugange admitted that pharmacists, medicine technicians and their

assistants are important experts in the health sector in strengthening coordination and supervision of health provision materials.

"We need to have these experts to ensure the quality of services provided at our health facilities and ensure proper management and distribution of drugs," he noted.

He said the government has already instructed District Executive Directors whose councils have enough internal revenues to hire such experts on contracts basis.

"May I call upon all the DEDs and local government leaders to use this opportunity to employ pharmacists at dispensaries and health centers," said the deputy minister.

Reps want joint Zanzibar-Union revenue account for mutual good

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

MEMBERS of the Zanzibar House of Representatives (ZHR) have called for the establishment of a joint account between the Union government and that of Zanzibar to keep revenue accrued so that each side of the Union benefits.

The call was made on Wednesday this week at the ZHR session when contributing to the debate for Budget estimates for the Office of the Second Vice President for FY 2021/2022.

Malindi Rep Mohamed Ahmada has called upon Union government officials not to let down President Samia Suluhu Hassan who in her speeches had stressed for the solutions of the Union's contentious issues.

He said so far the issue of having a joint revenue account that is stipulated in the Union Constitution is yet to be implemented.

"The issue of having a joint commission for the supervision of 4.5 per cent allocation to Zanzibar from the joint account has not been implemented so far," he said.

Chaani Rep Nadil Abdulatif called for the procedure of ratio in regard to employment in the Union government to be

followed so as to strengthen the Union.

He appealed to the Minister of State in the Vice President Office dealing with Union Affairs, Selemani Jaffo to find time to attend ZHR sessions to listen to some ministries whose responsibilities are directly related to Union issues.

He said both governments have been making efforts to find solutions to the contentious issues afflicting the Union but the implementation thereof has not been done.

"Already both governments have agreed on the issue of jobs allocation through its various institutions whereby Zanzibar will receive 21 per cent and the Union government 39 per cent, but its implantation is yet to be done," he added.

For his part the Shauri Moyo Rep Hamza Hassan Juma said "the appointment of Tanzania's ambassadors to foreign countries does not reflect the true aspirations for the Union as the Isles has virtually been shut out."

He said when one visits Tanzania's embassies abroad one will find many such missions without a single Zanzibari, even in the office cleaning positions.



Works and Transport deputy minister Mwita Waitara (R) shares a light moment with Contractors Registration Board chairperson Consolatha Ngimbwa (3rd-L) and other officials in Arusha city yesterday shortly after closing the board's two-day consultative meeting with local contractors. Photo: Correspondent Joseph Mwendapole.

Saudi Arabia suspends visa services in Uganda

RIYADH

The Saudi embassy in Kampala has suspended issuing visas to Ugandans who want to travel to the gulf country to work.

The move has greatly affected Ugandan companies dealing with labour export and women seeking employment as house maids in Saudi Arabia.

According to local media in Saudi Arabia, the visa suspension has been

attributed to a technical glitch in the electronic visa system and has caused an outcry from families that had already paid recruitment firms to get maids.

The spokesperson of Uganda Association of External Recruitment Agencies Ronnie Mukundane yesterday said: "For the last two weeks, maids haven't been given visas at the Saudi Arabia embassy."

The embassy officials notified us that they are facing technical prob-

lems."

Last month, Saudi Arabia banned travel or transit from 20 countries to curb the spread of COVID-19. The countries are: Argentina, Brazil, Egypt, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Pakistan, Portugal, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The restriction is expected to end on May 17.

The suspension of visa services in Kampala will have a negative effect on Uganda's forex exchange earnings because around 165,000 Ugandans working in the Middle East contribute about \$650 million yearly to the economy, according to UAERA.

Most of them work in Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Efforts to reach officials at the Saudi embassy for comment were not successful by press time.

AGENCIES



Al-Hikma Foundation chairman Sheikh Nurdeen Kishk (C) leads guests, including government officials, in having iftar his foundation hosted in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Right is Temeke district commissioner Godwin Gondwe. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Eight boards, management teams due to be called over failure to submit account books

By Guardian Reporter

NATIONAL Assembly Speaker Job Ndogai yesterday directed the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to summon the boards and managements of eight government institutions over failure to submit account books to the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) for auditing in the 2019/2020 financial year.

Speaker Ndogai issued the directive in the House, saying it was unacceptable that councils are challenged for getting qualified and adverse opinions, while there were key government corporations that haven't even prepared and submitted their account books to the CAG for auditing.

Ndogai said: "These government corporations should be summoned and questioned in order to enable us to advise the government to effectively and efficiently on the actions to take including sacking the management and dissolving the boards."

He named the institutions as the Muhimbili National Hospital; Muhimbili Orthopaedic Institute,

TanESCO and Tanzania Mercantile Exchange Plc.

The others include Unit Trust of Tanzania, Tanzania Posts Corporation, Tanzania Railway Corporation, Tanzania Fertiliser Company.

In another development, Speaker Ndogai issued new procedures to political parties requiring them to make attachment of party's constitutions minutes of meetings when writing letters informing his office on members who doubled as legislators sacked by respective political parties.

He said that the procedures will be used by his office during his tenure as National Assembly Speaker, adding his successors will also use the same because it simplifies the office bearers in arriving at just final decisions.

Speaker Ndogai added: "Political parties should be aware that the Registrar of Political parties will be involved because it is difficult for the Speaker to know articles of the Political Parties' constitutions and their respective decision making organs."

TBS stakeholders urged to strengthen processes for preparation of standards

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

THE Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has urged stakeholders in arts, culture and heritage have been called on to take part in the processes for preparation of standards.

This was said on Thursday in Dar es Salaam TBS Acting Director General, David Ndibalema during the African Day of Standardisation awarding ceremony for winners of the 8th African Standardisation Organisation (ARSO) continental essay competition.

The competition which attracted 214 students from 32 higher learning institutions in the country was held in March this year. This year's theme for the ARSO day was "the Role of Standardisation in Promoting Arts, Culture and Heritage - The Creative Economy in Africa".

Ndibalema said once preparation of standards involves the community would

minimise challenges facing the arts, culture and heritage sectors.

He said this year's theme reminds the nation to ensure the process to prepare and manage its implementation at various sectors is done by involving stakeholders including those in culture, arts and heritage.

"It is through community participation, the standards would contribute to improve products and services as well as helping Africa to reach its innovation goals," he said.

He said there is a huge difference in the mounting innovation economy, particularly in the arts, culture and heritage sectors for developing countries including Tanzania due to poor infrastructures, business, and use of standards.

"We mark the Africa standards day by organizing various activities, including essay writing competitions among students from higher learning institutions as

a way of creating awareness on the importance of standards," he explained.

A total of ten students emerged winners and were awarded various prizes including certificates and cash ranging between 300,000/- and 1.3m/-

They are Maina Masole(SUA), Godfrey Matiko (SUA), Kija Migele(MUST), Erwin Tadeu (Mzumbwe), Helena Ambele(Tudarco), Jamila Licholile(UDOM), Frank Joseph (UDOM), Elizabeth John (UDSM) , Mbonea Mbwambo (MUHAS) and Godrick Bunga (Udom).

Acting Director of Standards, Hamis Mwanasala said the major aim of marking the day was to educate people on the importance of standards in improving their lives through the quality of their assets, health and safety among others.

He said the bureau has been organizing essay competition using the theme of the specific year with the aim of measuring the understanding of students on issues

related to standards.

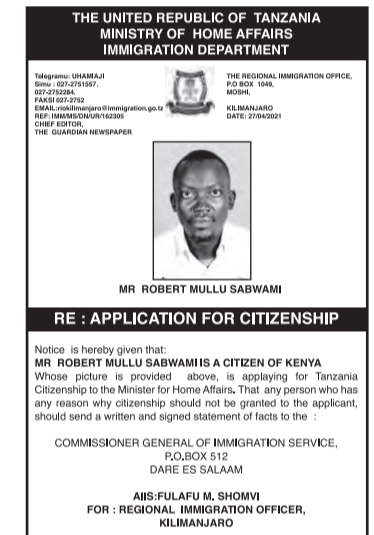
He added that the competition helps TBS measure the extent at which citizens understand the importance of standards and what should be done in capacity building, especially for students to understand the importance of standards in their lives.


One of the students who emerged a winner from Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), Maina Masole commended the standard body for introducing the idea adding such competitions promotes and increases understanding of matters related to standards.

"I take this opportunity to encourage my colleagues (students) to take part in such competitions," he said, thanking TBS for promoting issues related to standards from the grassroots.

Earlier, Chief Judge, Dr Michael Karani, said they experienced some challenges including delays by some participants to

submit their entries. He said some students copied materials from their friends.





MGEN TANZANIA INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED

Pursuant to Section 41 of Insurance Act Tanzania
Financial Statements for year ended 31st December 2020

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020			STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2020			STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020		
	2020 TZS 000	2019 TZS 000		2020 TZS 000	2019 TZS 000		2020 TZS 000	2019 TZS 000
Gross written premium	4,071,146	4,958,103	Share capital	2,920,000	2,920,000	Cash flows from operating activities		
LESS: Premium ceded to re-insurers	(1,213,911)	(1,433,065)	Contingency reserves	1,910,875	1,788,740	Cash generated from operations	(428,948)	(216,709)
Net written premium	2,857,235	3,525,038	Share premium	67,619	67,619	Tax paid	(10,091)	(38,289)
Change in gross unearned premium provision	534,709	443,598	Accumulated losses	(7,490,961)	(6,813,222)	Net cash from / (used in) operating activities	(439,039)	(254,998)
Re-insurers' share of change in provision for unearned premium	66,178	(346,678)	REPRESENTED BY	(2,592,467)	(2,036,863)	Cash flows from investing activities		
UPR movement	600,887	96,920	Assets			Purchase of fixed assets	(23,648)	(188,734)
Net insurance premium revenue	3,458,122	3,621,958	Property, plant and equipment	79,968	92,131	Proceeds on disposal of assets	25,346	6,846
Investment income	57,413	87,449	Intangible assets	109,746	167,705	(Increase) / decrease in investment in government securities	106,264	302,719
Commission earned	263,759	318,287	Receivables arising out of direct and reinsurance arrangement	102,352	435,389	(Increase) / decrease in investment in deposit with financial institutions	-	256,132
Other income	45,372	68,342	Reinsurers' share of technical provision and reserves	1,283,751	1,440,856	Net cash (used in)/generated from investing activities	107,962	376,973
Claims incurred	(1,036,182)	(1,237,493)	Deferred acquisition costs	99,940	131,086	Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(331,077)	121,973
Operating and other expenses	(2,821,072)	(4,480,121)	Other receivables	44,695	117,689	Increase in cash and cash equivalents		
Acquisition cost	(503,760)	(596,820)	Current Income tax	65,848	75,014	Cash at beginning of the year	287,491	165,518
Profit/(loss) before tax	(536,348)	(2,218,398)	Deferred tax	-	-	Cash at the end of the year	(43,586)	287,491
Tax	(19,257)	(433,235)	Investment	140,844	124,204			
Profit/(loss) after tax	(555,605)	(2,651,633)	Government securities	1,006,453	1,112,717			
			Deposits with financial institutions	-	-			
			Cash and bank balances	14,810	305,692			
			Total Assets	2,948,407	4,002,483			
			Liabilities					
			Unearned premium	1,658,407	2,193,117			
			Outstanding claims provisions	1,916,203	2,168,473			
			Creditors arising out of reinsurance arrangement	1,171,214	1,057,352			
			Other payables	736,655	602,203			
			Bank balances	58,395	18,201			
			Total Liabilities	5,540,874	6,039,347			
			NET ASSETS	(2,592,467)	(2,036,863)			

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2020						
Year ended 31st December 2020	Share capital TZS 000	Advance against share issue	Contingency reserve TZS 000	Share premium TZS 000	Retained earnings TZS 000	Total TZS 000
At 1st January 2020	2,920,000	-	1,788,740	67,619	(6,813,222)	(2,036,863)
Issue of shares	-	-	-	-	(555,605)	(555,605)
Net profit (Loss)	-	-	-	-	(2,651,633)	(2,651,633)
Advance against share issue	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to contingency reserve	-	-	122,134	-	(122,134)	-
At 31st December 2020	2,920,000	-	1,910,874	67,619	(7,490,961)	(2,592,468)

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019						
Year ended 31st December 2019	Share capital TZS 000	Advance against share issue	Contingency reserve TZS 000	Share premium TZS 000	Retained earnings TZS 000	Total TZS 000
At 1st January 2019	2,920,000	-	1,639,997	67,619	(4,012,846)	614,770
Issue of shares	-	-	-	-	(2,651,633)	(2,651,633)
Net Profit (Loss)	-	-	-	-	(148,743)	(148,743)
Advance against share issue	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfer to contingency reserve	-	-	148,743	-	-	-
At 31st December 2019	2,920,000	-	1,788,740	67,619	(6,813,222)	(2,036,863)

The financial statements issue by the Board of Directors on 13th April 2021 and signed on its behalf.

George Mpeli
Director

Mercy Mchechu
Director



Tigo Northern Zone Territory manager Said Idd (C) briefs Education, Science and Technology minister Dr Joyce Ndalichako on the company's services during Innovation Week celebrations in Dodoma yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TEA planning to implement project to construct classrooms and pit latrines in 4 primary schools

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE Tanzania Education Authority (TEA) is planning to implement a project to construct classrooms and pit latrines at four primary schools in Dodoma Region.

Explaining about the project yesterday, TEA director general, Bahati Geuzye said the project will cost 1.9bn/- and will be implemented at Kisasa, Medeli, Kizota and Mlimwa C primary schools.

Geuzye said the project aims at reducing the shortage of classrooms and toilets at Dodoma's primary schools. He urged the responsible officers to make sure the construction work is completed within four months to reduce congestion in classrooms.

Dodoma Urban legislator, Anthony Mavunde thanked the government through TEA for considering improving the learning environment in Dodoma city.

"We are thankful to the government for the provision of funds for construction of pit latrines and classrooms. Completion of the classrooms would reduce students' congestion in the targeted schools," said Mavunde. The lawmaker added that the de-

mand for classrooms is too high in almost all the public schools within Dodoma city due to the increase of children attending primary schools caused by the government's decision to introduce the free education policy. On November 27, 2015 the Tanzanian government issued Circular 5 to implement the Education and Training Policy 2014 and immediately, directed public bodies to ensure that primary and secondary education is free for all children. This included the removal of all forms of fees and contributions.

The implementation of free education in Tanzania has seen a three-fold increase in the numbers of children attending schools almost all over the country, according to government data.

"I call upon the committee responsible for supervision of the project to ensure proper expenditure of the provided funds as well as timely completion of the structures," he added.

Dodoma City Mayor, Prof Davis Mwamfupe thanked the government through TEA insisting on the authority to continue allocating funds for improvement of learning environment at schools because the demand increases every day.

Govt dishes out 50m/- to build dispensary at Huduma village

By Guardian Correspondent, Karatu

THE government has dished out 50m/- for the construction of a dispensary at Huduma village in Karatu District, Arusha Region, a move which will improve provision of health services in the area.

The dispensary will involve construction of laboratory, ma-

terial building, labour room and others thus giving smiles to thousands of residents in the village who have been struggling for years to access quality health services in nearby areas.

Abbas Kayanda, Karatu District Commissioner said this when he visited the area to inspect the construction progress.

Kayanda said that the completion of the dispensary will transform and enhance efficiency of health service provision at the village while also serving people from outside the area.

According to him, the government's major aim is to improve the overall health in the district so as to reduce and

eradicate maternal death and complications.

"Inadequate health services are a major obstacle to socio-economic development and have a negative health impact in the population, so this project is going to boost socio-economic activities," he said.

He however, directed the construction committee to su-

perwise well and ensure that the dispensary is connected to water and power.

The district commissioner also visited Kilimatebo dispensary where the government has set aside 10m/- to complete construction and refurbish some of the buildings and improve services in the village.

He said that the funds will be used to complete a building of the dispensary which includes construction of toilet, doors and waste dumping area.

Huduma village chairman Leonard Paulo commended the government saying that the completion of the dispensary will increase the overall well-being of the residents by

helping pregnant women have safer births, providing preventative interventions and health education.

Nicodemous Said, Kilimatebo village chair assured the DC that they are going to supervise well the completion of the dispensary building so as to allow residents to start accessing services in the area.

Sanlam firm set to invest in agricultural insurance

By Guardian Reporter

FARMERS in the country have a reason to smile following a desire by Sanlam General Insurance to invest in agricultural insurance as it plans to reboot its businesses and become a purpose led organization.

Yesterday, the company announced a new motto dubbed 'Live with confidence' as it strives to give customers a wide range of services in the next two to three years through expanding product offering, data and digital transformation as well as innovation.

The company's Chief Executive Officer Khamis Suleiman told journalists that the company sees an avenue for doing businesses in the agriculture sector though there are some issues that must be taken care of.

"The good thing is that the government has been facilitating this because there is VAT on other kind of insurances but not on agriculture which is an encouraging thing," he said.

He said the company is thinking of entering treaties to insurer the country's agriculture sector saying there are still studying the trend on

how it can go about it.

Insurance cushions farmers against losses by acting as a fall back in the event of a bad crop season.

He while the company said has been on the journey to place purpose at the heart of everything; COVID-19 has solidified the urgent need for corporates to play a more meaningful role in society, to move away from being led by profit to a place of empowerment and deep society impact.

He added that the company is committed to investing in Africa by investing heavily in the communities that it serves.

"It is about ensuring the previously marginalized have access to well-functioning financial infrastructure, this includes giving them financial confidence to manage their money," he added.

Tanzania records a continuous agricultural sector growth and is considered largely self-sufficient in its main staple crop maize. Cassava, paddy, sorghum and bananas are the second most widely grown staple crops by farmers. 68 percent of Tanzania's work force engages in farming, both in rural and urban areas.



The good thing is that the government has been facilitating this because there is VAT on other kind of insurances but not on agriculture which is an encouraging thing



Construction of Uhasibu flyover at the Kilwa Road/Mandela Road junction in Dar es Salaam well under way, as captured yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Ugandan health workers demand pay rise, risk allowance

KAMPALA

MEDICAL workers at Mbale Regional Referral Hospital, who were contracted to handle Covid-19 patients at the height of the pandemic last year, are demanding their salaries and risk allowances.

The health workers at the Covid-19 Treatment Unit (CTU) said in an interview on Thursday that they are demanding risk allowances of more than Shs350 million.

Each health worker at CTU is supposed to receive 90,000/- per day.

Dr Hussein Hasasha, the coordinator of Mbale CTU, said the health workers have taken more than eight months without getting their risk allowances.

"We are demanding Covid-19 risk allowances from

April last year to date. We are also demanding salaries for the months of March and April," he said.

Dr Hasasha said the hospital allegedly received some money in the second quarter but it was diverted to other activities.

"We were told by the management that the money was given to people who renovated the Covid-19 units in the second quarter and to pay plumbers who renovated the Covid-19 unit," he said.

Dr Hasasha said the health workers also lack accommodation, adding that despite several reminders, they have not received any communication from the Ministry of Health.

Health workers, who requested not to be named, said they are working under stressful conditions.

"It's unfortunate that we have worked and no al-

lowances and salaries are paid to us to date. We are not given meals, salary, accommodation and allowance. We have tried to complain in vain and yet we gave our lives to save the nation in this deadly pandemic," they said.

They also accused government of neglecting them whenever they get infected.

The workers also said they have inadequate personal protective equipment, which leaves them at risk of getting infected.

An April 13 letter signed by Dr Hasasha and addressed to the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health, reads: "I hereby submit the claim on behalf of Covid-19 Treatment Unit team, for special considerations and reference is made to our letter to your office dated December 29 last

year over unpaid allowance for staff working in Covid-19 Isolation Unit of Mbale Regional Referral Hospital."

"The allowances we last received were for August last year and we have tried to engage the hospital management but all we are told is that the money they received could only cover the months of August and July last year," the letter reads in part.

The director of Mbale Regional Referral Hospital, Dr Emmanuel Tugaineyo, acknowledged that the health workers are demanding allowances.

When asked when they intend to pay them, he said: "That question is better answered by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Health. I'm aware of unpaid allowances."



Deogratius Ndejemi (R), Deputy Minister in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good Governance) receives a solar light from D. Light Central Zone sales manager Noel Maktauwa shortly after launching the firm's new shop in Dodoma city yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

WHO warns of new Covid-19 wave in Africa

BRAZZAVILLE, Congo

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) yesterday warned of a new wave of Covid-19 infections in Africa due to delayed vaccine supplies, a slow roll-out and new variants.

The African bureau of the UN agency said the continent had to catch up with the rest of the world in terms of vaccine roll-outs.

"The delay in the delivery of vaccine doses from the Serum Institute of India earmarked for Africa, the delay in the deployment of vaccines and the emergence of new variants mean that the risk of a new wave of infections remains very high in Africa," it said in a statement.

It added that new variants such as the ones that emerged in India and South Africa could unleash a 'third wave' on the continent.

"The tragedy in India does not have to happen here in Africa, but we must all be on the highest possible alert," said regional WHO director Matshidiso Moeti.

"While we call for vaccine equity, Africa must also knuckle down and make the best of what we

have. We must get all the doses we have into people's arms."

Some African countries had been exemplary in deploying vaccines, the WHO said, without naming them.

But it added that in spite of this, only just under "half of the 37 million doses received in Africa have been administered so far".

Africa now accounts for only one per cent of vaccine doses administered globally, the WHO said, down from two per cent a few weeks ago, as other regions' roll-outs are progressing much faster.

The first vaccine deliveries to 41 African countries under the COVAX scheme began in March but nine countries have so far administered only a quarter of the doses received, while 15 countries have used less than half of their allocations.

The vaccination rate in Africa is the world's lowest. Globally an average of 150 vaccine doses per 1,000 people has been administered, but in sub-Saharan Africa it is hardly eight doses per 1,000, according to the WHO.

East Africa's rice value chain stakeholders to meet in Nairobi

By Guardian Reporter

MAJOR players in the East Africa's rice sector are set to meet this month to discuss key topics surrounding the region's rice value chain in a bid to increase domestic rice production to fulfill the increasing demand.

Dubbed 'East Africa Rice Conference (EARC)' which is slated on May 18 to 20, bringing together government officials, development partners, members of the research and academic community, donors and investors, the private sector, and farmer and civil society

groups to lead critical discussions for the region's agri-food systems transformation and development.

In a statement availed to the media, Hannington Odame, regional coordinator of the Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) programme, Nairobi said that the conference will be a hybrid of physical and online.

The physical in-country component of the conference will take place on Tuesday 18th in Naivasha, Kenya. The virtual component will be on 19th and 20th May 2021.

Odame noted that sustained

multi-stakeholder collaboration is a worthwhile investment and a step in the right direction for the achievement of national and regional rice self-sufficiency, food and nutrition security, poverty alleviation and improved livelihoods.

He said the discussions will focus on accelerating progress in rice research and development, inclusive markets and value chains, rice-based livelihoods - gender and youth integration, integrated rice sector development in a changing climate, inclusive finance and investment, and agricultural

policy processes and reforms.

"Rice research is the linchpin of scientific innovations and basis for an enabling policy environment that will accelerate agri-food systems transformation to respond to challenges that the region is facing," said Abdelbagi Ismail, Regional Representative for Africa of the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

The conference will give impetus to agricultural growth, food, and nutrition security, and rural development as outlined in the Comprehensive Africa Agricultural Development

Programme (CAADP).

