



National Pg 2 Covid-19 prevention and control measures



National Pg 4 Readiness to support flood victims



National Pg 6 Call for blueprints on TIC website



National Pg 7 Coronavirus disease a big challenge



Study: Masks check coronavirus spread

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

FACE masks could help limit the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to researchers who studied the effect of surgical masks on the transmission of other corona and flu viruses.

In the study, the use of surgical masks by sufferers significantly reduced the number of flu viruses detectable in droplets released through breathing and coughing.

It also reduced the number of seasonal coronaviruses - among the causes of common colds - detectable in the air as suspended microdroplets, or aerosols. The study did not look at the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2.

"Further research is needed to determine whether masks can specifically prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-2," the scientists said.

The research, published in the journal Nature Medicine, coincides with the pandemic of COVID-19 respiratory disease, which has infected more than a million people worldwide and killed more than 53,000



Further research is needed to determine whether masks can specifically prevent the transmission of SARS-CoV-2, the scientists said

Benjamin Cowling (pictured), the professor who led the study at the World Health Organization (WHO) collaborating centre for infectious disease epidemiology in Hong Kong, said its findings could be extrapolated to simpler cotton masks.

"My expert view is that cloth or cotton masks would have an effect, but maybe slightly less of an effect than a surgical mask properly worn," he said in a telephone interview. "And in terms of COVID-19, we're looking at every possible measure that could help."

Until now, there has been little robust scientific evidence on the effectiveness of face masks in slowing transmission of respiratory diseases.

The WHO says masks should be worn by anyone with symptoms such as cough or fever, or anyone caring for a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 case, but does not advise healthy people to wear them