Additionally, it will optimize gains from national rice development strategies (NRDS) and initiatives by organisations including the Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice), the Agricultural Policy Research in Africa (APRA) Programme of the Future Agricultures Consortium, the Center for African Bio-Entrepreneurship (CABE), the Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD), the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and other organisations.

The conference also provides an opportunity to revisit progress towards the 2014 Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods commitments adopted by African Union (AU) Heads of State and Government.

Ultimately, the conference outcomes and recommendations will provide useful multi-stakeholder information and perspectives to current Africa-wide and worldwide food and nutrition security initiatives such as the upcoming United

Nations Food Systems Summit 2021.

"Credible knowledge on rice is critical for informed policy making which is instrumental in increasing the productivity of rice-based agri-food systems and sustainable use of natural resources," said Harold Roy-Macauley, Director General, AfricaRice.

Africa has become a major consumer of rice with an estimated annual import cost of 5-6 billion USD. Between 2010 and 2035, the continent will need an additional 30 million tons to meet this demand (Seck

Kisarawe launches anti-rabies campaign

By Grtrude Mbago, Kisarawe

ABOUT 5,000 dogs and cats in Kisarawe District, Coast Region are set to receive rabies vaccine in the launched week-long campaign aiming to fight against rabies across different wards and villages in the area.

Funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the campaign is implemented collaboratively by the Africa One Health University Network (AFROHUN) in Tanzania, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO), World Health Organisation (WHO), Ifakara Health Institute (IHI) and the Ministry of Livestock and Fisheries.

Other partners are the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences (MUHAS) and Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA).

Launching the campaign on Wednesday here, Kisarawe District Commissioner Jokate Mwegelo commended FAO and partners for coming up with the mass dog vaccination campaign, a move which is going to make the district safe from rabies.

She noted that beside human mortality, the economic burden of rabies is significant, so investing in measures to control it is inevitable.

Reports show that in Tanzania approximately 1,500 people lose their lives every year due to the dog mediated human rabies infection.

Mwegelo said that the campaign is complementing the government's ef-

forts which aim to eliminate rabies in the country by 2030.

She said that rabies is among the six prioritized zoonotic diseases for Tanzania mainland, with control efforts coordinated through the One Health Coordination Desk hosted at Disaster Management Department in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO). In addition, a National Rabies Control Strategy exists to boost control efforts in the country.

"I have been informed that the campaign will work with veterinary students from MUHAS and SUA to sensitize communities on the control and elimination of rabies and other priority zoonotic diseases in the district," she said.

DC Mwegelo urged Kisarawe residents to utilise the opportunity and make sure that they come out in big numbers to bring their animals for vaccination.

Prof Japhet Kilewo, Afrohun Tanzania manager said the veterinary students from SUA had earlier received instructions on how to restrain and vaccinate dogs while the MUHAS students will focus on outreach activities and logistics, including engaging local leadership, recruiting dog owners for participation, distributing informational fliers and posters, registering dogs and owners, and providing vaccination certificates.

"They will also educate dog owners about risk factors, symptoms and signs of rabies, and the importance of bringing their dogs to vaccination sites on an annual basis to update their immunization," he said.



Pupils of Mazengo Primary School in Dodoma Region in jovial mood shortly after NMB Bank Plc presented 53m/- worth of 450 desks to primary and secondary schools as well as medical supplies to Chamwino's district hospital. The primary schools presented with desks are Dabalo, Chiwondo, Igamba, Msanga, Buigiri and Makang'wa in Chamwino District and Mazengo, Chadulu and Solou in Dodoma Urban. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt will stand with you, minister assures midwives

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

THE Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Dr Dorothy Gwajima has assured midwives that the government will continue to stand with them to enable them perform their duties to ensure women deliver their babies safely.

Dr Gwajima made the remarks on Wednesday this week when speaking about the 2021 International Midwives Day themed: "Follow the Data: Invest in Midwives" commemorated on May 5 each year.

She praised midwives and all stakeholders who made the commemoration a success, especially the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) that deals with population issues.

"UNFPA has always been supporting us to ensure we perform better with the agenda which they supervise well in regard to world population and better living, including issues of health.

"Today we shall be directing great efforts to analyse all UN priorities and its 17 SDGs, with Goal Number 3 concerning how we are dealing with people's health and our community development."

She added: "Midwives understand today's theme that say we should be guided by statistics, as this is an important area that would enable us to assess ourselves whether we will attain the goals by 2030."

She said: "The goals we have set for ourselves - those maternal deaths should be eradicated, it must not come a time when a pregnant woman goes to deliver but in the process both her and the baby die."

The world is facing a shortage of 900,000 midwives, with more than half the shortfall in Africa, where nearly two-thirds of maternal deaths occur,

according to the World Health Organization.

There are an estimated 1.9 million midwives and associate midwives working globally, 90 percent of them women.

The recent report, published by the World Health Organization, the International Confederation of Midwives and the UN population fund (UNFPA), said little progress had been made to improve midwifery care in the past seven years and the COVID-19 pandemic had exacerbated the shortage with midwives deployed to support other health services.

Communities in Tanga Region to benefit from FORVAC programme

By Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

AUTHORITIES in Kilindi and Handeni districts in Tanga region have called on local communities to make sure there is effective forest governance that engage natural forest stakeholders and addresses key challenges that affect the sector in order to benefit from forestry and value chain development programme (FORVAC).

They said that local communities are blessed with good forest cover due to the fact that the two districts are situated along the Eastern Arch Mountains, but in recent years the cover have started disappearing gradually due to deforestation caused by illegal timber and charcoal harvesting.

Speaking recently at a meeting convened to educate the local communities and raise awareness on the forestry and value chains development programme (FORVAC), the leaders said effective governance of the natural forest that involves among other groups, women and the youth will enhance the programme and benefit from the value chain.

Handeni district administrative secretary, Mashaka Mgeta said that the local communities should understand that it is very importance to stop deforestation, instead conserve the natural resource for socio-economic development.

"Natural forests provide many benefits. The value chain can improve socio-economic development such as supporting different projects in the villages. In other villages such as Kilwa district in Lindi region,

the forest value chain have improved social services such as installation of water, health and school facilities such as building classrooms," he said.

"Therefore it is important for you to work together with other forest stakeholders such as FORVAC and community conservation groups to crack down illegal acts of deforestation," he added.

He urged the local communities to form forest conservation and management groups that will have the impact and capacity to come up with plans and strategies for the value chain development in their respective districts.

For his part, Kilindi district executive director Gracian Makota said his district has more than 16 natural forests on the village land and two of them are involved in the FORVAC programme.

"We expect to conduct sustainable harvesting at Mhonde village in the near future and this exercise we shall get more than 290m/-the money will be used to carry out and implement different projects.

Handeni district executive director William Makufwe called on the local communities to be security guards by conducting fruitful patrols so that the villages can benefit from the forestry and value chains development programmes saying this will attract enough money in their villages.

"I commend all stakeholders who have provided this education and awareness raising on forestry and value chains development. This will guide the local communities to conserve the forests and protect the



Handeni district administrative secretary Mashaka Mgeta addresses local communities from Handeni and Kilindi districts on the effective governance of the natural forests. Photo: Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

environment, he said.

Executive Director for Tanzanian Community Forest Conservation Network (MJUMITA) Rahma Njaidi challenged Handeni and Kilindi local communities to double efforts of forest conservation in their respective areas saying forests can generate revenues for community development projects.

Citing an example of Transforming Tanzania's Charcoal Sector project in Kilosa, Mvomero, Morogoro district and Kilwa district in Lindi region, she said that since the introduction of CBFM, a couple of years ago, the revenues have improved more public services such as schools, water, health services, infrastructures, introduced income generating projects, and enhanced socio-economic development.

She said that the government should uphold community rights to manage the for-

ests on village land and ensure that the revenues accrued from the forest products are well managed and retained in the villages.

"If you conserve the forests, this will increase community resilience to climate change. Forest and tree products such as timber and non-timber forest products. For example the forest and value chain development programmes will provide income diversification strategies for many communities, she said.

"Currently, there is swift rate of natural forest deforestation which stands at 469,000 hectares of deforestation annually. If this trend goes on unchecked, we are told that the natural forest on the village land will disappear within 50 years," she stressed.

MJUMITA coordinator for Northern Zone Daniel Lucas called the local communities

to develop sustainable harvesting plans of forest conservation while constantly benefiting from the forestry and value chains.

He said that forest management when integrated with forest-based enterprises, will provide incentives for communities to manage the forests on the village land sustainably and at the same time enhance rural development.

"I call on the local communities to work with their leaders and government at district level to use the education to implement this FORVAC programme for swift socio-economic development," he said.

The local communities from Kwedikabu, Mazingara, Kitumbi and Gole in Handeni district, Mhonde and Bandari from Kilindi promised to work with the village government and the natural resource committees to conserve the forests and venture into forestry value chain.

"We recommend that community rights to manage their forests should be protected, including deciding on forest harvesting, as set out in the Forest Act and Village Land Act," they said.

Forestry and Value Chains Development (FORVAC) is working in different cluster areas including Tanga, Handeni and Lindi. It aims at contributing in increasing economic, social and environmental benefits from forests and woodlands while reducing deforestation. The expected outcome of FORVAC is "Improved forest-based income, livelihoods and environmental benefits.

EAC partner states urged to accelerate integration process

By Guardian Reporter

UGANDAN President Yoweri Museveni has said that East African Community (EAC) partner states have no option but to accelerate the integration process if the region is to become competitive in the global economy.

President Museveni said that failure by the EAC partner states to form a stronger, more cohesive bloc with a bigger market would be disastrous for the region in the long run.

"Integration is not really something we will do or not do. It is a must. If we don't we shall end up in a very bad situation. The question we should be asking ourselves as we seek to integrate is the need to integrate.

If we can answer that question, the how will become quite easy," said President Museveni.

President Museveni was speaking at the State House in Entebbe, Uganda when he met the Committee of Experts on the Drafting of the Constitution for the EAC Political Confederation. The Committee which sought the views of the President on the Political Confederation was led by its chairperson, retired Ugandan Chief Justice, Benjamin Odoki.

President Museveni pledged that the government of Uganda would give \$600,000 to the EAC Secretariat to support national consultations on the Political Confederation being conducted by the committee in the Partner States. This was

in addition to the \$150,000 Uganda had given to the EAC Secretariat in November 2019 to fund the process.

EAC Affairs Minister Gen Otafiire had earlier informed the President that \$3.5 million was required to complete the consultations in all the Partner States.

President Museveni cited prosperity for the region, strategic security and the fact that East Africans were peoples of the same origins as the three major reasons why the region needs to integrate faster.

On prosperity, President Museveni said that economic growth comes from the production of goods and services and not foreign aid noting that development partners can only

help a developing country in small ways.

"Prosperity must come from work. Integration is therefore a must to create a bigger market for the goods and services produced by our people. Just ask yourselves why a huge country like China which has a domestic market of 1.4 billion people is still struggling for more markets despite the huge domestic market. It is the same case with India which also has a very big market," said President Museveni even as he urged EAC partner states not rest on their laurels.

"Before 1978, China was not moving economically due to its socialist system. Then they started bringing in investments and selling to the global market.

Their economy grew and now Africa is simply supporting the prosperity of China by buying their products and services including expertise in infrastructure development," he said.

He added: "The huge conglomerates undertaking infrastructure development in Africa today were originally Chinese government and army companies that were building infrastructure in China. They went abroad after developing China."

President Museveni compared the Spanish colonies in South America that chose to remain sovereign states vis-à-vis the British colonies and present day United States which united to form a federation.

"Today, the US is a super-

power and people from South America are migrating to the US to look for jobs. This is despite South America being very rich in natural resources. Natural resources cannot help you if you have no strong economic framework," he said.

He said that EAC Partner States markets operating individually were small and therefore need to integrate into a bigger one.

Museveni said that EAC and Africa require the ability to defend themselves and their economic interests.

"Our borders are a problem because we are not united. Security is fragmented due to sovereignty. Rebels have been in eastern DRC for decades and are now in Mozambique. The

lack of cooperation on security matters engenders instability. Lack of a unified command means that you cannot solve security issues easily," President Museveni asserted.

While pitching for the formation of a Political Confederation as a transitional model to a Political Federation, Museveni said that focusing on the common market only will likely lead to imbalances in intra-regional trade as has happened in the European Union.

"You need to unite the market with other elements especially the free movement of persons, labour, services and capital. Under a federation, citizenship becomes one in a contiguous territory. As we integrate our markets, the other

Zambia headed for bumper harvest this year, with increase of 7pc

LUSAKA

MINISTER for Agriculture, Michael Katambo has revealed that maize production for the 2020/2021 marketing season is projected to increase to 3,620,244 metric tonnes from 3,387,469 metric tonnes produced last season, presenting an increase of 7 per cent.

Katambo has attributed the maize bumper harvest expected this year to the early delivery of inputs under the Farmer Input Support Programme (FISP) coupled with good rains and good agricultural practices by farmers.

ZANIS reports that the minister said this during a press briefing on the Crop Forecasting Survey for the 2020/2021 Agricultural Season and the Food Security Status for the 2021/2022 Marketing Season in Lusaka today.

Katambo stated that the total carry-over stocks held by millers, grain traders, small and large scale farmers as at May 3, 2021 was 840,944 metric tonnes.

"If we add the total production of 3,620,244 metric tonnes produced this season, the total supply of maize avail-

able for the 2021/2022 marketing season is 4,461,188 metric tonnes," he said.

He said taking into account all the national requirements of 2,932,208 metric tonnes and the stocks of 4,461,188 metric tonnes, the country is expected to have a surplus of 1,528 metric tonnes of maize.

Katambo stated that in line with the economic recovery plan, it is the intention of government to make agriculture a leading export sector.

He said government will this year continue with regulated exports of maize and mealie meal through programmes such as the government -millers Association of Zambia. Katambo further said government has accepted a request by the World Food Programme to buy Zambian maize and mealie meal equivalent for export to needy countries.

He said government will allow to export 80,000 metric tonnes of maize by the World Food Programme for Humanitarian purposes.

Katambo added that government is encouraging production of early maize which is planted in October and artificially dried in March and April.



Neema Michael, a student at Igabiro Agricultural Training Institute in Kagera Region students, explains earlier this week how she has benefited by having her college fees paid by Serengeti Breweries Ltd through its agriculture subjects sponsorship dubbed Kilimo-Viwanda Scholarship. This was when students from the institute toured SBL's Mwanza brewing plant. Looking on are SBL managing director Mark Ocitti (L) and the institute's principal, Sadock Stephano. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Zanzibar govt to resume registration of foreign-owned ships

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR government has said that it will resume registration of foreign-owned ships after completing investigation on various issues including violation of laws.

In 2018, the government of Tanzania suspended registration and issuance of licenses to foreign-owned ships after some of the li-

censed ships were caught violating the country's laws.

Minister of State in the Office of Second Vice-President Dr Khalid Salum Mohamed said this in the House of Representatives that some of the foreign ships have been caught transporting illicit drugs and weapons which is against the law.

He was responding to a ques-

tion by Shauri Moyo representative Hamza Hassan Juma who sought to know when the government will resume registration and issuance of license to foreign ships.

The minister acknowledged that the Zanzibar Maritime Authority (ZMA) is currently not registering the foreign ships and the issue is now in the hands of the union government for discussion.

"The two sides of the union government are now investigating more on the matter and if things go well, ZMA will resume the registration, this a serious issue because those ships that were engaging in drug trafficking were ruining the country's image," he said.

In 2018, the late President Magufuli, put a temporary ban on

the registration of foreign ships in the country and ordered over 400 vessels to be investigated for allegations of involvement in criminal activity.

The ban came after at least five foreign-owned ships flying Tanzania's flag were seized in various parts of the world carrying illegal consignments of weapons and narcotics.

He said the ban on the registration of foreign ships would be in force until the system of reflagging vessels was reviewed.

The maritime authority in the Indian Ocean archipelago of Zanzibar has in previous years been accused of allowing Iranian and North Korean vessels to use the Tanzanian flag to circumvent United Nations sanctions.



Julius Magabe (2nd-L), Sanlam Life Insurance's CEO and regional executive for East Africa, briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam at yesterday's launch of the firm's "Live with Confidence" slogan. He is flanked by Sanlam General Insurance CEO Khamis Suleiman and Sanlam Life Insurance chief finance officer Mika Samwel. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

UN report: 155 million people were affected by severe hunger last year

By Guardian Correspondent and Agencies

SEVERE hunger affected at least 155 million people last year as a result of conflicts, the economic fallout of the Covid-19 pandemic and weather extremes.

According to the United Nations, the outlook for this year is equally harsh or worse.

Two-thirds of the people in those crisis levels were in 10 countries—Afghanistan, Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Congo, northern Nigeria, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Zimbabwe, and Haiti.

The 155 million people faced 'crisis', 'emergency' or catastrophe/famine levels of food needs, an increase of around 20 million people from 2019. "The number of people facing acute food insecurity and requiring urgent food, nutrition and livelihoods assistance is on the rise," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres wrote in the forward to the 307-page Global Report on Food Crises.

"There is no place for famine and starvation in the 21st century," Guterres said. "We need to tackle hunger and conflict together to solve either."

The report, which covers 55 countries that account for 97 percent of humanitarian assistance, also said that 133,000 people in Burkina Faso, South Sudan, and Yemen needed urgent food to prevent widespread

death from starvation last year.

World Food Program's chief economist Arif Husain said at a UN news conference that the biggest driver of food crises is conflict, which accounted for 99 million people in 23 countries facing a food crisis last year.

"Unless we start finding political solutions to conflicts," the number of people needing humanitarian assistance will keep increasing, Husain said. According to the report, 40.5 million people in 17 countries faced acute food insecurity last year because of "economic shocks" including the fallout from the pandemic.

The report said 75.2 million children under 5 years old living in the 55 countries were "stunted" in their growth and 15.8 million were "wasted," or underweight for their height.

It said: "Food crises are becoming increasingly protracted and the ability to recover from new adverse events is becoming more difficult this year."

"Conflict, the Covid-19 pandemic, and large-scale economic crises are expected to extend food-crisis situations in 2021, necessitating continuing large-scale humanitarian assistance," it said.

The report forecast that more than 142 million people in 40 countries will face food crises, emergencies, or catastrophes this year.

Tanzania, Kenya tasked to make laws for long-lasting relationship

By Correspondent James Kandoya

TANZANIA and Kenya policy makers have been tasked to formulate laws that cement the long-lasting relationship for the mutual benefit of the two countries.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan said that yesterday when addressing the joint chambers-Senate and National assembly in Kenya in her day two state visit.

Samia became the second president to address the two chambers after the former president Jakaya Kikwete in 2006.

She said the two chambers have a great contribution by formulating laws that promote friendship and peace and stability of two member states.

"As members, you are entitled to form laws that can strengthen our existing relationship. The laws should be made as part-

ners, neighbours and friends and not obstacles," she said.

President Samia said the laws should focus to eliminate barriers within and along the country's borders to increase trade volumes.

"Kenya is our great business partner in the region, therefore we need to have laws that are consistent with law and policy that promote bilateral trade relationships," she said.

According to her, unhealthy laws can contribute to slow implementations of some bilateral agreement agreed by the two governments.

Citing trade volumes, Samia said Tanzania exports to Kenya increased from US \$399.6 billion to US \$526.3 billion in 2017 and 2020 respectively while Kenya exports to Tanzania increased from US \$420 billion to US \$571 billion in 2017 and 2020 re-

spectively.

President Samia called on the security organs from the two countries to have a jointly collaboration to protect the peace against the terrorism.

She reaffirmed her government commitment to continue collaborating with the Kenya government in the war against the covid-19.

"Tanzania is not an island, therefore it must collaborate

with others including Kenya to battle the pandemic," she said.

"I have formed a team of experts to work out on the pandemic. It is therefore my hope that the findings will help us to take action against the pandemic," she added.

Tanzanian President Samia Suluhu Hassan is on a two-day state visit to Kenya aimed at improving trade relations between the two East African neighbors.

Hassan was Tanzania's vice president and became the country's first woman president following the death of John Magufuli in March.

She was welcomed to Kenya by President Uhuru Kenyatta and given a full military parade. The two leaders later signed an agreement to eliminate barriers hindering the smooth flow of trade and people between the two nations.

Rwanda eases Covid-19 restrictions

By Edwin Ashimwe

A cabinet meeting chaired by President Paul Kagame has further relaxed Covid-19 restrictions in most parts of the country as new infections drop and more people get vaccinated.

Movements are now permitted up to 10 p.m., allowing restaurants and businesses to operate longer. The previous guidelines had curfew set at 9 p.m.

Gyms that have been closed for more than a year now, will gradually resume operations after getting a green light from government authorities.

However, restrictions remain in parts of the country that continue to record higher rates of new infections.

Movements remain prohibited between 7 p.m., through 4 a.m., in all Southern Province districts except Muhanga and Kamonyi, as part of the efforts to control the recent spike in infections in the region.

"A detailed reopening schedule of gyms will be communicated after a readiness assessment conducted by the Ministry of Sports," reads part of a statement released by the Prime Minister's office.

Bars will remain closed while gaming activities are still prohibited.

The cabinet also approved an increase in public transportation, with buses allowed a capacity of 75 per cent capacity, up from the previous 50 per cent.

The cabinet also resolved that arriving and departing passengers at the

Kigali International Airport must present a negative Covid-19 PCR test taken within 72 hours prior to departure.

For passengers arriving from India, the cabinet resolved that they are required to complete seven days in mandatory quarantine upon arrival at a designated hotel on their cost.

India has seen an upsurge in the pandemic and as of Wednesday, the country had 21,070,852 cases.

The new measures will be reviewed end May upon a health assessment, according to the statement.

As of May 4, a total number of 25,421 Covid-19 cases had been recorded in the country and out of these, 23,710 patients had already recovered.

Overall, 338 people have succumbed to the virus in the country since March 2020.



For passengers arriving from India, the cabinet resolved that they are required to complete seven days in mandatory quarantine upon arrival at a designated hotel on their cost



Preparations in progress yesterday for the construction of a concrete wall meant to prevent erosion by River Ng'ombe waters from further threatening surrounding areas in Dar es Salaam's Tandale suburb with collapse. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

ZFDA destroys 14 tonnes of spoiled rice in Chake Chake

By Guardian Correspondent, Pemba

THE Zanzibar Food and Drugs Authority (ZFDA) has destroyed 14 tonnes of spoiled wet rice at the Pujini dump in Chake Chake, Pemba after it confirmed the product was unfit for human consumption.

Speaking here yesterday soon after completion of the destruction exercise, ZFDA Director in Pemba, Nasir Salum Buheti said the rice consignment was seized in February this year at the Mkoani sea port in Pemba.

According to Buheti, the rice consignment was carried in the Azam boat from Tanga Region. He said upon arrival at the port, almost all the rice consignment was spoiled.

He said the seizing exercise was successful with collaborative efforts from security organs. He said the waterlogged rice would have health impacts to consumers if left to enter the markets.

"We aimed at protecting residents from consuming the wet spoiled rice since there were possibilities of it getting rotten after few days," he said that consuming spoiled rice would make people fall ill.

Buheti added that the authority has been working to ensure the safety of consumed food both locally manufactured and imported. He said ZFDA conducts regular inspections at different ware-

houses, supermarkets, and shops.

He said the inspections include removing from the market all expired and counterfeit cosmetic products.

"Some traders are still reluctant to provide support to our inspection officers; we have a few of them who are ready to learn and voluntarily destroy the fake goods found in their shops," he added.

ZFDA Health Officer in Pemba, Hassan Mzee Mohamed said they have been inspecting all the imported goods in order to protect last consumers.

He said during the inspections, the officers

checks the quality of the products by considering its production and expiry dates and standard marks. Mohamed asserted that consuming spoiled foods would result in someone getting diseases such as cancer because the foods develop aflatoxin and several other types of poisons.

ZFDA was established in 2007 and operates in accordance with the Zanzibar Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Act No. 2 of 2006. It is under the Ministry of Health, Zanzibar.

ZFDA responsibilities include products inspection, registration and quality control of food, drugs, cosmetics, medical devices and related products.

The Guardian

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SATURDAY 8 MAY 2021

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

Midwives are the heart of healthcare globally, and merit special attention

TODAY, on the International Day of the Midwife, we not only commit to celebrating midwives as they lead the way with quality care, but to giving them a platform to inform global health policy. As frontline healthworkers at the heart of each community, midwives are best placed to advise governments, leaders and agencies on the critical changes needed to improve health outcomes.

The International Confederation of Midwives (ICM) is proud to celebrate this year's International Day of the Midwife (IDM) on 5th May 2021 under the theme of "Follow the Data: Invest in Midwives." They look forward to coming together as a global midwife community to advocate for investment in quality midwifery care around the world, improving sexual, reproductive, maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health in the process. Ongoing and growing efforts to centre midwives as fundamental to improving quality maternal and newborn care, ending preventable maternal and newborn deaths and achieving SDG.

Midwifery is the health science and health profession that deals with pregnancy, childbirth, and the postpartum period (including care of the newborn), in addition to the sexual and reproductive health of women throughout their lives. In many countries, midwifery is a medical profession (special for its independent and direct specialised education; should not be confused with the medical specialty, which depends on a previous general training). A professional in midwifery is known as a midwife.

A 2013 Cochrane review concluded that "most women should be offered midwifery-led continuity models of care and women should be encouraged to ask for this option although caution should be exercised in applying this advice to women with substantial medical or obstetric complications." However, midwifery-led care was also associated with a longer mean length of labour as measured in hours.

Trimester means 'three months'. A normal pregnancy lasts about nine months and has three trimesters. Women may have an ultrasound scan during the first trimester which may be used to help find the estimated due date. Some women may have genetic testing, such as screening for Down syndrome. Diet, exercise, and discomforts such as morning sickness are discussed.

The mother visits the midwife monthly or more often during the second trimester. The mother's partner and/or the labour coach may accompany her. The midwife will discuss pregnancy issues such as fatigue, heartburn, varicose veins, and other common problems such as back pain. Blood pressure and weight are monitored and the midwife measures the mother's abdomen to see if the baby is growing as expected. Lab tests such as a UA, CBC, and glucose tolerance test are done if the midwife feels they are necessary. In the third trimester the midwife will see the mother every two weeks until week 36 and every week after that. Weight, blood pressure, and abdominal measurements will continue to be done. Lab tests such as a CDC and UA may be done with additional testing done for at-risk pregnancies.

Govt needs new formulas as it readies for LNG talks

QUESTIONS surrounding the future of the long delayed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) project plans were at the centre of expectations as Energy Minister Dr Medard Kalemani met with a team of negotiators likely to represent the government in upcoming talks. The minister said in remarks to the team that the government is ready for talk with two international companies that have expressed interest in developing the plant. Yet given the manner in which the issue has failed to get off the ground over the past decade, it takes a lot of convincing to be sure that this time the project stands a chance of being endorsed, at last.

For one thing, the situation in northern Mozambique is both a plus and a minus for the Tanzanian project, as eastern Africa faces similar insecurity threats as elsewhere in Africa, and the record so far doesn't show that any country can adequately handle such situations. Yet there is a difference between northern Mozambique and south central Tanzania, in which case there is a chance of agreeing on the project if other terms are altered from the stance that the government has almost always affirmed on such issues.

Even then, it can't be said that anyone has a ready-made formula, but President Samia Suluhu Hassan has put it plainly clear that the country needs investors more than they need us, as they have other options.

What can be surmised from the president's remarks is that it is really upon us to remould our thinking or procedural formulas when we meet investors, to take stock of what they essentially want, what some would call it 'the bottom-line.' This has to be linked with some basic determinants of what

conditions a company can take, if we have learned any lessons from the Bagamoyo port development project, which was scuttled by the fifth phase government. The point is that if the project is anchored in the private sector and the government merely has shares relating to the land but not the resources as it would expect taxes from exploiting the LNG, it would work. But if one says 'put up the capital and give us 50 per cent shares' it won't work, and it doesn't matter how many months - or years - government teams will talk.

There is an environmental aspect that fossil fuels are increasingly being frowned upon due to climate change issues, and while they may still draw substantial bank credits for commercial reasons, they aren't likely to fetch much support from development banks, etc. That means investors will seek optimal returns in the years following the start of the project, owing to threats from the viewpoint of security as politics in African states is by and large unpredictable. Our negotiating teams may then focus on the long term, that fossil fuel ventures costing billions of dollars aren't the easiest project to decide among multinational firms, hence we give them sufficient leeway for 'amortisation' (return of capital), get bigger taxes later.

When the minister Dr Kalemani says the government team is ready for negotiations, are they led by the 'permanent sovereignty' over resources notion or 'permanent risk' of investors in fossil industry? That is before one adds insecurity risks. So the team should digest the president's directive as the basic guideline and enable the talks to hurry up before new circumstances alter the balance and oops! The project wanes.

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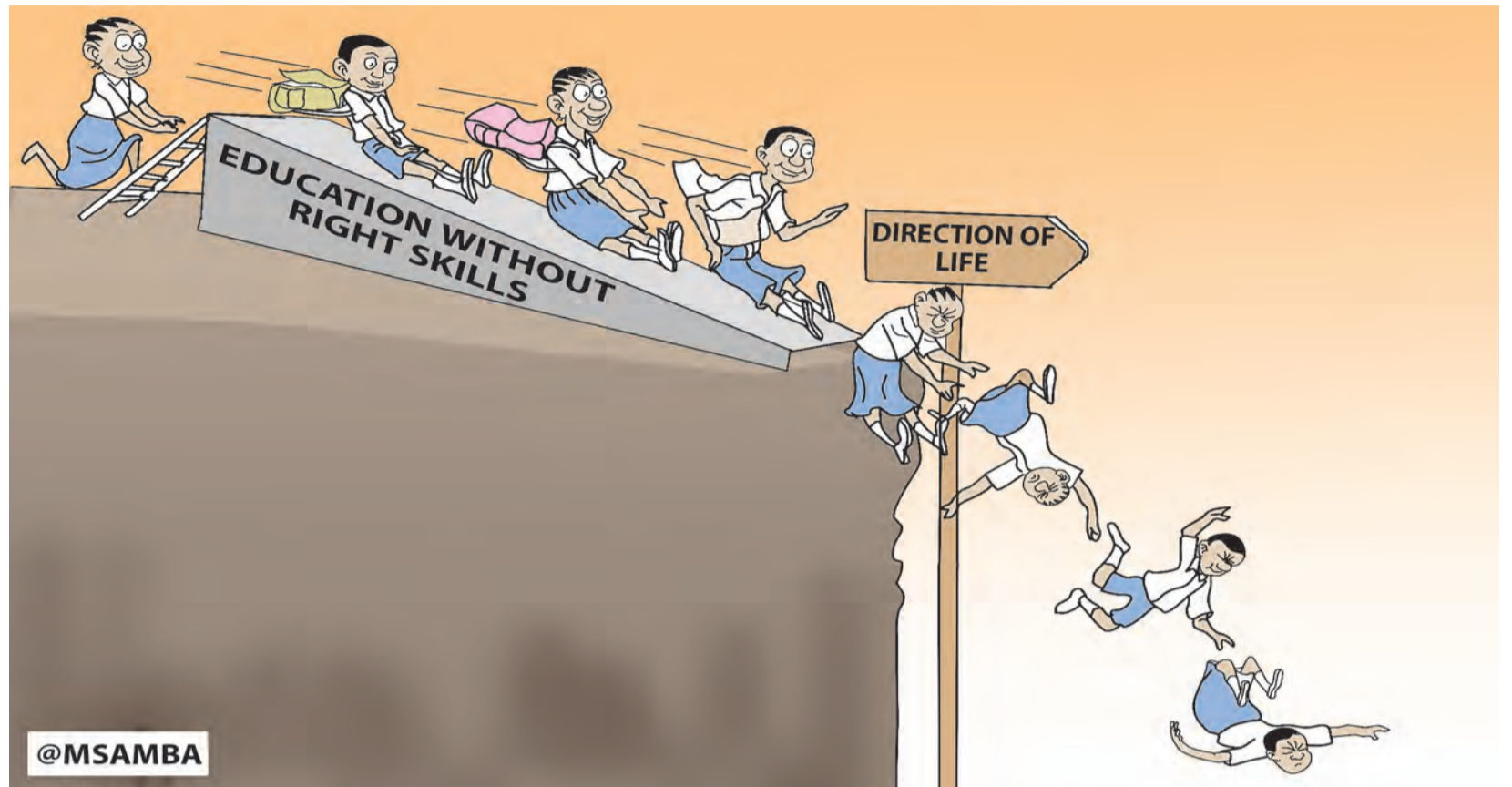
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Judicial Service Commission hearings were a disturbing show of intimidation, impropriety

By Professor Balthazar

A book could be written about all that was wrong with the conduct of last week's proceedings. We ought to be alarmed.

One cheer for the Judicial Service Commission (JSC) following its recent hearings for the appointment of candidates to vacant positions on the Bench. The recommendations of justices Mahube Molemela and Fayeza Kathree-Setiloane for the Constitutional Court and Judge Nolwazi Mabindla-Boqwana for the Supreme Court of Appeal are excellent decisions. These three will doubtless adjudicate on the highest courts with jurisprudential grace and legal acumen. The recommendations strike a massive blow for both demographic and intellectual transformation.

Sadly, that is where the reason for cheering ended. Both the conduct of the hearings and some of the appointments called into question the role of the JSC. A book could be written about all that was wrong with the conduct of these recent proceedings, but for the purposes of one column three issues must be highlighted.

The interview of Justice Dhaya Pillay was a disgrace.

To be clear, Professor Balthazar agreed with the decision to leave Justice Dhaya Pillay off the list of five recommendations for appointment. But the EFF representative, Julius Malema, was allowed, without restraint, to pursue his hatred of Pravin Gordhan to a level where he cast completely unjustified aspirations on Justice Pillay's ability to judge.

Remember, Justice Pillay is a judge of long standing, good enough to be successfully recommended for an acting stint on the Constitutional Court. She, as part of her judicial duties, is expected to adjudicate in the Constitutional Court and at the end of an acting stint in the high court.

How was it that Malema was allowed to attempt the total undermining of the legitimacy of a judge at a JSC hearing? Where was the recognition of the need to question candidates closely without defaming or egregiously undermined their continued



credibility as sitting judges?

But instead of intervening, as previous chief justices at JSC hearings would, Chief Justice Mogoeng Mogoeng piled on the pressure by somehow, five years after the event, suddenly recalling a conversation with Gordhan from which the inference was drawn that Gordhan had sought to interfere in a judicial appointment. The minister has set out a detailed account of their meeting which gainsays any inference that is sought to be drawn concerning impropriety. The Chief Justice owes the public a similarly detailed account, as well as an explanation as to why, did he only after five years mention that Gordhan's conduct was improper.

But the interview of Judge Pillay was not the only such instance.

Deputy Judge President Aubrey Ledwaba was subject to a similar excoriation because, for clear legal reasons, as he explained, he found in favour of President Cyril Ramaphosa and sealed the bank accounts of the CRI7 election campaign. Joining in the prevailing discourse was the President of the Supreme Court of Appeal, Mandisa Maya, who asked Judge Ledwaba whether he was a corrupt judge. Now to be fair, Judge Maya may have been seeking to protect Judge Ledwaba by affording him an opportunity to respond to what obviously was a smear campaign against a fine, independent judge; but why ask the question in an atmosphere where it appeared, to this observer at any rate, that the JSC had been taken over by the EFF and the Zuma wing of the ANC so that unsubstantiated allegations against judges who found against them were being made?

This leads to a further implication which is disturbing.

Given the treatment suffered by judges Pillay and Ledwaba, any judge who has ambitions of higher judicial office may

ponder the consequence of delivering a judgment that the EFF/Zuma wing regard as antithetical to their interests, no matter the obvious legal justification for the finding. As a further illustration, although claiming reluctance to ask the question, Malema asked Judge Elias Matojane as to how he had awarded R500,000 in damages to Trevor Manuel in his case against the EFF. That the question by a litigant to a judge who heard the litigant's case can be asked at a JSC hearing without being ruled out of order is truly mind-boggling.

A further problem was the continuation of the attack on the so-called top six (whoever they are) of the Supreme Court of Appeal. If there is a case of bullying of a junior judge of appeal, there are JSC processes to deal with such behaviour. But to continue to pursue in public what appears to be a vendetta against a court whose output compares more than favourably with that of the Constitutional Court, at hearings designed to determine suitability for appointment, serves no other purpose than to undermine the legitimacy of an important court in the eyes of the public.

The refrain that white candidates should not apply as there were more than competent black candidates

That demography is a critical factor in judicial appointments is clear. But so is a commitment to ensuring that the constitutional vision is converted into a reality for millions of South Africans living on the margins and for whom constitutional commitments have to date done very little. Hence, while race and gender must be considered by the JSC, that body should also ask the question: judging on the candidates' record, legal philosophy and answers to relevant questions, which appointment will promote the betterment of millions who are in need

of a jurisprudence that can help change the lives of these South Africans, the overwhelming number who are black?

That identity is not a guarantee for such results is clear from recent history, when the corruption of state money that should have been employed to better the lives of those most in need, knew no racial characteristics. That is, the rent-seeking cohort was composed of both white and black crooks. The simple point is that a sustained record that indicates the commitment to social and economic change is important such that identity alone cannot be the sole criterion for judicial appointment.

While some members of the JSC may hold to this view, section 174(2) of the Constitution dictates otherwise.

The hearings over the past week may well herald a real threat to the non-racial constitutional idea, the foundational principle of judicial independence, and the development of a jurisprudence that starts with concern for those most vulnerable. And on the latter point, in many cases concern for demography does meet that commitment, as is evident in the three distinguished women recommended for promotion. But that does not excuse the race essentialism that now dominates the JSC.

And, in a final note, South Africa must truly be blessed with huge pools of searing legal talent when it can afford to reject judges Owen Rogers and David Unterhalter, two jurists who would grace any apex court in the world!

Dr Aqsa Sheikh: Transgender doctor injecting hope during Covid-19 pandemic

NEW DELHI

WHEN Dr Aqsa Sheikh Tweeted and asked if she was the only transgender person to head a vaccination centre, it seemed extraordinary that in a country with 1.3 billion people, that this could be true.

"Can I lay claim to be the only #Transgender person to head a #Covid #Vaccination Centre in India? Will be very happy to have company of other Trans Folks in this spot," she wrote on March 3, 2021.

India had turned countless hospitals into COVID-19 vaccination centres – and Sheikh was, and still is, the only transwoman heading one.

Born and raised in Mumbai, Dr Aqsa Sheikh is a proud Muslim transwoman. She is presently living in Delhi and working as the Associate Professor of Community Medicine at Hamdard Institute of Medical Sciences and Research. She is the nodal officer of a COVID-19 Vaccination Center, involved in COVID-19 surveillance, and engaged in vaccine and transmission research. Despite her qualifications even in a pandemic, the idea of a trans-Muslim woman as a doctor defies stereotypes.

"I haven't faced any active face-to-face discrimination. However, a lot of name-calling on social media is common. In my videos, I get comments of people asking whether I am a man or a woman or why is my voice so masculine," Sheikh told Inter Press Service (IPS) in an exclusive interview.

"People call us 'Madarsa chhaap' (derogatorily referring to being from an Islamic School), 'Hijras' (a term sometimes used to refer to trans people in a derogatory manner) and so on."

When asked how her gender identity affects her daily professional interactions, especially during the pandemic, Sheikh says that often "our stories and our identity travel to people before us", so people look at her through many lenses.

The intersections of her identity are many, Muslim, transgender, woman, leader, health activist.

She credits two aspects of her life for saving her from stigmatisation often experienced in the trans community. Firstly, a lot of time has passed since she transitioned, and secondly, she is in a position of privilege where she is a provider rather than someone who is seeking the service. Both these make her less of a target for discrimination.

Coming out as a trans woman, however, has not been an easy task for Dr Sheikh.

When she broke the news to her family that she was a transwoman, there was anger, denial, and rebuttal.

She says she understands that for a family which has never had exposure to a transgender person, to accept that someone they have raised as a boy for 20 years now says and affirms that they are a woman was difficult to accept. The transition, which involved surgical and legal transitions, met with increased resistance because she came from a conservative Muslim background.

"While my mother stays with me, the rest of the family is not very comfortable affirming these familial bonds, but then you can't get everything in life," Sheikh says. "I am happy that I have been able to do what I wanted to do despite all the opposition from



society, and that's what matters at the end of the day."

Sheikh also emphasises there is a lot of homophobia within the Muslim community, like most commu-

nities. Still, she believes that acceptance of trans and intersex people is a little better, especially for those who transition.

The most important thing, according to Sheikh, is to be comfortable with oneself and be secure in the knowledge that she is not doing anything wrong.

"When I was confident that I was right, what I am doing is not wrong or anti-religion, then I was able to talk more about it, I was able to convince more people about it, I was able to break down more walls," she says.

According to Sheikh, the intersectionality of identities at play and understanding them is also imperative.

"You are not just a Muslim person, or just a queer person, just a doctor. You are not just a woman or just an Indian. You are all of them together," she says. "So, I, for example, do not only speak on the transgender issues, but I also speak on the different issues of the Muslim community. I speak on the issues faced by the Kashmiri Muslims, those faced by the patients while receiving healthcare irrespective of whether they are cis (assigned and identify with a gender given at birth) or trans."

She feels once people see you as someone who understands intersectionality (the interconnectedness of aspects of race, class, gender, and religion), acceptance increases.

The transgender community is highly vulnerable, says Sheikh and accessing general, COVID-19, or transition-specific healthcare is challenging.

"With COVID-19 and then the subsequent national lockdowns, the number of service providers available for providing services to the trans persons saw a decrease," Sheikh says. "During such times, the stigmatisation also always increases because one is looking for scapegoats."

She says the blame for transmission is often placed on minority groups, like the Tablighi Jamaat or trans persons.

Mental health services, which are a privilege for any person in India to afford, became difficult to access during the pandemic.

"Especially (difficult) when it came to queer-affirmative mental healthcare and counselling. The pandemic has been a tough and challenging time for the trans community with so many losing their traditional livelihood measures," Sheikh says.

With all the challenges that the present pandemic brings with it, she continues with her activism.

Apart from her professional medical engagements, she runs an NGO called Human Solidarity Foundation.

"We started a charitable clinic in Zakir Nagar this year. With the second wave of COVID-19, apart from distributing food kits and other work, we are doing a teleconsultation and also helping out people with COVID-19 resources," she says.

Sheikh's education was funded by Zakaat Funds (money to be compulsorily given by Muslims for charitable causes), and it's her dream that the potential of children is not lost because of lack of resources. Eradication of hunger, health and education for all, sensitisation and awareness are her goals.

"I am not sure whether we can achieve these in my lifetime, but that's what I really look forward to."

IPS

Time for Washington to act first to salvage Iran nuke deal

VIENNA

THE negotiations on getting the United States and Iran to resume compliance with the historic 2015 Iran nuclear deal, officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), have entered their fourth week in Vienna.

The international community is longing for a major breakthrough in the negotiations. Washington, if sincere in its intent to return to the pact, should act first, given its decision to unilaterally withdraw from the JCPOA and apply maximum pressure on Iran thereafter, setting off the current crisis.

Elaborating on his country's logic for returning to the nuclear agreement, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said earlier this month that "the United States, which caused this crisis, should return to full compliance first."

The U.S. administration under former President Donald Trump withdrew from the JCPOA in May 2018 and unilaterally reimposed sanctions on Iran. In response to the U.S. moves, Iran gradually stopped implementing parts of its JCPOA commitments from May 2019.

Therefore, in the quest for some real progress, Washington must take the first step by lifting all illegal unilateral sanctions against Iran and involved third parties.

Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi said earlier that the United States must "lift all sanctions" before any progress can be made.

His view is also shared by Russia and China, which have repeatedly urged the United States to immediately and completely lift sanctions against Iran.

Removing all illegal unilateral sanctions is "the key to the success of the negotiations," said Wang Qun, Chinese envoy to the United Nations and other international organizations in Vienna.

"All parties must continue to focus on and resolve this core issue first. At the same time, the Joint Commission should also consider how to verify the U.S. lifting of sanctions," Wang added.

Attended by representatives of China, France, Germany, Russia, Britain and Iran, the meeting of the JCPOA Joint Commission began on April 6 in Vienna.



The latest meeting of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) Joint Commission is held in Vienna, Austria, April 27, 2021. (Xinhua)

The one who began the trouble should end it. The negotiations have entered a crucial stage, and steps by the United States are of paramount importance to the fate

of the historic nuclear deal and future stability of the region and the world.

It is time for Washington to shoulder its global respon-

sibility by taking the first step toward a breakthrough in the nuclear talks.

Xinhua

20 million more people face food crises, as acute hunger rates rise to 5-year high

UNITED NATIONS

WITH COVID vaccines rolled out in more countries, we have reason to expect to be more equipped in the fight against the pandemic. Exiting the pandemic and reviving the economy is a first-order priority for all countries.

The COVID-19 pandemic, protracted conflicts and climate change have created an untenable situation for the most vulnerable, with 155 million people across 55 territories suffering from severe food insecurity, sending acute hunger figures to a 5-year high.

That's according to the Global Network Against Food Crises, an alliance of humanitarian partners working to prevent hunger and respond to food crises. The Network, which was founded by the European Union, Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and World Food Programme (WFP), released the findings of its 2021 Global Report on Food Crises on Wednesday, May 6.

The partners have issued an annual report on food crises since 2017, but this year's publication presents the grimmest snapshot to date of global food insecurity. It reported that 20 million more people faced acute hunger in 2020 than the previous year.

Stating that by the end of 2020, the zero hunger by 2030 goal seemed "increasingly out of reach", the report categorised 133,000 people in Burkina Faso, South Sudan and Yemen as being in "catastrophe", meaning that they need immediate action to prevent widespread death and collapse of livelihoods.

Additionally, it stated that children living in food-crisis countries are especially vulnerable to malnutrition. In the 55 food-crisis countries under review, almost 16 million children under 5 years were acutely malnourished, while 75.2 million children under five years experienced stunted growth.

The Network Partners say it is possible to reverse the rising trend of food insecurity, but this requires urgent commitment, finance and action.

"Humankind can now pilot a helicopter drone and even split molecules to generate oxygen on the far-off planet of Mars, yet here on Earth, 155 million of our human family are suffering acute hunger and their lives and livelihoods are at risk because they lack the most basic of foods. The contrast is shocking and not acceptable," said FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu.

The FAO Chief says as the international and humanitarian community prepares for the United Nations Food Systems Summit in September, the information in reports like this one should serve as a guide for solutions to the world's hunger crises.

"This requires a bold transformation of agri-food systems to be more efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable. This includes the development of early warning systems linked to anticipatory actions to protect livelihoods and food security before a shock or the threat emerges," he said.



A new report categorized people in Burkina Faso, South Sudan and Yemen as being in 'Catastrophe,' meaning that they need immediate action to prevent widespread death and collapse of livelihoods. This year's report on Food Crises presents the grimmest snapshot to date of global food insecurity. Thousands of displaced people camping under trees in Minkaman, northeastern South Sudan. (file photo).

UN Children's Fund Executive Director Henrietta Fore told the launch that the situation was worrying. She said COVID-19, with its lockdowns, economic and social shocks, has worsened a fragile nutrition situation.

"In virtually every single one of the crises described in this year's report, the most vulnerable are young children and marginalised, hard-to-reach populations," she said. "These children and their communities must be our priority. We need to invest in data and information systems that help us identify hot spots

of vulnerability and risk at the sub-national levels in key countries. This information is critical in targeting resources efficiently to reach children, their families and their communities who are most in need."

While the partners lament the staggering acute food insecurity statistics, the outlook is just as dire. They say threat of famine persists in some of the world's worst food crises.

"Tragically, this report is just the tip of the iceberg that we're facing all around the world," said WFP Executive Director David Beasley. "The global picture is even more bleak when we consider all countries significantly impacted by hunger. For example, chronic hunger, which was 690 million, is now up an additional 130 million people."

According to the report's forecast, while

conflict will remain the main driver of food crises in 2021, the economic fallout of COVID-19 will worsen acute food insecurity in fragile economies. 142 million people are projected to be in a food crisis, emergency or famine, in 40 territories for which forecasts are available.

"High levels of acute food insecurity will persist in countries with protracted conflicts by limiting access to livelihoods and agricultural fields, uprooting people from their homes, and increasing displaced populations' reliance on humanitarian aid for their basic needs," the report stated.

The Global Network Against Food

Crises says while humanitarian assistance is urgently needed, on its own, it is insufficient to deal with the scale of the present crises. The Network says the answer also lies in peace and a transformation of global food systems.

"A system that has the most vulnerable people continuing to bear the greatest burden of global crises is broken. We must take this opportunity to transform food systems, reduce the number of people in need of humanitarian food assistance and contribute meaningfully to sustainable development and peaceful and prosperous societies," it said.

IPS

Africa may still be in the starting blocks but it can't stay out of the space race

By Peter Fabricius

SPACE powers or aspirant space powers like India, China and Turkey long framed their space ambitions as purely developmental. But they're now jostling among themselves and with pioneer space-farers like the US to beat each other to the Moon or Mars. This is as much for the sake of national power and prestige as it is to boost development.

Where does this leave Africa? Is outer space the next terrain of a new Cold War-style proxy contest for allegiance and influence in which African countries will again be pawns in a power game – or be left behind? Should African countries join the race to stake a claim in what some analysts see as a new age of extra-terrestrial colonisation?

Temidayo Oniosun, who heads the Nigerian analytic and consulting company Space in Africa, said 12 African countries already had space programmes, and a further eight were busy establishing them. The African Union will soon launch its long-envisioned continental space programme, which will pool member states' resources, he told a webinar at Washington's Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) on 30 April.

African countries have launched over 40 satellites to date, and Oniosun says they're expected to send up about 80 more by 2024. The 12 countries with space programmes have spent over \$4-billion on these programmes, mostly on satellites. In 2019 alone, African countries spent about \$800-million on satellite projects. The total space budgets of countries on the continent increased by almost 50% in the past three years to \$503-million.

CSIS Africa director Judd Devermont noted that sceptics suspected these were vanity projects – or opportunities for corruption. Yet they had valid developmental goals, such as boosting agriculture, disaster management, remote sensing, climate forecast, banking and finance, defence and security. Africa expects that its investment in space programmes will increase the application of space tech to job creation, poverty reduction, sustainable resource management and rural development.

Oniosun said African space entrepreneurs were increasingly entering the growing space industry, mainly by making specialised components of satellites for foreign manufacturers. University of Delaware geographer Julie Klinger noted last year that China's moon rover included South African-made imaging equipment.

And Africa's space partnerships with foreign space agencies and companies are also increasing. Kenya's defence secretary Monica Juma told the CSIS webinar about her country's long and fruitful collaboration with Italy, including the launch and landing of satellites at Kenya's Luigi Broglio Space Centre near Malindi.

Oniosun said Turkish president Recep Tayyip Erdoğan this year announced that Turkey would build a launchpad for its planned first moonshot in 2023 in Somalia. Both Italy and Turkey have chosen African partners straddling the equator because this location provides extra launch speed to get into orbit.



In South Africa the Foundation for Space Development is developing what it calls Africa's first mission to the moon, the Africa2Moon Project.

Juma said, "It is clear that space has become the next frontier of human development. This reality is a sea change from a point where for a long time space science was seen as a preserve of defence and intelligence sectors and institutions."

But is the space arena really that benign and idealistic? Not quite, Todd Harrison, head of the CSIS Aerospace Security Project, suggested at last week's seminar. The current global space race is very different from the contest during the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union to put someone on the moon first, he said.

Today's space race was a multipolar competition including commercial and civil missions "and the moon is a destination but not the prize." The real prize was international partnerships, building coalitions for science and exploration and commerce in space "that can translate to better engagement and influence here on Earth."

"And Africa is a key element in this competition," Harrison added. He said the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) gave the US a strategic advantage in this space competition. The US wanted to maintain its leadership position in space to establish positive and inclusive norms of behaviour there, Harrison said. Yet countries like Russia and China were trying to build an alternative coalition of nations to retake that leadership mantle.

Harrison said the US should be getting African nations and others to choose to partner with it, particularly on NASA's Artemis Accords. These are a set of 10 principles for peaceful cooperation in the growing global flurry of efforts to return to the moon.

Klinger was sceptical of the 'space race' characterisation as it evoked too much of the Cold War contest between the two superpowers "which had fundamentally different goals with respect to outer space." These varied from what was now happening in Africa "where collaboration and cooperation are the norms... not only among Africans but in their international partnerships."

She noted that during the Cold War, Africa had been the site of proxy wars and had been framed as a pawn of global politics. Today, Africa's space activities were being driven and financed mainly by Africans themselves. This wasn't about countries of the global north doing or giving things to African leaders in exchange for ideological alignment or geopolitical allegiance.

Klinger suggested the US was being inconsistent in advocating for norms of good behaviour in outer space, such as through the Artemis principles. She noted that joining the accords was by invitation.

And Washington's creation of a Space Force and its 2011 Wolf Amendment, which restricted NASA from cooperating with China, were contrary to the letter and

spirit of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty. This committed the US, China, Russia and 130 other signatories to collaborate and "not to militarise, weaponise or privatise" outer space.

All this suggests that Africa should keep its head down and avoid being sucked into an acrimonious space race among major global powers. But will that be possible or even desirable? Should it join the race?

Kenya's Juma told the CSIS webinar, "We aspire to be a space-faring nation by 2030." In South Africa the Foundation for Space Development is developing what it calls Africa's first mission to the moon, the Africa2Moon Project.

African Peer Review Mechanism Executive Director Eddy Maloka has suggested that having been the big loser in the last epoch of colonisation, Africa shouldn't be in the next. He told a webinar at South Africa's international relations department last year that outer space was now being weaponised. "The race for the colonisation of the moon and Mars is on ... Once other nations reach the moon and Mars without us, the 21st century will be gone and lost for Africa."

Melodramatic, certainly. But what he implies is perhaps less so – that Africa should at least be partnering with others to join what is an irrevocable 21st-century space race.

DM

Global shortfall of nearly 1m midwives due to failure to value role, study finds

By Liz Ford

THE world is facing a shortage of 900,000 midwives, with more than half the shortfall in Africa, where nearly two-thirds of maternal deaths occur, according to a new survey.

Insufficient resources and a failure to recognise the importance of the role mean there has been little progress since the last study in 2014, according to the State of the World's Midwifery report, which looked at 194 countries.

There are an estimated 1.9 million midwives and associate midwives working globally, 90 percent of them women.

The recent report, published by the World Health Organization, the International Confederation of Midwives and the UN population fund (UNFPA), said little progress had been made to improve midwifery care in the past seven years and the Covid pandemic had exacerbated the shortage with midwives deployed to support other health services.

It called for greater investment in education and training, and urged governments to make support for midwifery a priority.

Midwifery, and roles caring for women and newborns, it said, were often undervalued, "leading to midwives having no voice and no place at the leadership table: this hinders respect, access to decent work and pay equity". In 2017, an estimated 196,000 women in sub-Saharan Africa died during pregnancy or childbirth compared with 740 in Europe. Research published in the Lancet last year found that investing in midwifery could prevent roughly two-thirds of maternal and newborn deaths and stillbirths.

Anneka Knutsson, chief of UNFPA's reproductive health branch, said that, at the current pace of progress in making up the shortfall in midwife numbers, "we would end up with a gap that is still 750,000 by 2030, which is little improvement".

She said: "Africa would be exactly the same, that's the projection. The progress won't keep pace with the fertility rate and unmet need in Africa. The improvement we see would happen in middle-income countries."

Knutsson said trained and resourced midwives would be able to deliver about 90 percent of essential sexual and reproductive healthcare services.

Midwifery, in particular, is seen as "women's work", which often confuses



and undervalues midwives' economic and professional contributions to society

Dr Franka Cadée, president of the International Confederation of Midwives (ICM), said: "As autonomous,

primary-care providers, midwives are continually overlooked and ignored.

It's time for governments to acknowledge the evidence surrounding the life-promoting, life-saving

impact of midwife-led care, and take action. "ICM is committed to leveraging the strength of our global midwife community to carry forward these powerful findings and inspire country-level change.

However, this work is not possible without commitment from decision-makers and those with the resources to invest in midwives and the quality care they provide to birthing women."

Promising malaria vaccine enters final stage of clinical testing in West Africa

By Special Correspondent

THE annual death toll from malaria is over 400,000 with most of them being amongst children in sub-Saharan Africa.

There has been little improvement noted in the last 5 years despite the large amounts of funding allocated to bed nets, insecticide spraying and antimalarial drugs.

An efficacious vaccine is needed to try and reach the World Health Organization (WHO) goal of reducing malaria deaths by at least 90 percent by 2030.

R21/Matrix-M, a malaria vaccine developed at the Jenner Institute, University of Oxford, showed efficacy of 77 percent over 12 months in a recently reported phase II trial. First vaccinations have now begun in Mali in a larger phase III trial which is hoped to lead to licensure of this malaria vaccine by 2023.

This phase III trial will assess

efficacy and safety in 4800 children across five sites in Tanzania, Burkina Faso, Kenya and Mali. It will be a double-blind, randomized, controlled trial where participants, aged 5-36 months, will receive three vaccinations 4 weeks apart and a booster vaccination 1 year later.

The University of Oxford has partnered with Serum Institute of India Pvt Ltd. (SIPL) for the manufacturing of R21/Matrix-M to ensure provision of low high volumes of low-cost vaccine, and access in countries where it is required the most.

SIPL has confirmed its commitment to the provision of 200 million doses per year after licensure, which will be adequate supply for children most at risk of malaria in sub-Saharan Africa.

Prof Adrian Hill, Director of the Jenner Institute, University of Oxford said: "The start of a phase III licensure trial is always an important milestone in the development of a

vaccine. This large malaria trial is the culmination of many years of laboratory research and assessment of numerous candidate vaccines in early-stage clinical trials with large numbers of collaborators."

Prof Alassane Dicko, Head of the Bougouni Clinical Research Unit, MRTCP, USTTB and Malian Principal Investigator said: "We are very pleased to see the enthusiasm with which the communities of Bougouni received the first doses of this new candidate malaria vaccine. We are hopeful that the encouraging Phase 2 results will be confirmed in this larger Phase 3 trial."

Prof Abdoulaye Djimdé, Director of the Malaria Research and Training Centre - Parasito (MRTC-P), University of Science, Techniques and Technologies of Bamako (USTTB), said: "We are thrilled to be the first site to enroll volunteers in the Phase 3 trial of this very promising R21 vaccine. We will utilize our more

than two decades of experience in malaria vaccine testing towards successful completion of this trial."

Prof Halidou Tinto, Principal Investigator of the Nanoro, Burkina Faso trial site, said:

"This is a very important moment in the development of the R21 malaria vaccine candidate. We hope that the public-private partnership behind this pivotal Phase III trial will confirm the high efficacy and good safety profile seen in our phase II trial in Nanoro."

He added: "We are all committed to work hard in order to generate data that will provide regulators and policy makers with the evidence needed to support the registration of this vaccine. If successful, this vaccine should be made available as quickly as possible to complement existing malaria prevention tools."

Prof Jean Bosco Ouedraogo, Prin-

cipal Investigator at The Institute of Sciences and Techniques in Bobo-Dioulasso, Burkina Faso said: "The R21 vaccine is a promising malaria prevention tool to help accelerate malaria elimination, particularly in high burden countries in Africa. The Phase II trial demonstrated high vaccine efficacy in children and I'm proud that it was done in Burkina Faso. I am really happy to be part of this key new trial to evaluate the vaccine's safety and efficacy in an area of perennial transmission near Bobo-Dioulasso."

Dr Umesh Shaligram, Chief Scientist at the Serum Institute of India said: "Malaria has been one of the most difficult diseases to make an effective vaccine against. We are committed to ensuring that the supply of this very promising vaccine, manufactured here in Pune, India, meets public health needs by supplying over 200 million doses annually."

Vaccine clinical trials are used to test if new vaccines are safe and effective. A phase I trial aims to test the safety of a new vaccine, a phase II tests the new vaccine to see if it is safe and effective and a phase III tests this in larger numbers to provide further safety and efficacy data.

WHO estimates that malaria causes over 400,000 deaths each year globally and progress in reducing malaria mortality has stalled in recent years. Most deaths are amongst children in Africa where very high transmission rates are found in many countries. 229 million cases of clinical malaria were reported in 2019.

Current malaria control measures include the use of insecticide treated bed net, insecticide spraying and seasonal malaria chemoprevention where drug are administered monthly to children at time of highest transmission.

Zimbabwe considers mass elephant killing, first time since 1988

By Ray Ndlovu

THE government of Zimbabwe, which has the world's second-largest population of elephants after neighboring Botswana, maintains that the large number of the animals is leading to destruction of habitat needed by other species and an increasing number of dangerous human-elephant interactions.

Adult elephants can eat 300 kilograms (660 pounds) of vegetation a day and often strip bark from trees, killing them.

"We are trying to see ways in which we can reduce the numbers. We have to discuss it at policy level as government," Mangaliso Ndlovu, the Environment, Climate, Tourism and Hospitality Minister, said recently in an interview carried by the state-controlled Zimpapers Television Network.

"Options are on the table, including culling," said Ndlovu without giving details.

While elephant numbers have fallen in total over the last few decades, Southern African nations, including Zimbabwe, have seen their populations of the animals rise.

While culling has been avoided across the region after protests from environmental activists, Botswana and Zimbabwe have in recent years asserted the right to manage their elephant numbers as they see fit.

"It's an option but not a decision yet," Ndlovu said by text message. "We will obviously rely on scientific advice."

The southern African nation is



undergoing a review of its Parks and Wildlife Act to collate views on how to better manage its wildlife resources.

Zimbabwe killed more than 50,000 elephants when it carried out culling on five occasions between 1965 and 1988, according to the Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority.

Uganda, Zambia and South Africa have also culled elephants in the past.

When elephants are culled family groups, or herds, are shot

in their entirety to prevent post-traumatic stress for surviving animals.

"The only way to manage elephant populations by culling is to take out entire herds," said Rob Lurie, chairman of the Zimbabwe Professional Hunters and Guides Association. "It's not an easy task and would require a lot of manpower and financing to be done correctly."

Other methods of population control include contraception and translocation.

USAID awards \$300m to UNICEF for mothers and children globally

By Guardian Correspondent

THE United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has awarded about \$300 million to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to improve the lives of mothers and children globally.

A press statement by USAID said Administrator Samantha Power announced the renewal of USAID's long-standing and successful partnership with UNICEF to improve the health and well-being of mothers, children, families, and communities around the world at the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers meeting.

It read in part, "The five-year award of up to \$300 million, subject to annual appropriations, will build on lessons learned from prior programs and continue to improve lives in areas such as health; education; water, sanitation, and hygiene; youth engagement; and child protection.

"In partnership with the U.S. government, UNICEF will strengthen local health system capacity, support the resilience of communities and countries in responding to public health emergencies and other crises, and ensure the lasting impact of USAID's investments.

"To promote increased transparency and accountability, the agreement also sharpens the focus on data-driven results and strengthens monitoring and reporting of program progress.

"This new award supplements the U.S. government's \$134 million annual contributions to UNICEF, as well as USAID's \$61 million investment in 2020 in urgent work to prevent, respond to, and mitigate the secondary impacts of COVID-19."

According to the agency, "...This partnership demonstrates that the world can come together to meet global challenges.

"The U.S. looks forward to seeing all members of the G7, as well as other partner governments, increase and sustain support for UNICEF's vital work at this critical time."

How West African leaders can tackle youth and gender inequities

By Ifeanyi Nsofor, Adaye Oreh, and John Lazame Tindabil

RECENTLY, both Republics of Benin and Chad held their 2021 national elections. These countries are among thirteen countries on the continent billed to elect new political leaders in 2021 alone. This is a good opportunity to improve conditions on the continent. Indeed, the COVID-19 pandemic has magnified other issues on the continent like youth unemployment that better leadership could help improve.

These are three ways West African leaders can better help their nations at this time of COVID-19 and beyond.

First, the rate of youth unemployment must be effectively tackled.

According to the United Nations, about 64% of the population in West and Central Africa are aged below 24. Although these young people are a huge resource for the region, unemployment, and a failure to invest and develop such as agriculture, education, health, and industry have led to an under-utilisation of this vital resource.

Sadly, the World Bank reports youths account for 60% of all of Africa's jobless. For a continent with more than 200 million people aged between 15 and 24, the continent is home to the world's youngest population whose level of unemployment is twice that of older adults.

Most electioneering and campaign messaging encourage violence, and with an astonishing number of unemployed and "working poor" amongst youth in the sub-region, these young people are ready tools to be used for violence, election fraud and social unrest, not to mention communal conflict and gang violence.

With informal employment be-

ing the default at up to 89% of jobs in sub-Saharan Africa, social safety nets and workers' rights are inaccessible to most youths. Last year, Ghanaian President Nana Addo Akufo-Addo announced that his country would cease to export cocoa to Switzerland, its largest trade partner, to increase cocoa processing and chocolate manufacturing for export.

This bold move which speaks to a focus on innovation could however change the status quo for Ghana and the West African sub-region. Harnessing the country's youthful population into innovation-led agricultural and value-adding industrial processes medical equipment and vaccines will attract new and improved business ventures, which would lead to the creation of more jobs and economic growth.

Secondly, we must involve youths in elective offices.

United Nations projections reveal that over the next twenty-five years, the population of sub-Saharan Africa is projected to double (in what constitutes a 99% increase). For the youngest continent in the world, there is a vast disconnect between its people and its leaders - age, as the region plays host to some of the "oldest and longest-serving political leaders".

Changing the political narrative will require Africa's youth to throw their hats in the ring and defy entrenched systems of elder deference to bring about political change. Younger nationals must be encouraged and supported to enter politics at all levels, vying for not only executive office, but also parliamentary seats in local, state and national elections.

Lastly, there must be gender balance in elective offices.

There is no current female West African leader. Liberia's Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was the first



Women informal cross-border traders.

elected female leader in Africa, while Nigeria's Patricia Etteh and Joyce Adeline Bamford-Addo of Ghana were two female Speakers of Parliament in a list of elected female West African leaders that is still too short.

Experience from the COVID-19 pandemic illustrated that nations that were successful in containing the virus were mostly women-led. There have been suggestions that women leaders are more diverse and inclusive in the perspectives brought to bear in their exercise

of leadership, and prioritise the protection of their citizens over risk.

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's leadership in the eye of the storm of the West African Ebola outbreak of 2014 is a case in point. Madam Sirleaf herself has stated that the success of women leaders in addressing the COVID-19 pandemic has been borne out of their readiness to "draw on informal networks, ingenious partnerships, community support and alternative resources to solve problems."

COVID-19 has affected all aspects of governance - economy, businesses, healthcare, education etc. Consequently, it will take a long time for economies to recover to pre-pandemic levels.

To quote Ellen Johnson Sirleaf: "Now is the time to recognize that developmental transformation and true peace cannot come without fundamental change in who is leading and the ways of leading."

High-dose Vitamin D supplements significantly reduce ICU admissions and COVID-19 deaths

NEW JERSEY

THERE is considerable evidence that vitamin D reduces the risk and severity of COVID-19 (Mercola 2020; Wimalawansa, 2020). More than 50 clinical studies have published confirming that high doses of vitamin D administered early in persons with COVID-19 significantly reduce complications and the need for ICU admissions.

Additionally, five randomised controlled clinical trials (RCTs) were published using high-dose vitamin D in COVID-19 patients, and over 20 other large RCTs are ongoing. To obtain benefits, however, doses high enough must be administered early in the disease.

Among others, few examples of countries where these RCTs conducted were Brazil (Murai et al, 2021), India (Rastogi, et al, 2020; Lakkireddy, 2021), and Spain (Castillo, et al, 2020; Nogués et al, 2021). The vitamin D3 doses used were between 130,000 IU to 300,000 IU or the equivalent of 25-hydroxyvitamin D [25(OH)D, also known as calcifediol] as used by Castillo et al. in Spain.

As shown in the meta-analysis, figures 1 and 2, at <https://vdmata.com>, even with slightly less optimal doses of calcifediol resulted in over 50% (95% confidence interval, 14 to 71%) reduction in severe adverse outcomes by preventing the development of cytokine storm and death.

In examples below, the expected death rates is adjustable with 75% reduction following vitamin D; so as the cost of vitamin D per patient:

- Admissions or transfers of symptomatic COVID patients to a hospital: n=2,000
- Administer 200,000 IU dose to 1,000 and a placebo to 1,000 (i.e., every other person)
- Expected death rate without vitamin D: 8%; i.e., 80 people die out of 1,000
- Expected death rate with vitamin D, "4-times" less, 2%; 20 people die out of 1,000
- 60 fewer deaths for 1,000 symptomatic COVID persons treated with vitamin D
- Assume, one dose cost, \$1.00: So, 1,000 persons cost, \$1,000
- So, 60 fewer deaths in 1,000 patients: to save 60 lives, cost \$1,000
- Approximate cost per life saved = \$16.60

Conclusion

Vitamin D, 200,000 IU dose in single or divided doses is safe and highly cost-effective in reducing complications and deaths in persons with SARS-CoV-2 infection. Early use of vitamin D (100,000 to 600,000 IU) can re-



UN Secretary General António Guterres (R) speaks with Yeashea Braddock, Operations Manager at the Morris High School vaccination site, after getting his second vaccine shot against COVID-19 at that High School in the Bronx, New York.

duce ICU admissions by -80%. Therefore, vitamin D can greatly reduce the need for expanding ICU beds AND cost less than 0.001% of using an ICU bed/day.

Additional information regarding bolus D3 and oral calcifediol:

There is little vitamin D3 (cholecalciferol) in food and multivitamins, including fortified food. Without passing through glass or sunscreen, skin exposure to ultraviolet-B from high-elevation sunlight can produce sufficient D3 for bone and immune system health.

However, low elevation sunlight in winter, clouds, pollution, clothing cover, melanin-rich skin and concerns about skin cancer mean that most people are vitamin D deficient unless they take vitamin D supplements.

Conversion of D3 in the liver to the circulating form, 25(OH)D, and for the immune cells to function takes two to five days. 25(OH)D is measured in the blood test and has a half-life of -three weeks. Recent research shows that the immune system requires at least 40 ng/ml (100 nmol/L) circulating 25(OH)D to support autocrine (inside each cell) and paracrine (to nearby cells) signalling. Please refer to the research articles at: <https://vitamind-stopscovid.info/02-autocrine/>.

In the long term, such levels can be attained, on average for 70 kg adults, with 0.125 mg (5,000 IU) D3 per day. This is 72 IU per kg body weight per day and 100 IU/kg for people suffering from obesity due to fat absorption of 25(OH)D.

The link to research articles cited follows: <https://vita->

mindstopperscovid.info/01-suppl/.

Since most people-and almost all who are at risk of severe COVID-19 symptoms-have circulating 25(OH)D levels much lower than 40 ng/mL, such as between 5 and 25 ng/mL, their D3 supplementation should begin at 5 to 10 times the long-term quantity of 4,000 IU/day needed, in order to attain and maintain the required blood 25(OH)D levels rapidly.

While vaccines markedly reduce the severity of and deaths from COVID-19, vitamin D cost less than 1% of a COVID vaccine.

As reported in several studies, most hospitalised patients with COVID-19 can be assumed to be vitamin D deficient. Their health and survival depend mainly on raising their 25(OH)D levels to at least 40 ng/ml, ideally within hours, rather than days or weeks.

Some of the trials mentioned above attempted to do this with bolus D3 doses, except that in the Murai et al. trial, given too little treatment, too late (i.e., faulty study design).

The urgency of 25(OH)D depletion is acute for all those suffering from, or at risk of, hyper-inflammatory immune dysregulation (i.e., cytokine storm), which causes severe COVID-19 and death.

The primary mechanism of this recently elucidated by McGregor, et al, 2020-Th1 regulatory lymphocytes remain stuck in their initial pro-inflammatory program and fail to switch to their anti-inflammatory shutdown program due solely to lack of 25(OH)D.

This explains the extraordinary success of trial by Castillo et al., in which patients were given 0.532 mg oral calcifediol, which raises circulating 25(OH)D levels to about 50 ng/ml in four hours (Sune Negre, 2016).

This resulted in the reduction of ICU admissions by 90% (from 50% to 2%) and deaths from 8% to zero. The earlier the treatment is given, the better the clinical outcomes are.

Calcifediol has been hard to obtain but is now available in the USA and Canada without prescription: <https://developimmunity.com>. Sixty 20 microgram tablets for \$30 contain 1.2 mg calcifediol-more than twice the single initial dose used by Castillo et al.

In that trial, 0.266 mg calcifediol was also given on days 3, 7, 14, etc. However, maintenance of the initial boost to 25(OH)D can most easily be achieved with 5,000 to 10,000 IU D3 per day.

We have urged governments of Sri Lanka and India, in particular, to seriously consider obtaining calcifediol tablets to prevent severe complications, ICU admissions, and deaths from COVID-19, which is highly cost-effective.



ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Prize-winning Ugandan woman entrepreneur ventures into juice business, improves community

KAMPALA

A finalist of UNCTAD's award for women in business gets US\$10 million from her government to build a fresh juice factory that will promote sustainable agriculture and improve livelihoods.

Cheers employees with Julian Omalla (center) near the orchard that grows the fruit used in the company's juice. Julian Omalla produces one of Uganda's most popular fruit drinks, sold under the brand name "Cheers" and boasting a loyal customer base of over 5 million people.

Affectionately known by many as "Mama Cheers", the 56-year-old founder and chief executive director of Delight Uganda Limited is one of the east African nation's foremost female entrepreneurs.

And thanks to her long-standing experience and runaway success in the industry, the Ugandan government awarded her company a \$4 million grant in February to construct a fresh juice factory in northern Uganda. The government also allocated her another \$6 million to procure equipment, with 50% of the funds repayable by her company in 10 years.

Another feather in her cap: The grant is the latest feather in Ms. Omalla's cap. She's one of the most decorated female entrepreneurs in Uganda, having bagged several local and global business awards. Last year, she won a special prize during the 7th edition of UNCTAD's Empretec Women in Business Awards for her dedication to empowering other women through her inclusive business.

The honours recognize the contributions of inspiring women entrepreneurs trained by UNCTAD's Empretec programme and celebrate their success in business. The award was sponsored by the Inclusive Business Action Network, a programme of the German development agency, GIZ. Ms. Omalla also received a fellowship to participate in an executive education programme by the International Institute for Management Development in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Empowered and mentored "Empretec empowered and mentored me to be who I am today," Ms. Omalla says. When she started her company in 1996, she didn't know much about running a business. In 2000, Empretec equipped her with the skills to become a successful entrepreneur. "The training helped me realize that I was born an entrepreneur," she recalls. "It helped me develop and execute my business growth plan."

In subsequent years, she continued to learn from Empretec trainers and honed her entrepreneurial skills as her business grew. "I kept asking questions to help me improve my business, even during weekends," she says.

For over 20 years, Charles Ocici, Empretec director at Enterprise Uganda, has trained and guided Ms. Omalla on how to be a better entrepreneur. "It's been a delight to support her through many milestones in her entrepreneurial journey," Mr. Ocici said. "She's made a huge mark in Uganda." Ms. Omalla says Empretec improved her self-confidence and other competencies such as goal setting, bookkeeping, marketing, setting targets and working efficiently to meet them.

12,000 litres per day Equipped with the skills from Empretec and imbued with dogged determination, Ms. Omalla grew the company from scratch to the point of possessing 60% of market share during its peak, having built a processing line producing 12,000 litres of fruit-flavoured drinks per day.

Ms. Omalla defied many odds along the way, including having to start over from scratch after a business partner disappeared with part of her capital. "I always learn from setbacks and failures. I never let them put me down," she says.

Raising funds to expand her business was an uphill task, as she, like most women in Uganda, didn't have the collateral that banks needed to finance her venture. She had to rely on her savings and invest her profits back into the business to finance its expansion. She also diversified into other business activities, such as poultry farming, maize-feed production, a flour mill and a bakery.

Turning a dream into reality Until 2011, Ms. Omalla produced "Cheers" based on imported juice concentrates, partly due to the challenge of sourcing high-quality and locally grown fresh fruits. Then she started turning her long-cherished dream of producing fresh juice into reality by acquiring 1,700 acres of land for cultivating fruit trees, such as mangoes, guavas and citrus.

She established a nursery seed bed to propagate clean fruit planting materials and organized under a cooperative an orchard with 5,000 contracted fruit farmers (locally known as outgrowers) in the northern district of Nwoya. Of its 5,000 members, the Nwoya Fruit Growers Cooperative has 3,750 women growing fruits for Delight Uganda, benefiting over 100,000 women directly and indirectly.

GENEROSITY

Group of fathers, children from UAE in Z'bar to build classrooms as an Eid gift

DUBAI

A group of families from the United Arab Emirates will spend the Eid break transforming a community school in Zanzibar.

Fathers And Kids Camping started as a Dubai-based network of dads who went on camping trips in the emirates with their children each month. The group's latest adventure, however, will take them much further afield, to the small fishing village of Kizimkazi.

On Saturday, more than 70 adults and children will team up with 50 people on the ground in Zanzibar to expand the 'Seeds of Light' school. Together they will build five classrooms, bathrooms and a playground, plus install a rooftop solar PV system to power the school, allowing children and adults to study in the evening.

The ambitious six-day project is being funded by individuals and businesses in the UAE who have donated over Dh500,000 (\$136,000) to the Tanzanian charity CR Hope Foundation, which runs the school. The dads camping group has come a long way from toasting marshmallows in the Dubai desert, said organiser Vahid Fotuhi, 45, who is also the founder of the Middle East Solar Industry Association.

"The original idea was to get kids together with their dads and challenge them to have an adventure, to push their boundaries. Our camping trips covered all seven



Members of Fathers And Kids Camping group from the UAE, who are planning their fifth philanthropic endeavour - a building trip to Zanzibar.

emirates and Oman. We wanted to expose the kids to nature and get them to switch off for a weekend.

"The natural next step was to expose them to the realities of the world," he said. "Sometimes it feels like we live in a bubble here in Dubai, but in reality the world isn't like that. The trips expand their horizons and give them a chance to have a positive impact on the world around them.

"It's an excellent opportunity for us to demonstrate to our children the importance of sharing and the impact we can have on our planet by pushing beyond our comfort zone. We're all really pumped and giddy to get down there and get to work," Mr Fotuhi said.

Five philanthropic projects in five years

The group's first philanthropic project was a Ramadan kitchen in 2018, when the group volunteered

to help Classic Catering prepare, package and serve 5,000 meals to low-wage workers in Dubai.

This was quickly followed by their first international adventure in 2019 to Zambia, when 18 families worked with charity Mothers Without Borders to add four classrooms and a solar-powered computer lab to Carol Zulu Primary School. The project enabled 100 orphaned children to gain access to primary education and, thanks to the solar-sourced electricity, adults can now use the school at night to learn to read.

Eastern Kenya was the group's next destination and clean drinking water was the mission, as children were dying from drinking dirty water. In partnership with the non-profit social enterprise Project Maji, a group from Fathers and Kids Camping built three solar-powered water stations in

three villages.

The facilities now provide clean drinking water to 5,000 villagers and school children, and the positive impact has already been seen within the community, as fewer children are missing school or being hospitalised with waterborne diseases.

Closer to home, last year the group teamed up again with Classic Catering, the UAE Food Bank, and 300 students from across Dubai to deliver 30,000 warm meals to blue-collar workers in Dubai who had lost their jobs due to the pandemic.

The project in Zanzibar represents the group's fifth philanthropic endeavour in the past five years and the aim is to double the size of the 'Seeds of Light' school, which currently educates 53 unprivileged children aged four to seven.

The average income per household in the village is just \$75 a month and the majority of children would not have access to education were it not for the school, said Mr Fotuhi, who is originally from Canada and has lived in the UAE since 2007.

"Our first aim is to give underprivileged kids the opportunity to read and write, and to give them hope for a more successful future. Secondly, we want to give our own kids a chance to - with their own hands - build something that will last decades and instil in them a sense of achievement.

CRISIS

The world is facing a shortage of 900,000 midwives, and Covid-19 is making it worse

GENEVA

The world is facing a shortage of roughly 900,000 midwives, according to a new report, even as interest in home births has been on the rise during the pandemic.

There are about 1.9 million midwives globally, about two-thirds of what is needed, according to the report, which was published this month by the United Nations Population Fund, the World Health Organisation, the International Confederation of Midwives, and partners.

The shortage can be linked to gender inequality, as midwifery is a female-dominated profession with a chronic lack of investment

from policymakers, per the report. Midwives also face gender-based pay disparities and lack of career growth opportunities, the report found.

In the pandemic, many midwives left the midwife workforce, in some cases because they lacked sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE), according to the report. Midwives not only deliver babies but provide a variety of other sexual and reproductive health services, and antenatal, postpartum, and neonatal care, the report points out.

"It's time for governments to acknowledge the evidence surrounding the life-promoting,

life-saving impact of midwife-led care," Dr. Franka Cadée, the president of the International Confederation of Midwives, said in a statement.

A problem magnified by the pandemic

The midwife shortage comes at a time when midwives across the US have reported seeing a spike in demand for out-of-hospital births during the pandemic, Kaia Hubbard recently wrote for US News. Kate Bauer, executive director of the American Association of Birth Centers, told US News that she'd seen a significant increase in people looking to give birth in freestanding birth centers with home-like facilities.

"There is the fear about going into an acute care facility where COVID patients are also being treated," Bauer told the publication. On top of that, many hospitals last year banned partners from being present in the delivery room due to concerns about the virus. Even Prince Harry and Meghan Markle have said they're planning a home birth for their daughter at their home in California this summer.

Still, home births are rare in the US, accounting for less than 1% of births, a quarter which are unintended, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. In the pandemic, midwives have allowed more births to happen

away from hospitals - which can become virus hotspots - and helped reduce transmission of the virus among pregnant women and their babies, the midwifery report says.

The report calls for more investment in midwives, estimating that more midwives with better resources could reduce 67% of maternal deaths, 65% of newborn deaths, and 65% of stillbirths.

The pandemic is creating a medical professional crisis

It's not just midwives who are considering leaving their medical fields after over a year of emotional and physical exhaustion wrought by the Covid-19 pandemic. Nurses, like midwives, have been overworked and faced shortages of PPE and other resources. Many are so burned out that they're considering leaving the profession altogether, as Insider's Sarah Al-Arshani reported.

Nikki Motta, a travel nurse who has worked at hospitals along the east coast for the past year, told Insider's Al-Arshani that she's looking to leave bedside care and go into advanced practice after six years as a nurse. The stress of caring for Covid-19 patients in understaffed hospitals has led to hair loss, she said. "... The weight was really heavy of what I was doing and I didn't feel like I was doing the job that I initially signed up for, which is to help people and make people feel better," Motta said.



A midwife at work in Tanzania.

INCLUSIVITY

New global H&M initiative to identify, support, inspire children

LAGOS

Fashion retailer H&M has introduced a new global initiative to identify and support young role models who are making progress on social equality, sustainability, education, and other important civic matters.

Through the initiative, H&M will bring forward, champion and tell the stories of young changemakers from around the world, in a bid to "support, improve and contribute to a better future for children

and parents alike". According to the retailer, the world needs to embrace the optimistic, collaborative, free-thinking spirit of kids who are more informed and engaged than ever before.

"There are countless examples of youth taking action to make our world a better place, filling a vacuum left by those who we'd normally look to: adults. At a time of social and environmental upheaval, leadership has never been more paramount. This fundamental need inspired the company

to explore how it could play a part in supporting the role models who are right in front of us and are shaping our future," H&M said in a statement.

To launch the global campaign, H&M worked with double Oscar-nominated director Bryan Buckley to craft a short film featuring the kinds of role models the world needs. The goal of the film is to illustrate how young people view adults today, how initiatives large and small can improve the world, and to encourage people to reconsider

the role models we have previously looked up to.

The retailer is encouraging people to share their own role model story as inspiration to others and nominate kids who are remarkable role models. Later this year, H&M will spotlight these young changemakers' efforts and create awareness for how the broader community can support their work.

H&M will also help support their causes using the proceeds from a new line of more sustainable clothing inspired by young role

models, which is being developed by the H&M Kids design team. Pascal Brun, global sustainability manager at H&M, comments,

"As a company that stands for progress, we feel a certain responsibility to use our size to create change today and for the future. We're ambitious in our goals to make our business more equitable and sustainable so the world is better for future generations. Part of that is making the decision to amplify the voices of role models who are making a difference today: kids."



Babalwa teaches girls about menstruation.



TALENTED

17-year-old author: This is what gender equality is all about

KIGALI

Gender equality is the state in which access to rights or opportunities is unaffected by gender. Although Bayingana has written other books, they are only in draft, but with this one, she was driven to see it through to publication after noticing gender inequality at school.

For instance, when it came to sports, it's the male students that participated mostly; the girls avoided it and the boys felt they were better at basketball and football, among other games. This bothered her as she believed girls could also take part in sports and succeed.

"The female students mostly chose art subjects leaving math, physics, chemistry and others to the male students," she says. Often, she adds, the male students would brag that they would excel in such subjects, and they actually did, a thing that intimidated the girls.

Bayingana wishes to address this issue through writing. She wants to encourage women and girls to take up positions and activities that are thought to be done best by men. For her, many times, gender stereotypes affect behaviour, study choices, determination, and attitude of people.

In summary, her book dubbed, "Muhirwa" is a story of a couple with three daughters. Unfortunately, the father was disappointed in only giving birth to girls as he wanted his firstborn to be a boy to inherit his possessions.

He decided to name his third daughter, "Muhirwa", a boy's name, since he seemed to be out of choices. Later, Muhirwa got married to a prince and since her husband had the powers to do anything for her, she requested him to promote gender equality. Everyone had equal rights in society.

She mostly wrote this book for students and young adults. She notes that gender inequality can be curbed in schools through opportunities for male and female students, to be able to take part in all kinds of sports, and activities, without discrimination.

"Eliminating gender issues means a world where women and men, girls and boys all enjoy equal rights, resources, opportunities, and protection," she says. Bayingana adds that when girls are empowered to lead their lives, speak their minds and decide their futures, it's everyone's benefit.

History recommends that when gender oppression is fought, societies become more stable and safe, she says. The writer also notes that promoting gender equality and empowering girls should start from childhood.

She adds that all students require the same support when it comes to career dreams, and everyone's dream should be to spread awareness about gender equality through books, poems, videos, news, word of mouth and so forth.

Her wish is that schools form girls' clubs to train them to identify and solve some of the common problems they face at school and in the community, such as sexual harassment. The author also adds that gender inequality usually places males in a state of superiority which disturbs women and girls, hence affecting them emotionally and mentally and leaving them with low self-esteem. She goes by the mantra, "what men can do, women can do."

Bayingana is a student at Mother Mary School Complex, Kibagabaga. She looks forward to being a famous published author and interior designer. She has a passion for art and design and wants to pursue a course in interior design later on. Copies of her book can be accessed at Arise Bookshop in Kimironko. A copy goes for Rwf 3,000. The author is already in the process of writing her second book on child abuse, and was inspired to start writing by her mother.



Nelly Keza Bayingana, 17 and her gender equality book.

ENTERPRISING

Babalwa sold her car to start a sanitary pads brand, now building 67 million Rand factory

CAPE TOWN

Being unable to meet this basic need can significantly alter the lives of those who are affected as they are forced to find alternative means, which may often pose health risks.

Having seen the need for sanitary products, particularly for young girls, Babalwa Mbuku (40) from Mthatha started her own sanitary pads company, Ntombam, in 2017. She was inspired by a young girl who once said she preferred to get free sanitary pads from government instead of a free education.

Babalwa then decided to do her research in the Eastern Cape

to assess how many schools and children have the same problem. "I discovered that around the Eastern Cape some children use pieces of cloth, aloe and others would use cow dung as sanitary pads to absorb the flow of their monthly menstruation due to high sanitary costs. None of those methods are good for sensitive areas," she says.

Babalwa started the brand from her pocket, making whatever sacrifice was necessary to get started. "I went as far as selling my car. We do not need funding from major corporations to start investing in our companies," she says.

Ntombam imports the pads from South Korea and they are

sold in 37 retail stores in the Eastern Cape and Western Cape. The company hopes to expand to other parts of the country. Ntombam also has sanitizers, wet wipes and a fashion label.

During her research, the 40-year-old business woman also noticed that many girls do not have proper panties to wear while others do not have them at all. She plans to address this issue soon. "We are planning to add one-size-fits all panties to our range of products," she says.

Babalwa has received some support for her business, having partnered with Vodacom in a CSI project in the Eastern Cape and being part of an incubator programme by the Department of

Women, Youth and Persons with Disabilities.

Ntombam is in the process of building a hi-tech sanitary towel manufacturing plant in East London through an Eastern Cape Development Corporation (ECDC) facilitated deal in partnership with South Korean investor, Mview Global. The R67m facility should be operational in June next year.

Babalwa's journey has not been easy but she is proud of what she has achieved so far. "I have failed here and there, but I am a very patient person. I want to create jobs and empower youth even if it takes me 20 years to get there," says Babalwa. Babalwa is also a menstruation coach to teenag-

ers, and says many girls are not educated about menstruation and their bodies while others develop insecurities and start having low self-esteem.

"They do not understand the change in their bodies, and they need guidance. We teach them to take pride in their girlhood. I have a personal relationship with my clients. In the morning, others wake me up with video calls to talk about what they are going through, and I have had parents say they can see improvements in their children's lives," says Babalwa. Babalwa was in the top 25 of the 100 Most Influential Young South Africans of 2019 for social enterprise and philanthropy.

IMPRESSIVE

A city garden exploding with fairytale beauty

NAIROBI

Establishing and maintaining a garden is an expensive affair. You have to think about how you will design it, where to source the plants, how to care for them once they are firmly rooted in the ground and how to mourn and move on if they die after pouring your heart and soul into them.

But for Dorothy Kiarie, the sheer delight of opening her bedroom window to coloured landscape, the taste of fresh organic strawberries and veggies and a flow of fresh air all from her garden make the costs pale in comparison.

"Waking up to such a surge of nature's goodness starts my day on a high note," says Mrs Kiarie at her home garden in Nairobi's Karen. Her love affair with nature began when she was a young girl playing in the dust of the relatively dry Taita.

Her father was big on greenery and his philosophy was, "Always leave a place greener than you found it." Sitting on a half-acre piece of land, her garden is proof that she made his mantra her own. It has at least 30 indigenous trees and more than 30 species of unique plants, potted or planted.

Two small-leaf variegated fig trees over six feet tall, in earth-coloured pots, meet your gaze



Dorothy Marami at her home in Karen, Nairobi.

by the two huge front porch pillars. This is the favourite part of the garden because it contains an ocean of her favourite plants: anthuriums. "I love anthuriums because they're elegant in an effortless manner with long-lasting flowers, an attractive shine and come in different varieties," she says touching each of them.

Towering these potted plants is a variegated rubber plant, whose leaves have shades of cream and dark green. Impossible to miss, it adds life to the corner in which it stands. Looking out from the porch,

there are several Traveller's and Cuban royal palms and silky oak trees. While Mrs Kiarie found the silky oaks on the property, the nine-year-old palm trees are the works of her hands.

The front yard boasts of a rock garden with a great mix of evergreen plants including the New Zealand flax, the African milk tree, snake plants, false agave plant, a Duranta hedge and the ground-hugging Singapore daisy. She plans to instal a water feature to "complete the look."

A property developer by profession, Mrs Kiarie knows that a great backyard is essential

as it is a home's extended family room. Hers is no exception. In the wide-open space, she has endeavoured to create pockets of colour through plants and flowers beginning with the ground which is covered by a healthy coat of Zimbabwe grass. "I had initially planted Bermuda grass but it turned out to be a nightmare. It was always pest-infested. Fed up, I uprooted it and together with my gardener, Richard, planted Zimbabwe grass."

She now walks barefoot and enjoying it. A creeping Bougainvillea does a great job of

softening the concrete perimeter wall. Below her windows, she has planted what her husband calls a multicoloured "bush." There is a dragon tree, woody lavender, Fuschia, hibiscus, Egyptian star clusters, touch-me-nots, a garden/rose balm, fire bush and a huge pink-flowered anthurium, among others.

In the backyard, there are islands of plant clusters for colour distribution, like the yellow Allamanda and trailing Abutilon. Adored for its bright foliage, the Crotons are also a favourite. Where a plant or tree cannot stand, a potted plant is placed instead.

She draws gardening inspiration from the internet and from the various hotels she stays at when travelling. Next to where we are sitting are two flower stands purchased from Dubai. "I saw them and couldn't leave them behind. Isn't this the struggle of every gardener? In fact, one never carries enough money to a plant nursery," the nature lover shares.

"You enter to buy one plant but end up with a truck after having to decide which plants to leave behind because your purse is empty." Her plant collection is from vendors in Nairobi's Limuru and Ngong roads and is multiplied through propagation. Her favourite nature app is called NatureID which identifies plant names.

CONCERN

Lindsay Myeni wants SA citizenship: 'I don't want to raise children in America, it's unsafe'

DURBAN

The wife of Lindani Myeni wants to raise her children in South Africa because she does not believe it is safe for black children in the United States. Myeni, a South African, was shot dead by police in Hawaii.

"We always wanted flexibility to be in whichever country the kids can prosper most and, right now, I feel like this is the safest country for them. I don't want to raise kids that are considered

black in America, where clearly it's not safe," Lindsay Myeni said on Thursday.

She was speaking at the memorial service for her husband in Empangeni, KwaZulu-Natal. Lindsay said her plan is to bring her children to South Africa because she believes they could be targeted by police in the US.

"My next steps, honestly, to get help from the SA government... to get me citizenship, so I can stay in my children's home

country, without my husband. People think when you're married, citizenship to each other's countries is automatic, but it takes five years each side for him to be a citizen of my country and me of his. She said that, thus far, the US government and other authorities were not helpful.

"USA government has not given any support, not even a comment, nothing. The mayor in Honolulu also has no response. He knows the police department

are in trouble, so I'm guessing there's not much for him to say, without making them look bad.

"We are still suing the Honolulu PD [police department] and waiting for them to give back his cellphone, his clothes, his headband." Lindsay said she had always felt welcomed and loved by locals and the Zulu nation.

"The family, friends and neighbours have been so overwhelmingly supportive and loving. Zulu people know the true sense of family, more than

other cultures, they know how to make someone feel warm and welcomed." She said the trauma of the incident might only hit her by the weekend.

"I think the actual reality of everything won't hit until everybody goes home, and things subside. Right now, we are all staying in one house, and are together and close. Come Sunday, the reality is going to hit. I need to decide what am I doing with the kids."

ACTIVISM

Artists come together in raising funds for India, as it faces second wave of COVID-19

LONDON

A number of artists and authors have come together to raise funds for India as the country battles a surge in Covid-19 cases.

Initiatives like Artists for India, for example, brought together 70 writers - including Booker Prize winner Salman Rushdie, Ali Smith, Jodi Picoult, Fatima Bhutto, Avni Doshi, Megha Majumdar and William Dalrymple - to sell signed copies of their books, with the proceeds going to Mission Oxygen, a non-profit organisation that purchases oxygen concentrators for hospitals and nursing homes in India. Canadian visual artist Alison Dunlop has also pledged a water-colour work to the highest donor.

The fundraising efforts of Artists for India have been spearheaded by London writer Sonia Faleiro, who has spent almost 20 years reporting on the South Asian nation. In April, the country witnessed a spike in coronavirus cases, totalling more than 21 million at the time of writing.

"I'm well aware of how economic in-



London based writer Sonia Faleiro.

equality, a fragile healthcare system and rising authoritarianism have left the country ill-prepared to fight the pandemic," Faleiro said. "But the ex-

tent of the devastation, which is ongoing, has left me in shock."

She said she started the initiative in order to "channel my fear and

grief into something constructive", reaching out to various authors to participate. "Within 24 hours, more than 50 authors had pledged to donate and mail out signed copies of their works," she said.

Groups like Art for India have also galvanised artists, raising £30,000 (\$42,000) for Mission Oxygen since the campaign launched on Sunday. The print sale, organised by Heta Fell, Vivek Vadoliya and Danielle Pender, includes works by Ashish Shah, Bharat Sikka, Avani Rai and Kalpesh Lathiga, among others. Their prints are sold for £100 each online, and proceeds after printing and shipping costs will be donated.

Vadoliya reveals that the initiative was put together within 48 hours, after he and the other organisers reached out to their network of artists whose works centre on India. "Our goal with this project was to get short-term funds into the country as quickly as we can," he said. The sale con-

tinues until Sunday, with more prints being added to the website.

In the UAE, artist Nabla Yahya is selling 50 of her cyanotype Ashen, which depicts a hand carrying a burning heart like a torch. For a \$100 donation to any of four non-profit organisations selected by Yahya, individuals can receive one of the works.

Dubai gallery Carbon 12 has worked with one of its artists, Amba Sayal-Bennett, to contribute three drawings towards fundraising efforts. Sayal-Bennett, who lives in London, is known for abstract drawings and sculptures that combine architectural, diagrammatic and totem-like structures. Proceeds from the three works on paper, which cost €650 (\$783) each, by the artist, will be donated to GiveIndia, an online donation platform.

As hospitals continue to be overwhelmed and citizens struck with grief, the Indian government has faced criticism for its handling of the pandemic, in-

cluding the delays in dispensing aid to those in need. At the start of last week, ventilators, medicines and oxygen equipment arrived in the country from the UK and the US. However, state officials have told local media that the supplies were not distributed until more than a week after arrival. The government has denied the claim, but places like Kerala, still had not received aid as of Wednesday evening, according to a BBC report.

Indian officials have linked the second wave to the rise of a "double mutant" variant that was first discovered in the country in March. The double mutant is the result of two mutations joining in the same virus. The variant, known as B.1.617, has been found in states such as Maharashtra, West Bengal, Gujarat and Chhattisgarh. As of Thursday, India has reached another record number of new infections, with 412,000 new cases and almost 4,000 deaths in the last 24 hours.

ANGELIC

Meet the mother in Dubai who feeds 500 people every day during the holy month

DUBAI

Dubai resident Mahnaz Faquih, 51, feeds 500 needy people every day during Ramadan. She started when she moved to Dubai from India in 2002, distributing food during Ramadan to those around her, including the security guard in her building.

In 2018, thanks to the help of her friends and community members, she delivered 500 iftar boxes a day to workers and unemployed people during the holy month. That trend has continued every year since.

This year, because of Covid-19 restrictions on sharing and distributing food, Ms Faquih joined up with local charities to distribute food parcels at worker accommodation in Al Quoz. In 2020, she worked with Sahana, a Sri Lankan Welfare Association in the UAE, to help provide meals to those who lost their jobs during the pandemic.

"I moved to the UAE from India where I lived in a joint family of 10 people and there was a lot of Ramadan fervour," Ms Faquih said. "For me, Ramadan meant being involved in charity. "My parents always encouraged me to help others and I wanted to keep that tradition alive. "I started sending iftar boxes of fruit, laban or juice to my local mosque," she said.

Ms Faquih, an interior designer, said she ensured her children understood the importance of giving while realising their own privilege. "The initiative has grown so big. It started with a wish to treat others to some good food or a box of biryani," Ms Faquih said.



Mahnaz Faquih with her daughter Alina and son Mikhail.

"Before the pandemic, I asked my children to give away the food packets so that it touched their hearts. "I wanted them to have the consciousness that others are needy and they are privileged. "My parents always gave away money or gifts through us, and I wanted my children to think about others."

Her daughter, Alina Shaikh, 16, has been helping her mother since she was six and her son, Mikhail Shaikh, 12, also helps to distribute boxes. "When we were little, we used to bring food and juices to workers every single day during Ramadan," Alina said. "We feel happy and grateful that we are lucky enough to help others."

"It's such an amazing and rewarding feeling. "It's allowed us to understand how others live and empathise with them. It has helped us become humble and open-minded to people from different walks of life," she said. Mikhail also enjoyed being able to help others.

"In the past, we helped in packing the food boxes, but most of the time we handed out the iftar meals to people," he said. "We think that giving back is extremely important and when you have the ability to help others, why not do it?" Ms Faquih said her friends supported her, too.

Shanu Hathiramani, an Indian from Nigeria living in Dubai, has known Ms Faquih for the past eight years and often helps her with her charitable work. "Mahnaz is a very giving and helpful person," Ms Hathiramani said. "In the past, we have helped feed people during Ramadan. My son also helped out with the charity work."



ITV

SUNDAY 18 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Watoto Wetu
10:00 Isidingo
11:40 Movie rpt: Nzowa
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
15:30 Mwangaza
16:30 ITV Top 10
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Matukio ya wiki
19:30 Igizo: Mtego
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko
21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Reflexology
21:15 Mizengwe
21:35 Mjue Zaidi
22:15 Bongo Movie: Laana
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin

MONDAY 19 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto wetu
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera News
12:30 Mtego rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Mjue Zaidi
13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:10 Aibu yako rpt
18:15 Mapishi
18:45 Kesho leo
19:00 Afya ya Jamii
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:05 Dakika 45
22:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

TUESDAY 20 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto Wetu
10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Dakika 45 rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza Huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Ijue Sheria
19:00 Kipindi Maalum: TMDA
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco
21:30 Kipindi Maalum:
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

WEDNESDAY 21 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto Wetu rpt
10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Dakika 45 rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza Huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Ijue Sheria
19:00 Kipindi Maalum: TMDA
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco
21:30 Kipindi Maalum:
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

THURSDAY 22 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI

9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto wetu rpt
10:30 Jungu kuu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Afya ya jamii
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 DWTV: Kesho leo rpt
13:30 Shika Bamba rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:10 Yu wapi
18:15 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt
18:30 Uchumi na biashara
19:00 Jarida la wanawake
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Reflexology
21:10 Kipindi Maalum: Tanzania
Yetu
21:40 Chetu ni chetu
22:30 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin

23:00 Habari
23:30 Chetu ni chetu
23:45 The Base
00:45 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

FRIDAY 23 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
8:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto Wetu rpt
10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Dakika 45 rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:00 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza Huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Ijue Sheria
19:00 Kipindi Maalum: TMDA
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco
21:30 Kipindi Maalum:
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

SATURDAY 24 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera

6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
9:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto
10:30 Shamba lulu rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Ijue sheria rpt
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Kipindi Maalum rpt: TMDA
13:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanzania
Yetu
13:55 Habari za saa
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
14:55 Habari za saa
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi rpt
18:30 Jagina
19:00 Usafiri wako
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Malumbano ya hoja
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

6:40 Kumekucha
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
9:55 Habari za saa
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
9:55 Habari za saa
10:00 Watoto wetu rpt
10:30 Usafiri wako rpt
10:55 Habari za saa
11:00 The Base rpt
11:55 Habari za saa
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Kipindi Maalum rpt: Tanesco
12:55 Habari za saa
13:00 Jagina rpt
13:30 Chetu ni chetu rpt
13:55 Habari za saa
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
15:00 Meza Huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base (DJ Show)
17:30 Kiislam
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mjue Zaidi rpt
19:00 Shamba lulu
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:05 Kipima Joto
23:00 Habari
23:30 The Base
00:30 Al Jazeera
02:00 DWTV

SUNDAY 25 April

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Watoto Wetu
10:00 Isidingo
11:40 Movie rpt: Laana
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
15:30 Mwangaza
16:30 ITV Top 10
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Matukio ya wiki
19:30 Igizo: Mtego
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko
21:05 Kipindi Maalum: Reflexology
21:15 Mizengwe
21:35 Mjue Zaidi
22:15 Bongo Movie: Who's Back
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin

CAPITAL

Sat 17 April
08:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Rev rpt
09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt
10:00 Culinary delight rpt
10:30 Innovation rpt
11:00 Out n' about rpt
11:30 Sports Gazette rpt
12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt
12:30 Eco@Africa rpt
13:00B usiness edition rpt
13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The slave hunter
14:30 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt
17:45 Bundesliga kick off
18:15 Capchat rpt
19:15 Mizengwe
19:30 The Decor
20:00 Korean Drama: Iris
21:00 Out n' About
21:30 Movie: Grindstone Road(tape no:5593)
23:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love
01:00 Al Jazeera

Sun 18 April

08:00 Al Jazeera

9:00 Watoto wetu
10:00 Shika Bamba 5
10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
12:15 Korean drama rpt: Jumong
13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje)
Wild Skin
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizengwe
16:20 Igizo: Mtego
17:00 Shamsam za Pwani
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama: Jumong
19:00 Jungu Kuu
19:30 Shika Bamba
20:00 Habari
21:00 Art and lifestyle
21:30 ITV TOP 10
22:10 Isidingo rpt
00:30 DWTV

09:00 In good shape
10:00 Capchat rpt
11:00 Sports Gazette rpt
11:30 Korean Drama rpt: The slave hunter
12:00 Jagina rpt
12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt
13:00 In good shape rpt
13:30 Series rpt: Beats of Love
15:15 Aibu yako
15:30 Rev rpt
16:00 Dakika 45 rpt
16:45 Mizengwe rpt
17:00 The Decor rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Turning the Spotlight rpt
19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights
20:00 Korean Drama: Iris
21:00 Shift
21:15 Capchat live
22:15 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
00:00 Al Jazeera

Mon 19 April

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
14:00 Club 101 (Via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love
16:30 Tanzania Yetu rpt
17:00 Eco@Africa rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 The Décor rpt
19:30 Shamba lulu
20:00 Series: Beats of Love
20:45 The Monday Agenda
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Kipima Joto
00:00 Al Jazeera

Tues 20 April

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love
16:30 Capchat rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Innovation
19:30 Jagina rpt
20:00 Series: Beats of Love
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death
21:30 Capital Prime
22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt
22:30 Eco@Africa
23:00 Al Jazeera

Wed 21 April

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Beats of Love
16:30 Culinary delight rpt
17:00 Innovation rpt
17:30 Meza huru
18:00 Sports Gazette
19:30 Chetu ni chetu

WORLD

Gandhi warns 'explosive' COVID-19 wave threatens India and the world

BENGALURU

INDIA'S main opposition leader Rahul Gandhi warned yesterday that unless the deadly second COVID-19 wave sweeping the country was brought under control it would decimate India as well as threaten the rest of the world.

In a letter, Gandhi implored Prime Minister Narendra Modi to prepare for another national lockdown, accelerate a country-wide vaccination programme and scientifically track the virus and its mutations.

Gandhi said the world's second-most populous nation had a responsibility in "a globalised and interconnected world" to stop the "explosive" growth of COVID-19 within its borders.

"India is home to one out of every six human beings on the planet. The pandemic has demonstrated that our size, genetic diversity and complexity make India fertile ground for the virus to rapidly mutate, transforming itself into a more contagious and more dangerous form," wrote Gandhi.

"Allowing the uncontrollable spread of the virus in our country will be devastating not only for our people but also for the rest of the world."

India's highly infectious COVID-19 variant B.1.617 has already spread to other countries such as Britain, forcing nations to cut or restrict movements from India.

In the past week, India has reported an extra 1.5 million new infections and record daily death tolls as its hospitals run out of beds and medical oxygen. Since the start of the pandemic, it has reported 21.49 million cases and 234,083 deaths. It currently has 3.6 million active cases.

Modi has been widely criticised for

not acting sooner to suppress the second wave, after religious festivals and political rallies drew tens of thousands of people in recent weeks and became "super spreader" events.

His government has also been criticised for lifting social restrictions too soon following the first wave and for delays in the country's vaccination programme, which medical experts say is India's only hope of controlling the second COVID-19 wave.

While India is the world's biggest vaccine maker, it is struggling to produce and distribute enough doses to stem the wave of COVID-19.

Modi has stressed that Indian states must keep up vaccination rates. Although the country has administered at least 157 million vaccine doses, its rate of inoculation has fallen sharply <https://graphics.reuters.com/HEALTH-CORONAVIRUS/INDIA/jbyprwkawv/chart.png> in recent days.

"After having achieved a rate of around 4 million a day, we are now down to 2.5 million per day due to vaccine shortages," Amartya Lahiri, an economics professor at University of British Columbia was quoted as saying in the Mint newspaper.

"The 5 million a day target is the lower bound of what we have to aim for, since even at that rate, it will take a year for us to get everyone two doses. The situation unfortunately is very grim."

RECORD INFECTIONS

India reported another record daily rise in coronavirus cases, 414,188, on Friday, bringing total new cases for the week to 1.57 million. Deaths from COVID-19 rose by 3,915 to 234,083.

Medical experts say the real extent of



Rahul Gandhi

COVID-19 in India is five to 10 times the official tallies.

India's healthcare system is crumbling under the weight of patients, with hospitals running out of beds and medical oxygen. Morgues and crematoriums can not handle the number of dead and makeshift funeral pyres burn in parks and car parks.

Prominent U.S. disease modeller Chris Murray, from the University of Washington, said the sheer magnitude of infections in India in a short period of time suggests an "escape variant" may be overpowering any prior immunity from natural infections.

Infections are now spreading from overcrowded cities to remote rural villages that are home to nearly 70% of the 1.3 billion population.

Although northern and western India bear the brunt of the disease, southern India now seems to be turning into the new epicentre.

The share of the five southern states in the country's daily surge in infections rose from 28% to 33% in the first seven days of May, data shows.

In the southern city of Chennai, only one in a hundred oxygen supported beds and two in a hundred

beds in intensive care units (ICUs) were vacant on Thursday, from a vacancy rate of over 20% each two weeks ago, government data showed.

In India's tech capital Bengaluru, also in the south, only 23 of the 590 beds in ICUs were vacant, and only 1 in 50 beds with a ventilator were vacant, a situation officials say points to an impending crisis.

The test-positivity rate – the percentage of people tested who are found to have the disease – in the city of 12.5 million has tripled to almost 39% as of Wednesday, from about 13% two weeks ago, data showed.

Bengaluru has 325,000 active COVID-19 cases, with demand for ICU and high-dependency unit (HDU) beds up more than 20 fold, said H. M. Prasanna, president of the Private Hospitals and Nursing Homes Association in Karnataka state, which includes Bengaluru.

"Every patient coming to the hospital needs a ICU or a HDU bed...that is why patients are running from one hospital to another searching for an ICU bed," he said.

"There is also short supply of medical oxygen...Most of the small hospitals now who can't procure oxygen on a daily basis are refusing to admit COVID patients."

Lavrov castigates EU statements on Russia's retaliatory moves

YEREVAN

BRUSSELS' statements about the illegitimacy of Russia's steps in response to the EU's unilateral sanctions indicate that Europeans believe that anything is permissible for them, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told reporters on Thursday at a news conference in Yerevan.

"With regard to the latest developments, we stated clearly that we had declared those people in EU agencies and a number of EU member-states personae non gratae due to the fact that they took a decisive part in another round of sanctions against our officials, including parliamentarians," he said.

"The fact that the European Union declared that our actions were illegitimate and lacked international legal justification means just one thing - that the European Union believes that anything is permissible for it."

Lavrov also noted that the EU's threats to slap more sanctions on Russia showed that it was confident that its actions would go unpunished.

"When the European Union begins to threaten us with new sanctions, I just start to think that, beyond this sense of 'anything goes' and infallibility, the European Union is starting to get obsessed with another mania, and what I mean here is its complete impunity. I believe that going down this road will lead to a dead-end," he said.

According to Russia's top diplomat, a number of EU members share that stance, but "the aggressive Russophobic lobby in the European Union is doing its job," and so far those who disagree with them cannot oppose that.

"This is sad, but this is not our choice. Let me stress once again that, if you just look at the statistics of what happened after March 2014, you will instantly see who started that flurry of sanctions and what is the reason why we cannot but respond to that animosity," Lavrov concluded.

Japan extends state of emergency to May 31 over COVID-19

SYDNEY / TOKYO / DUBAI

JAPAN'S government extended yesterday a state of emergency in Tokyo and three other areas by about three weeks until the end of May to curb a surge in novel coronavirus cases just months before the start of the Tokyo Olympics.

The government had hoped a "short and powerful" state of emergency would contain a fourth wave of infection, but new cases in the capital Tokyo and second-city Osaka are still at high levels, said economy minister Yasutoshi Nishimura, who is also in charge of pandemic measures.

Japan's government may approve the use of coronavirus vaccines developed by AstraZeneca PLC and Moderna Inc as early as May 20, the Nikkei reported yesterday.

Health ministry officials plan to hold a meeting around that date to discuss approval, the financial daily reported. The only vaccine for the novel coronavirus to have received Japanese approval so far is that developed by Pfizer Inc and BioNTech SE.

Approvals for other vaccines are widely expected to come later this month, though no specific dates have been announced.

Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga has pledged to have enough vaccine doses for the country's 126 million people by June, before the July 23 start of the Tokyo Olympic Games.

Australia

Australian citizens stranded in COVID-ravaged India will be able to return home from May 15, Prime Minister Scott Morrison said on Friday, as Sydney remains on high alert for a potential outbreak.

Morrison said yesterday that citizens should be able to start returning home from May 15 after repatriation flights resume. Australian authorities last week banned all travellers from India, including its own citizens, from entering the country due to the surge in COVID-19 cases there, and warned offenders could be prosecuted and penalised.

Morrison stood by his decision to impose a biosecurity order barring flights to and from India, a ban that was backed by potential prosecution and financial penalties.

The policy drew heavy criticism from lawmakers, expatriates and the Indian diaspora, but Morrison said it had worked to slow the rate of COVID-19 infections in people quarantined in Australia.

"National Security Committee of Cabinet has confirmed that it will have done its job by then, and as a result we see no need to extend it beyond that date," Morrison told reporters.

Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan's acting health minister Teymur Musayev on Thursday hailed the CoronaVac vaccine made by China's pharmaceutical company Sinovac Biotech as fully safe.

Agencies

Third wave of pandemic 'appears to be broken' - German health minister

BERLIN

THE third wave of the coronavirus pandemic appears to be broken, German Health Minister Jens Spahn said yesterday, as social distancing measures and an accelerating vaccination campaign help lower the infection rate.

"The third wave appears to be broken," Spahn told a regular weekly news briefing on

Germany's pandemic management.

The head of the Robert Koch Institute for infectious diseases, Lothar Wieler, said the incidence of COVID-19 infections was falling across all age groups, and he was hopeful of soon controlling the pandemic in Germany.

The share of the population that has received a first vaccine shot has reached 31.5%,



with 900,000 getting a dose on Thursday, putting Germany "in the fast lane" by international comparison, said Spahn.

In a push to accelerate Germany's vaccination drive, Spahn on Thursday allowed the shot from AstraZeneca to be given to all adults - reversing earlier curbs imposed after earlier reports of rare cases of blood clotting.

The decision followed moves

by several German federal states to allow people to get the AstraZeneca shot, in consultation with their doctors.

"We are convinced that this offer is attractive for those who would otherwise not get vaccinated so quickly," said Spahn, adding that 1 million doses of the AstraZeneca vaccine would be delivered to doctors' practices next week.

Agencies

PM Johnson's party sweeps aside Labour in northern English town

LONDON

BRITISH Prime Minister Boris Johnson's Conservative Party won a new seat in parliament on Friday, ousting the Labour Party in the northern English town of Hartlepool with a sweeping victory that tightens his grip on traditional opposition-voting areas.

Conservative Jill Mortimer beat Labour's candidate by 15,529 votes to 8,589, a once unthinkable victory under a Conservative leader who has proved, so far, to be largely immune to accusations of crony-

ism and criticism over his handling of the COVID-19 crisis.

The overwhelming victory in the former industrial port town hands Johnson an even larger majority in parliament and increases pressure on Labour leader Keir Starmer, who faces criticism for not fulfilling a pledge to revive his party's fortunes after a 2019 election disaster.

"There's no hiding from the fact this is a shattering result for Labour, absolutely shattering," Labour lawmaker Steve Reed, a member of Starmer's top team,



told the BBC.

"It tells us that the pace of change in the Labour Party has not been fast enough. We need to quicken it up."

The Conservatives described it as an historic day. The by-election, which takes

place outside the normal parliamentary election cycle, was triggered by the resignation of a Labour lawmaker in March, and is one of dozens of votes which took place on Thursday.

Labour had held Hartlepool for decades. Election analysts said it was the biggest swing of votes to the governing party at a by-election since World War Two, defying Johnson critics who have taken aim at the prime minister for failing to move quickly enough to tackle the coronavirus crisis. Britain has one of the highest death tolls

from COVID-19 in the world.

"It's quite a spectacular turnaround in a seat that Labour should really have saved and defended," politics professor Michael Thrasher told Sky News.

RED WALL

Voters on Thursday were also electing local councils and parliaments in Scotland and Wales, gauging support for Britain's two main parties and in Scotland's case, the depth of backing for its leading party's push for independence.

Agencies

NAIROBI

U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken's recent virtual trip to Africa turned out to be another Washington's political trick to drive a wedge between China and Africa.

What is quite interesting about the virtual trip is that Blinken, never stop telling the cliches of so-called China threat or debt trap to smear China, said that the United States is not asking anyone to choose between the United States and China.

The real intention behind Washington's words and deeds is too obvious. It is attempting to put on a zero-sum game, disrupt China-Africa cooperation, and exclusively advance American interests in Africa. However, China and Africa would

China and Africa would not fall into zero-sum trap

not fall into that trap of zero-sum thinking.

History tells the most trustworthy facts that China and Africa enjoy a long-lasting friendship. Historical records have shown that renowned ancient Chinese navigator Zheng He had travelled to Africa around 600 years ago. The fleet he led had traded porcelain, tea, and silk with locals' ivory and ambergris, in a fair and friendly manner.

Zheng's voyages were an open chapter of the friendly exchanges between China and Africa. The China-aided Tanzania-Zambia Railway built more than half a century ago, and today's growing China-Africa cooperation are also good

results of China-Africa friendly relations.

However, in stark contrast, the exchange history between the Western countries and Africa is full of misdeeds of invasion and colonization. Therefore, those groundless accusations that attempted to provoke anti-China sentiment are merely futile.

Moreover, China-Africa relations continue to develop strongly. Over the past 20 more years since the establishment of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, China-Africa trade has increased by 20 times. Meanwhile, China's investment in Africa surged by more than 100 times in value from 2000

to 2017.

Flagship projects constructed with China's support have largely promoted Africa's prosperity and development, and have created an enormous number of jobs for local people while also guaranteeing their access to basic services such as water, electricity, transport, and skill learning.

China is the largest developing country, and has gained great experience in poverty reduction. It is willing to share its development experience with its African friends and other developing countries that uphold the same aspiration to let their people live better lives. A recent survey conducted in 18 Afri-

can countries by Afrobarometer, a pan-African research organization, showed that up to 60 percent of Africans believe China's economic and political influence in Africa is positive.

Nowadays, China-Africa cultural and people-to-people exchanges are booming. Many young Africans dream of going to China for further study and then coming back to help build their home countries. As more African people come to China, they get the chance to see the real China with their own eyes, and get to know what the Western world has portrayed is untrue and distorted.

In Africa, numerous words of

wisdom tell how mankind should cooperate rather than going against each other. "Wisdom is like a baobab tree, one individual cannot embrace it." Such words are ringing truer in today's world as no single country alone can tackle global crises such as climate change, the COVID-19 pandemic and terrorism.

In this fast changing world, China and Africa will surely continue to work together and stride forward along the path of building a closer China-Africa community with a shared future.

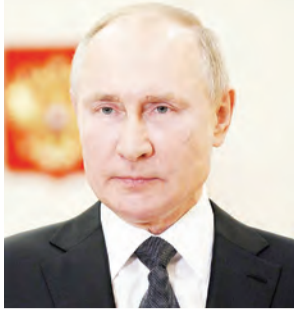
Those who have been addicting to the zero-sum game and attempting to drive a wedge between China and Africa could well save their strength.

People's Daily

Putin instructs govt to support international Arctic expedition

MOSCOW

RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin has tasked the cabinet and a number of government agencies with furnishing support for an international scientific research expedition in Russia's Arctic zone and on the territories of the Arctic Council member states.



The instructions to this effect were given following a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Russian Geographical Society and were published on the Kremlin's website yesterday.

"The government of the Russian Federation, together with the Russian Foreign Ministry, the Russian Federal Security Service (FSB) and other interested federal executive bodies, [are tasked with] considering the proposals of the Russian Geographical Society with regards to, in particular, providing support for an international scientific research expedition in the Arctic zone of the Russian Federation and on the territories of the Arctic Council's member states and making appropriate decisions based on the results of the consideration," the document reads.

Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and FSB Director Alexander Bortnikov must report on these decisions by June 1, 2021.

In addition, Putin recommended that the Russian State Duma (lower house of parliament), with the participation of the government, ensure the adoption of amendments to the legislation of the Russian Federation to ensure government protection of cultural heritage sites at water bodies and report on that by December 1, 2021.

African leaders seek job-making sites to counter inequality

By Bloomberg

RWANDA, South Africa and Senegal are among countries calling for the establishment of full vaccine-manufacturing plants to prepare for future pandemics after Africa found itself at the back of the queue for COVID-19 shots.

While many developed nations are well advanced with their vaccination rollouts, most African countries are almost out of initial supplies and the continent accounts for just 2 percent of global administered shots, data from the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show.

There are fewer than 10 vaccine manufacturers in Africa, based across Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Senegal and South Africa, according to the World Health Organization. And most of those carry out packaging and labeling rather than manufacturing. That makes the continent ill-equipped to source and supply doses in times of crisis, as this pandemic has demonstrated.

"The only way to ensure vaccine equity is to produce more vaccines where they are needed," Rwanda President Paul Kagame said this week. "So long as Africa remains dependent on other regions for vaccines, we will always be at the back of the queue whenever there is scarcity."

Among the biggest barriers to local manufacturing are intellectual-property protections. Almost 100 developing countries led by India and South Africa have petitioned for a waiver and the sharing of recipes for COVID-19 doses, but that's been opposed by some nations and the drugmakers themselves.

The US unexpectedly changed its stance to back the proposal this week, opening the door to negotiations between members of the World Trade Organization.

The campaign "is understandable given past and present experience of waiting in line to get life-saving medications and vaccines," Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, director-general of WTO, said at a conference last month. WTO members "must increase vaccine production now and also look for pragmatic outcomes" to the intellectual-property protection issue.

Specialized Skills

Vaccine manufacturing needs both significant financing and specialized skills to build factories that can be certified as free from contamination, said Stavros Nicolaou, chairman of South Africa's local pharmaceutical manufacturers industry association.

"These skills and expertise are in limited supply on the continent," he said. "It is possible to build further fill-and-finish capacity, but this requires local manufacturers having guaranteed off-takes and ongoing demand."

The BioVac Institute, a state-backed South African vaccine company, has won a deal with US-based ImmunityBio Inc. to make coronavirus shots if that company's vaccine is approved. It expects a new plant to cost as much as 200 million euros (US\$241 million). In Ghana, the pharma industry body has also proposed a local factory, but says it could take as long as two years to complete.

BioVac currently runs a fill-finish site, allowing it to package doses, but now wants to build a plant that produces the ingredients needed for the vaccines themselves. Aspen Pharmacare Holdings Ltd., another South African company, signed a deal with Johnson & Johnson to fill and finish its version of the COVID-19 vaccine locally.

"The current COVID-19 pandemic presents a great opportunity to harness the various conversations and proposals into an action-oriented road map," said William Ampofo, chairman of the African Vaccine Manufacturing Initiative. "Increased vaccine production in Africa will facilitate immunization of childhood diseases and control outbreaks of highly infectious pathogens."

Agencies

Experts warn against cliquism as G7 meeting ends

LONDON

AS the first in-person meeting in two years of the Group of Seven (G7) foreign and development ministers ended here on Wednesday, officials vowed to tackle economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and various regional security issues.

Experts, however, have said the club of rich countries may prove to be inadequate to address global challenges if they fail to be more inclusive and seek exclusion of certain countries for reasons like ideological or political differences.

LIKE-MINDED OR NARROW-MINDED

To forge an alliance of "like-minded" countries, the G7 has invited representatives from the European Union, Australia, India, South Korea, South Africa, and this year's chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Brunei, for the three-day meeting.

Experts, however, have said divisions among the countries and groups might not be easy to overcome, especially those regarding China, and therefore shutting out China by an expanded alliance is not possible.

"For many, China is an indispensable trading partner," Khairy Tourk, professor of economics at Chicago-based Illinois Institute of Technology, said Wednesday on the Financial Times.

"For example, industrial associations such as the Federation of German Industries (BDI) in Germany and Keidanren in Japan, as well as the chaebol in South Korea, are all eager to participate with China in building projects in third (BR) countries," he added.

"India, the largest beneficiary of the (China-led) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank loans, is also reluctant to join an anti-China alliance."

Robin Niblett, director and chief executive of London-based think tank Chatham House, pointed out that the motive to contain China is doomed.

"This more inclusive G7 should have positive core objectives this year... not to seek to contain China or oppose Russia, on which there would not be agreement," he said. Niblett called on the group to focus on such a positive agenda as strengthening the countries' economic and technological resilience as well as agreeing on common positions in the World Trade Organization on upgrading world trade rules.

Agreement in these areas could provide the platform for cooperation on sharing digital health data or building smart grids, thus tackling two of the biggest global challenges of the present day, resilience to the next pandemic and a successful energy transition away from reliance on fossil fuels, he added.

ANTI-CHINA SENTIMENT UNHELPFUL

What came visible during the G7 ministers' meeting and



Representatives pose for a group photo during the meeting of the Group of Seven (G7) foreign and development ministers at Lancaster House in London, Britain, on May 4, 2021. (Xinhua)

in the flurry of bilateral meetings was that China remained high on the agenda. In a joint communique issued after the G7 meeting, the ministers said they "look for opportunities to work with China to promote regional and global peace, security and prosperity." However, the communique did not fail to mention such issues as Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong in the name of "human rights."

The anti-China sensation purportedly hyped up by certain countries is not only utterly irresponsible but unhelpful to achieve the global unity much needed amid the most grave pandemic in living history, experts have said.

"Why blame China?" tweeted Martin Jacques, a renowned British scholar and political commentator, on Tuesday.

"The West is failing because of huge inequality, miserable growth and disastrous handling of COVID. While Trump was by far the biggest threat to the international order," "Governance is not about nice-sounding words and phrases," Jacques, also senior fellow at the Department of Politics and International Studies at the University of Cambridge, said in another tweet.

"It is about delivery. The Western nations are failing to deliver for their people. China is delivering. That is why the West is in deep trouble." "Treat China with respect. Regard it as your equal. Honour the achievement of 1.4 bn people," Jacques added.

In an earlier interview, Astrid Nordin, founding director of Lancaster University China Center, told Xinhua that she believes

that now is not the time for confrontation. "Frank and open discussions" are much needed from all sides to enable cooperation in various areas, she said.

IRREPLACEABLE ROLE OF CHINA

David Phinnemore, professor of European politics at Queen's University Belfast, has told Xinhua that for the G7 to stay relevant and tackle global challenges, it needs to engage with China.

"I think it (G7) has always served as a forum where you bring together some of the most powerful economists in the world," he said. "But increasingly, it's only some, it's not all of them as they used to be the case. So we're obviously missing quite significant power, economic powers there... China most obviously." "I think we're not in the position, we were a couple of decades back where the G7 was seen by some people as the key to how the world was going to be economically, it doesn't hold that same power and position that it did back then," he said.

"We shouldn't overstate its influence or importance," he added. "We shouldn't be over exaggerating our expectations from what's going to come out of it in the coming years."

Xinhua

China will not acquiesce to any attempt to destabilise Xinjiang

WASHINGTON

CHINA will not acquiesce to any external attempt to destabilize Xinjiang, or even to split up China and obstruct the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation, said Chinese Ambassador Cui Tiankai on Thursday.

During the "Xinjiang Is a Wonderful Land" online meeting co-hosted by the embassy and the government of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, Cui said that Xinjiang affairs are internal affairs of China, and the 1.4 billion Chinese people of various ethnic groups will not allow any interfering forces to contain China's development.

"In the United States and other Western countries, lies about Xinjiang still hold sway. Systemic slandering and unilateral sanctions against China are rife," the ambassador said, "but lies cannot stand the scrutiny of facts."

"The so-called 'genocide' is just a downright lie," Cui said, citing figures of the Uygur population in Xinjiang, which has doubled from 5.55 million to over 12 million in the past 40-plus years.

Describing "forced labor" as "groundless," Cui said, "Workers in Xinjiang choose their jobs, including those in the high-income industry of cotton picking, on their own volition. They sign labor contracts as a free and equal party, their rights and interests are well protect-



Chinese ambassador to the United States Cui Tiankai delivers a speech at the 2019 China-US Business Council gala in Washington, Dec 4, 2019. (XINHUA)

ed, and they enjoy full remuneration." "If making a decent living is 'forced labor,' then should they only deserve 'forced poverty' and 'forced unemployment?'" asked the ambassador.

"Feigning concerns about Xinjiang's human rights, they are thinking about using Xinjiang to contain China," the ambassador said, calling on those Western countries to listen to what the 25 million Xinjiang people of various ethnic groups and the 1.4 billion Chinese people say, and "tell truth from falsehood, and right from wrong."

Shohrat Zakir, chairman of the regional government, said Xinjiang spends more than 70 percent of its general public budget expenditures every year on protecting and improving the livelihoods of all its ethnic groups.

Xinhua

WHO says COVID-19 vaccine supply hitches could reignite upticks in Africa

NAIROBI

THE delays in supply of COVID-19 vaccine doses to Africa linked to the crisis in India could reignite new waves of infections in the continent, the World Health Organization (WHO) official said on Thursday.

Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa said during weekly virtual briefings that the COVID-19 vaccine supply crunch combined with new variants could undermine efforts to contain the pandemic in the continent.

"While we call for vaccine equity, Africa must also knuckle down and make the best of what we have. We must get all the doses we have into people's arms," Moeti said in a statement. According to WHO, Africa currently accounts for 1 percent of COVID-19 vaccines administered globally, down from 2 percent a few weeks ago amid supply bottlenecks. Moeti said that low vaccination coverage

in Africa where eight doses per 1,000 people have been administered compared to 150 doses per 1,000 people globally, bodes ill for the continent's quest to flatten the curve. Statistics from the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC) indicate that 37.6 million doses had been acquired in the continent while 20.2 million had been administered as of May 4.

The pan African health agency said that the top five countries in Africa in terms of administering the highest number of doses include Morocco, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Egypt, and Kenya.

Moeti said WHO has rallied behind efforts to mitigate the harmful impact of the COVID-19 vaccine supply crunch in Africa that includes appealing for a donation of excess doses from wealthy nations and fast-tracking establishment of structures to boost local manufacturing of the life-saving commodity.

Positive moves by Saudis, Iranians welcomed in region

HONG KONG



THE prospect of a thaw in relations between Saudi Arabia and Iran in the wake of conciliatory moves by both sides has been welcomed as offering hope for peace and stability in the Middle East, experts said.

In a televised interview last week to mark the fifth anniversary of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030, a socio-economic blueprint aimed at reducing the kingdom's dependence on oil and developing the nation's public services, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman said his country wanted to have good relations with Iran. Iran, in turn, said it was willing to adopt a constructive dialogue with its Gulf neighbor and overcome their differences.

Pakistan and Qatar are among the countries that have welcomed the crown prince's gesture.

Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan said his nation was encouraged by the Saudis' overtures for peace with Iran. "Iran is our neighbour and KSA our closest friend."

This peace initiative will strengthen the Muslim Ummah (community)," Khan, using shorthand for Saudi Arabia, tweeted on April 28. His tweet has been widely shared on social media. Khan was scheduled to visit Saudi Arabia from Friday to Sunday.

The Saudi crown prince's words have been widely reported. "Iran is a neighboring country, and all we aspire for is a good and special relationship with Iran," he said. "We do not want Iran to be in a difficult situation. On the contrary, we want Iran to prosper and grow." Qatar Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani said Qatar supports Crown Prince Mohammed's call for a foreign policy based on the foundations and principles of good neighborliness and dialogue in the region, including with Iran, Doha-based media outlet The Peninsula Qatar reported.

"It is also not a coincidence that Qatar Salman's call for building bridges with the neighboring Iran coincided with the celebration of five years of achievements toward Vision 2030," said Asif Shuja, senior research fellow at the Middle East Institute of the National University of Singapore.

Shuja said one of the reasons behind the conciliatory words is the United States' interlinked policies toward the Middle East.

Long-term rivalry

The rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran has persisted for generations, mainly because of religious differences. Iran is largely Shia Muslim, while Saudi Arabia sees itself as the dominant Sunni Muslim power.

As for tensions between Saudi Arabia and Yemen, they go back to 2014 when Houthi Shia rebels seized control of much of western Yemen and a Saudi-backed coalition of Arab states and subsequently launched a military operation to support Yemeni President Abed Rabbo Mansour Hadi. **Agencies**

Coach Mecky Mexime joins Dar soccer centre



Mecky Mexime

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

FOOTBALL coaches, Mecky Mexime and Mwami Mohamed, have joined a Dar es Salaam soccer centre, Cambiasso Sports Management Academy, on a two-year contract to coach the institution's youngsters.

Mexime said their center will target to see to it that it nurtures better players than Simba SC's midfielder Clatous Chama.

Speaking to reporters in the city, Mexime said he has decided to coach promising players at the center to boost youth football development program.

He noted: "We will have young people aged 16-18, as long as they come here and have real football talent that can be promoted."

He stated: "We have had a lot of good players from abroad and our players are just not competent, this has been resulted by failure to see to it they get good upbringing."

Mexime said it was a good thing for Cambiasso Sports Management Academy to volunteer to take care of the young footballers as not everyone has such a determination.

He disclosed: "Such a person has to wait until the government looks after him, volunteering to raise 25 young people and take care of them is not

mean task."

Mexime further pointed out that they aim at continuing to gather young footballers across Tanzania and nurture them.

Mexime and Mohamed's contracts were signed in the presence of Cambiasso Sports Management Academy's director, Twaha Ngwambi.

Ngwambi said it was a good thing for the center to work with Mexime as he is one of the best coaches to have ever worked in the Mainland Premier League outfits.

He noted: "He's a good coach who was able to work in Premier League teams and First Division League, but has decided to come here."

Ngwambi said in the search for a coach for their center, they had about 50 coaches but they felt they found the right person in Mexime.

He pointed out: "Most of the coaches were from the youth teams but, in the vetting session, we saw that the one we are introducing is the right one."

Mexime will be joined by Yahya Issa (assistant coach), Edin Nzaganzeru (physio) and Stephano Mkomola (manager) in his technical bench.

Cambiasso Sports Management Academy is located in Kigamboni in Dar es Salaam but they practice at Uhuru Stadium.

National beach soccer team in intensive preps

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimi

NATIONAL beach soccer team's head coach, Boniface Pawasa, has said his players have already started watching several videos of their rivals in the group stage of the Africa Cup of Nations (BSAFCON 2021) tournament slated for May 23-29 in Senegal.

Tanzania is scheduled for Group A with hosts Senegal, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Tanzania will play Uganda in the opening clash and then they will later lock horns with Democratic Republic of Congo and finish with the Senegalese.

Senegal who will come up against Democratic Republic of Congo in the first clash.

Commenting on the progress of his squad, Pawasa said that they last week started preparations that will focus on friendly matches.

The tactician stated the side had earlier concentrated on building fitness and thereafter wrapped up most of the training phase of the second phase of the program which focused on technical techniques, cunning and creativity.

Pawasa pointed out the matches will not only help them show the shortcomings in their squad but also enable

them to evaluate what progress they have made towards the finals where they are determined to do a good job.

The coach said that so far they have reviewed several videos of their opponents in order to learn their tactics, how they play and what style they use in attacking and defending in order to give them ease.

"We have already started preparations for the last week of training yet we are still working on analyzing the videos of our opponents to see their tactics, how they play, the tactics they use in attacking and defending as well as check their quality and shortcomings," Pawasa disclosed.

It should be recalled that this is the second time in a row that Tanzania has qualified to play in the finals.

The team successfully performed well in the 2018 edition.

The results helped the team scale up the ranking, as they were placed eighth in the list of 52 countries in the continent.

Tanzania qualified for the finals after securing a 12-9 aggregate victory over Burundi.

In the first leg, Tanzania trounced Burundi 8-3 and the former later lost 6-4 in the second leg played at Coco Beach in the city on April 3.

Who would get in Simba SC, Yanga best XI ahead of Dar Derby today?

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

SIMBA SC and Yanga enjoy a rivalry like no other, and this weekend's game bringing together the two sides is even more tantalising given they are placed first and second respectively in the Vodacom Premier League.

The match, which will take place in Dar es Salaam today, will get underway at 17h00.

Yanga will be looking to stay in contention for the title, as they sit four points behind leaders Simba, who have two games in hand.

In contrast Simba are enjoying a good run having won four of their last four matches in the league, the last of which was a 3-1 thrashing of Dodoma Jiji FC in Dar es Salaam last week.

They are unbeaten in 17 league matches and look set to saunter to their fourth league title in a row.

So what better time than now to pick a combined team? This one incorporates the best players from each team but only those available for the Saturday's showdown.

Both Metacha Mnata and Faroukh Shikhala have been jostling for the No. 1 jersey at Yanga, with the latter perhaps more favoured towards the end of this season.

In contrast Aishi Manula has been the undisputed



Simba SC's midfielder, Luis Miquissone (3rd L), dribbles past Yanga's midfielder Feisal Salum when the teams met in a recent Vodacom Premier League clash in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

number one goalkeeper for Simba, making him a straightforward pick here.

At fullback the decision is also not so difficult to make, with Shomari Kapombe and Mohamed Hussein the two outstanding wide defenders in the league. The two of them play a critical role in Simba's build up.

For Yanga, neither Kibwana Shomari and Yassin Mustapha are at the level of Kapombe at Hussein.

In the centre Joash Onyango is an obvious pick, with the Kenyan international perhaps the best centre-back in the league right now.

He seems to improve whoever plays alongside him. Choosing his partner is slightly tougher, with Paschal Wawa, Bakari Mwamnyeto, Abdallah Shaibu and Lamine Moro all in conten-

tion.

However, given Moro and Mwamnyeto recent troubles, Wawa gets the nod.

More importantly Mwamnyeto and Moro do not have Wawa's ability on the ball.

Despite his lack of speed, Wawa remains a crucial component in the Premier League's best defense.

In midfield, Simba's Tadeo Lwanga edges out Yanga's Mukoko Tonombe because of the latter's lack of match fitness.

Lwanga anchors the midfield, the Ugandan international stepped up during Jonas Mkude's absence and cemented his place.

Yacouba Songne and Clatous Chama are kept together. Yacouba is on form, enjoying his football and contributing goals and assists right now.

He has been directly involved in ten goals so far more than any other Yanga player except Deus Kaseke.

There is a good argument to say Chama is the best player on either side and the whole league. He has been directly involved in 20 league goals this campaign.

Luis Miquissone and Tuisila Kisinda flank the midfield. Saido Ntibazonkiza has been outstanding for Yanga since his arrival at Jangwani Street side late last year and would have made this if he had the legs, but his minutes need to be managed carefully.

John Bocco and Meddie Kage-re have scored more goals than Chris Mugalu but it is the work of the latter that really shows his brilliance.

Mugalu is a more rounded centre forward, good at winning long balls, receiving passes and holding up the ball for his teammates to advance in good positions.

He has eight goals and one assist in the league.

On the other side, Yanga's attacking line-up is adorned with the likes of Michael Sarpong, Waziri Junior, Fiston Abdul-Razak and Ditram Nchimbi but none has hit the mark.

Sarpong has scored four league goals, the same number managed by central defender Moro.

Deus Kaseke being joint top scorer with six goals highlights the club's attacking issues. He is not even a regular starter this season.

City derby redraws battle lines, settles debates among fans

By Correspondent Michael Eneza

AFTER months of gearing up to prove this or that point in relation to the strength, prowess of players and organisational aptitude on both sides, the city derby is a moment of truth where all these issues are being put to the litmus test.

It settles diverse issues ranging from appropriateness or otherwise of players that the clubs chose to register, as they are tested in all matches in the competitions where either club participates, but the truth of each and everything is performance at the derby. It is like a final exam or for the semester.

When a side wins or loses the 'maximum encounter', all that was negatively said in its regard to it was wrong and if it loses, all that was said negatively in its regard must definitely have been right, as this is clearly demonstrated in the fact that it lost.

This definitely isn't the logic of things ordinarily, but this encounter doesn't allow that kind of logic for it has to be tested where it matters, at the derby.

How far indeed each of the derbies proves what is being said about the respective club is a different matter, as it all depends on which side was stood at the start, whether such person, privately, was proved right or wrong.

Listening to curtain raising discussions all over the week concerning the Saturday May 8 league fixture shows at least one thing, that Simba SC is at their historical best - with some pundits excusing themselves that they did not see legendary sides like those which featured Abdallah Kibadeni, or Sunday Manara for the other side.

Their frame of reference isn't the early 1970s but the past two decades where most of those who watch the matches live or on television know a few things about the two teams.

It is uncertain if it can be said that the current Yanga side is weak, let alone being historically so.

Organisationally peaking it



Yanga's midfielders, Feisal Salum (R) and Jaffary Mohamed (L), challenge Simba SC's fullback, Shomari spombe, in a recent Vodacom Premier League clash in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

can be said that Yanga have survived a historical moment of disorganization within the club, on account of misfortunes of its erstwhile sponsor who fell on the wayside as the fifth phase rearranged the way things were being done in the country - and especially in Dar es Salaam.

How far the new, noticeable more positive pro-business posture implies for the club is still a matter to be sorted out, as what the club has pointedly lacked in the past few years wasn't resources in the first place, but resources to pay for a certain kind of club culture. It is this aspect that rocks the club, not just cash.

A club that lacks cash would scarcely have been as profligate as the Jangwani Street side, sacking coaches at the earliest excuse and finding it easier to sack critical or vehement coaches instead of providing critical moral support for them to manage the team.

For many of the issues that arose for instance between Luc Eymael and the fans aren't new or strange in African soccer, discounting for that matter

one or two inordinate phrases on his part.

Still, parting ways with Zlatko Krmpotic foe expressing doubt in the club's ability in the derby was a typical illustration of club culture, to go with what the fans want, or say.

There is all the same a more enlivening aspect of things when one looks at results over the past year when the two sides have met, as purely by those results there are even chances for either side, with the balance perhaps going to Yanga.

The club won 1-0 on the March 8 derby and then drew 1-1 on the November 7 derby, the trouble with that record being in the adage that since then 'a lot of water has passed under the bridge.'

While Simba was a good side as the continental club championship started in the third quarter of last year, the manner in which it has continually excelled has left many astonished, even among their fans.

That is why the current derby isn't like the previous, despite that neither club has made surprise signings since November

last year, as the season only closes at the end of May.

The 'million dollar question' in this encounter is whether Simba is still the same team that Yanga encountered in November, or has since changed.

It has a victory over feared Egypt's Al Ahly in the bag and a resounding crush of Congolese club, AS Vita Club, etc.

Listening to the pundits, there is cultivated defiance about all this flamboyance surrounding Simba SC, like the quarterfinals of the CAF Champions League, etc.

Nor are the fans scared of a side that is now regularly fielding as a reserve player its erstwhile best player, Meddie Kage-re, and one time Yanga icon, Bernard Morrison, about whose loss the fans or leader's aren't ready to forget or forgive.

This situation has catapulted the leaders into a range of deceitful tactical steps with fans, leading to expulsion of Yanga vice-chairman Fredrick Mwakalebela by the federation authorities. This may have an effect on the pitch.

Ronaldo and Ibrahimovic face off in battle for Champions League spot

MILAN

DETHRONED Juventus host AC Milan on Sunday in a clash of former Serie A title hopefuls now fighting to qualify for the Champions League.

Juventus' bid for a 10th consecutive title collapsed as Inter Milan sealed their first league crown since 2010 with four games to spare last weekend.

Antonio Conte's Inter host Sampdoria in the San Siro Saturday, their first game at home since being crowned champions, with fans only allowed to celebrate outside because of Covid-19 restrictions.

Behind Inter, five teams battle for the other three Champions League spots.

Atalanta, Juventus and AC Milan are all level on 69 points, with fifth-placed Napoli two points behind and Lazio a further three points adrift but with a game in hand.

Not qualifying for the Champions League would have been unthinkable at the start of the season for Juventus, twice finalists of Europe's top club competition in the past decade.

"We know that we have to qualify for the Champions League at all costs," said Juventus coach Andrea Pirlo, whose side also host Inter before the end of the season.

Cristiano Ronaldo scored twice last weekend at Udinese to rescue three points and extend his lead at the top of the scoring charts with 27 goals, six more than Inter star Romelu Lukaku.

Ronaldo, 36, has one more year left on his contract, and amid speculation over his future failure to qualify for the Champions League could herald his exit.

Veteran Sweden star Zlatan Ibrahimovic has already committed to another season at Milan which will take him to 40 years old.

Ibrahimovic galvanised Milan after his return midway through last season, leading the line as the 'Rossoneri' went 27 games unbeaten before losing 3-1 to Juve at the San Siro in January.

Sitting top of the league until after this campaign's winter break, Milan crumbled in their biggest matches against Juve, Inter, Atalanta and Lazio.

However coach Stefano Pioli insisted the priority was always a return to the Champions League for the first time in eight years.

Juve have won each of their last nine Serie A home matches against Milan, who also face a tough final fixture at Atalanta later this month.

Atalanta, who sit second, travel to relegated Parma looking to take advantage of their rivals going head-to-head, with Napoli also hopeful of a win at struggling Spezia and Lazio at 14th-placed Fiorentina.

Benevento and Cagliari face off on Sunday with just a point separating the two relegation rivals.

Key stats:

199 - Antonio Conte's games as manager in the Italian top flight, including 135 wins

99 - Ronaldo and Paulo Dybala are both just one goal short of a century for Juventus

18 - Inter's unbeaten run

15 - Ibrahimovic's goals this campaign

5 - Points between second and sixth

Fixtures (times GMT)

Today

Spezia v Napoli, Udinese v Bologna (both 1300), Inter Milan v Sampdoria (1600), Fiorentina v Lazio (1845)

Tomorrow

Genoa v Sassuolo (1030), Benevento v Cagliari, Hellas Verona v Torino, Parma v Atalanta (all 1300), Roma v Crotone (1600), Juventus v AC Milan (1845)

AFP

Bayern renew bid to win league as Dortmund battle Leipzig

BERLIN

BAYERN Munich make their second attempt to wrap up the Bundesliga title on Saturday after Borussia Dortmund and RB Leipzig clash earlier in a rehearsal for next week's German Cup final.

A 2-1 defeat at relegation-threatened Mainz a fortnight ago cost Bayern the chance to be confirmed Bundesliga champions for the ninth straight season.

With three games left, they can now secure the title at home to Borussia Moenchengladbach late on Saturday.

However, Bayern's seven-point lead at the top could be cut before kick-off as second-placed Leipzig head to Dortmund earlier in the day.

Fifth-placed Dortmund are a point from the Champions League places and want a home win to boost their European ambitions while laying down a marker for next Thursday's domestic final.

"We want three points - and to win the cup five days later," admitted Dortmund captain Marco Reus.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, Dortmund posted losses of 26.3 million euros (\$31.7 million) in the first half of the 2020/21 financial year, which could be eased by the 15.25 million euros each club receives for qualifying for the Champions League's group stages.

The pressure is on both clubs.

Leipzig want a confidence booster before the final and revenge for January's 3-1 home defeat when Erling Braut Haaland netted twice after Jadon Sancho's opening goal for Dortmund.

AFP

Emery regrouped and moved on; Arsenal haven't

LONDON

ARSENAL sacked Unai Emery because they feared he was sending them into the wilderness. As it turns out, it didn't stop him.

Emery's Villarreal side advanced to the Europa League final with a 0-0 draw at Emirates Stadium on Thursday, earning a 2-1 aggregate win they deserved for being the better-organised, more purposeful outfit in both legs of this semifinal.

As Villarreal's substitutes and staff streamed onto the pitch at full-time, Emery allowed himself a double-fisted shake of his arms before walking in a different direction to the rest, across the touchline to Arsenal manager Mikel Arteta for a commiserate handshake. He might not admit it publicly, but this will be the sweetest of moments for Emery, much maligned in these parts after losing his job in November 2019, with sources telling ESPN he had become a figure of fun among the Arsenal players.

Former Gunner Mesut Ozil underlined this antipathy before kickoff, tweeting "good evening" in reference to Emery's English language skills, which some squad



Arsenal had no answer for their previous manager, falling to Unai Emery's Villarreal. (Agencies)

members mimicked behind his back at the training ground.

Dropping into the Europa League and standing on the periphery of the top four was viewed as Arsenal's nadir, ultimately accounting for Emery and his predecessor, Arsene Wenger, after two decades of Champions League football. But this is a new, devastatingly low. Barring a highly improbable sequence of Premier League results, the Gunners will not play in Europe next season for the first time since 1996.

In the space of 19 days, they have gone from European Super League to no European football at all.

The squad is in need of an overhaul, fans are protesting furiously at the owners, and although Kroenke Sports

Enterprises have vowed to invest this summer, an absence of European football hits Arsenal hard in pockets already emptied by the financial impact of COVID-19. The rebuilding job now is colossal. It almost feels too big for a manager with just 18 months' experience in the dugout, but the Gunners promoted Arteta from head coach to manager at the start of the season to reflect both the faith they had in him and the shift toward a more professional culture he was seemingly making strides to instill.

Where is it now? This was an abject performance for a team with their season on the line in a European semifinal. UEFA stats recorded one shot on target; Opta gave them two -- the disagreement probably centering on whether Pierre-

Emerick Aubameyang's 79th-minute header was on target before hitting the post. Either way, it wasn't good enough. Aubameyang hit the woodwork twice, but make no mistake: Arsenal weren't unlucky.

A terse exchange between Arteta and reporters followed afterward.

Does he accept his job is under threat? "I think everybody's job is under scrutiny," he replied. Does he still have faith in his own ability to do job? "Yes." Does he understand why there will be focus on him now? A nod.

He needs better answers, and soon. Arteta's experiment with a false-nine shape in the first game backfired and an atypical 4-1-4-1 formation in the second game failed to illicit any meaningful improvement.

It is the sort of tactical tinkering Emery was piloried for.

But more than that, there was precious little fight, an alarming absence of intensity given the stakes. Arteta claimed his players were missing the backing of supporters -- and there is probably some truth to that given how fragile they have proved in the past -- but he can consider himself fortunate there were no supporters inside to pass judgment on this.

The Gunners have always insisted they are determined to stand by Arteta. Kroenke Sports Enterprises have enough concerns staving off fan unrest and the possibility of an imminent takeover bid from a consortium led by Spotify co-founder Daniel Ek without undergoing a

fresh managerial search.

But Arsenal are on course to finish lower in the Premier League than last season while missing out on Europe. There is no FA Cup final to provide a positive coda to the campaign, instead a drift toward an ignominious conclusion with 10,000 fans due for the final home game, which will likely double as a referendum gauging support for Arteta and anger toward the Kroenkes.

Difficult and painful times lie ahead. Emery spent far longer than usual conducting his post-match interviews, waving to members of Villarreal's entourage and clearly revelling in the moment. He has regrouped and moved on. Arsenal are still waiting to do the same.

Man City eye Premier League title in Champions League final curtain raiser

LONDON

MANCHESTER City and Chelsea will play off for the biggest prize in European club football later this month, but there is plenty on the line for both clubs when they meet in a prelude to the Champions League final on Saturday.

City can wrap up a fifth Premier League title in 10 years with victory, cementing their place as the dominant force in English football over the past decade since money began flowing in from Abu Dhabi to build a dynasty on the field.

Chelsea's transformation under Thomas Tuchel has taken them to a third Champions League final since their own transformational takeover when Roman Abramovich bought the Blues in 2003.

However, the Blues are still paying for a slow start to the season under Frank Lampard with their place in next season's Champions League far from guaranteed.

Tuchel's men are fourth in the Premier League, three points clear of surprise top-four challengers West Ham.

But should City seal the title in style and lay down a marker for Istanbul, Tottenham and Liverpool are also not out of the running for the top four.

Chelsea ended City's quest for a quadruple of trophies when they last met just three weeks ago in the FA Cup semi-finals

However, that 1-0 win at Wembley was against a shadow City side as Pep Guardiola prioritised progressing in the Champions League.



Pep Guardiola

Thomas Tuchel

A key to both clubs' success has been their strength in depth and both managers could make several changes this weekend after the exertions of seeing off Paris Saint-Germain and Real Madrid in midweek.

Chance for the chasing pack - A trip to City is only the start of a tough run in for Chelsea, who also face Arsenal and third-placed Leicester in their final four league games of the campaign, with another meeting against Leicester in the FA Cup final in between.

Gareth Bale gave Tottenham a taste of what they have been missing with the Wales forward on the bench for most of the campaign under Jose Mourinho, prior to the Portuguese coach's sacking, as he scored his first Premier League hat-trick in a 4-0 demolition of already-relegated Sheffield United last weekend.

Victory for Spurs in Saturday's early game at

Leeds would take Ryan Mason's men to within two points of Chelsea.

Liverpool are seven points off fourth, but have a game in hand after their clash at Manchester United was called off due to fan protests last weekend.

Last season's title winners host struggling Southampton at Anfield on Saturday needing a win to keep their chance

of Champions League football next season alive.

West Ham have arguably the easiest run in of the top-four contenders, which begins with the visit of Everton to the London Stadium on Sunday.

"It would be an incredible achievement," said David Moyes, who succeeded in just keeping the Hammers up last

season. "We're not far away from the Champions League positions. We've got to keep believing."

Fulham, West Brom on the brink -

The battle to beat the drop is far less competitive and could be decided this weekend if Fulham and West Brom fail to win.

West Brom boss Sam Allardyce admitted his

side need a "magic miracle and some fairy dust" to avoid the drop as they are 10 points adrift of safety with just 12 left to play for.

Allardyce has never previously been relegated from the Premier League in spells with Bolton, Newcastle, Blackburn, West Ham, Crystal Palace, Sunderland and Everton, but the great escape has been beyond him at the Baggies.

West Brom's fate could be sealed at Arsenal on Sunday, while Fulham host Burnley on Monday.

Fixtures (all times GMT)

Today

Leeds v Tottenham (1130), Sheffield United v Crystal Palace (1400), Manchester City v Chelsea (1630), Liverpool v Southampton (1915)

Tomorrow

Wolves v Brighton (1100), Aston Villa v Manchester United (1305), West Ham v Everton (1530), Arsenal v West Brom (1800)

Monday

Fulham v Burnley (1900)

AFP

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Emery regrouped and moved on; Arsenal haven't

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Athletes ready for Tulia Marathon

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

NATIONAL team athletes say they are ready for this season's Tulia Marathon which gets underway in Mbeya today.

Eight national team athletes will be among the athletes who will compete at the event which has attracted more than 1000 athletes.

The eight are sponsored by China-based firm Ocean Silent and their coach Thomas John said his athletes are well prepared for the event.

He said all the eight athletes are national team athletes who are camping at Olmotonyi in Arusha.

John mentioned the athletes lined up to compete at the Tulia Marathon as Alphonse Simbu, Emmanuel Giniiki, Joseph Panga, Jackline Sakilu, Faraja Damas, Andrew Rhobi, Herman Sullen and Lameck Misiwe.

He said the Tulia Marathon is good as the athletes will use it to prepare for the Tokyo Olympics and Commonwealth Games.

"Our athletes are in good shape ahead of Saturday's Tulia Marathon, we thank Ocean Silent for sponsoring the eight to compete at the event, the marathon will help them prepare for the coming international events," he said.

Nelson Mrashani, who is one of the organizers of the eight athletes' trip to Mbeya, hailed Ocean Silent for supporting the athletes, saying this will help in keeping the athletes in good shape.

The Tulia Marathon is a spectacular annual race held in Mbeya. It is a spectacle that gives the participants and the sponsors rare and memorable privilege of racing in the land of Mt. Kilimanjaro and Serengeti National Park.

The marathon managed to create positive attention towards supporting underprivileged groups in our societies and there has been a massive response in participation from locals, members of parliaments and corporate participants.

A pool of local and international corporate organisations did partner with the Tulia Trust last year.

Musicians outraged by BASATA's new rules

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

TANZANIA's artistes have expressed their outrage over National Arts Council (BASATA)'s new rules and regulations regarding the process of preparing and releasing music to the public.

The BASATA has decided that every musician must submit his or her song to their offices for inspection before being released to the public.

This measure aims at ensuring that values are observed and obscene music is prevented from spreading.

Muhea constituency's Member of Parliament, Hamis Mohamed Mwinjuma, popularly known as Mwana FA, opposed BASATA's new regulations saying they are not productive and they do not help any artiste.

'Mwana FA', who is also a musician, in his views, pointed out such laws should not exist and apply.

He urged the council to find another way for preventing dirty and abusive songs, revealing that the issue had arisen while he was one of the BASATA board members.

He stated he opposed the directive and he will continue to oppose it.

He pleaded with BASATA to enforce Act No.7 of 1999 which authorizes the Copyright Society of Tanzania (COSOTA) to issue licenses for sites that use music and collect the funds and provide them to artistes.

"You should not turn it into an exercise, which could be likened to the one a person goes through when he or she is processing a passport or a VISA, you are oppressing the artistes," 'Mwana FA' stated on his social media account.

Musician Ambwene Yesaya 'AY' supported 'Mwana FA', noting he would like to know if BASATA would block domestic musicians' dirty songs and allow foreign ones with the same messages.

This comes at a time a prominent domestic musician, Emmanuel Elibariki 'Nay wa Mitego', faced predicament due to the new BASATA regulations.

'Nay wa Mitego' submitted his new song titled 'Mama' to BASATA for inspection before releasing it to the public, it was nevertheless banned.

Yanga's midfielder, fullback set to miss Dar Derby



Yanga's midfielder, Carlos Fernandes. PHOTO: COURTESY OF YANGA

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

YANGA have suffered a huge blow ahead of the club's Vodacom Premier League match against Simba SC, alias 'Dar Derby', after it emerged two of the former's key players will not be available for the duel, to be played in Dar es Salaam today.

The Jangwani Street giants will face their rivals for the second time in this league campaign but the former have confirmed midfielder, Carlos Fernandes 'Carlinhos', and fullback, Yassin Mustapha, have pulled out of the squad owing to injuries.

The two players will therefore miss the clash, which will take place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium.

Yanga team doctor Sheky Mngazija has confirmed that the two players have already been allowed to leave camp as they start treatment for their injuries.

"Carlos will miss the derby as we have asked him to stay out of action for two

weeks after he picked an injury," Mngazija said.

He disclosed: "The MRI report has indicated he has a swollen leg and his treatment will take a period of two weeks, so he will not be available for the derby."

On Mustapha, Mngazija said: "He has also shown great improvement since picking his injury but will not be ready to face Simba, we don't want to rush him into the game, we have given him a few weeks to return fit and stronger."

This will be a huge blow to Yanga and 'Carlinhos', who also missed the first meeting between the two sides as they battled to a 1-1 draw.

Despite the absence of the two players, Yanga information officer Hassan Bumbuli has maintained the team is ready to get maximum points against Simba.

"As for the overall preparations are going well so the fans should have no doubt we are ready for our game against our traditional hometown rivals Simba and we are ready to beat them," Bumbuli said.

He pointed out: "We know it not be an easy match but the players have promised me they will fight to get a win, they will give their all and will battle for the fans, so I want to ask the fans to turn out in large numbers and give the boys the much-needed boost."

Yanga are currently placed second on the 18-team league table with 57 points from 27 matches, four fewer than Simba, who are topping the log with 61 points from 25 matches.

Chui Riders cricket team win Tanzania T10 League silverware

By Guardian Reporter

CHUI Riders cricketers have clinched the 2021 Tanzania T10 League's top honour, as the showdown climaxed in Dar es Salaam early this week.

The competition's final, which was set to pit Buffalo Gladiators against Chui Riders, had to be called off because of rain.

Chui Riders lifted the showpiece's silverware given they were the ones with the best performance.

The outfit ended at the top with 0.8698 in net run rate, posting victory in three outings and losing one game, the remainder was washed out and the squad shared a point with opponents.

The side had notched 355 runs and gave away 369 runs.

Second-placed Buffalo Gladiators had 1.0179 in net run rate, they came out victorious in two fixtures and suffered loss in one.

Two of the squad's fixtures were called off because of rain.

Rhino Challengers and Simba Heroes came third and fourth respectively after completion of league fixtures.



Chui Riders cricketers pictured with Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA)'s Chairman, Premji Pindoria (standing 8th R), and TCA's vice-chairman, Shaheed Dhanani (standing fifth R), after the completion of this year's TCA-organized 2021 Tanzania T10 League in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday. PHOTO: COURTESY OF TCA

Tembo Rangers and Twiga Masters ended fifth and sixth respectively. Tembo Rangers ended with one victory and two losses in five games.

Twiga Masters ended without notching victory, conceding losses in two outings and three clashes were called off.

Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) information officer,

Atif Salim, noted: "As the rains have been pouring down heavily today as well, the final is abandoned."

He pointed out: "Chui Riders have emerged as champions of the first edition with a superior finish in group against the Buffalo Gladiators."

The Tanzania T10 League's winners raked in 1m/- in cash

prize, the second-placed Buffalo Gladiators walked away with 500,000/-.

Chui Riders outfit moreover held sway in individual awards, given the squad's skipper, Zafar Khan, was voted as the show-down's best batsman.

Chui Riders' Jitin Singh laid his hands on the tournament's best all-rounder prize.

The showpiece's best bowler honour went to Ramesh Alluri of Simba Heroes squad.

Promising all-rounder Ivan Ismail of Simba Heroes team was voted as the best fielder.

The 10-over format showpiece, which started on April 25, was organized by TCA in an effort to step up the game's promotion at the domestic level.

The tournament was organized in memory of Tanzania's fifth term President, the late John Pombe Magufuli, with all matches taking place at Leaders Club's venue.

Six sides, namely Rhino Challengers, Buffalo Gladiators, Tembo Rangers, Chui Riders, Simba Heroes and Twiga Masters, took part in the showdown.

The Tanzania T10 League's sponsors, TCA information officer Atif Salim stated, are GI Security Group Limited, KFC, Sayona Drinks Ltd, Pepsi and Hitech Sai Health Care Centre.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

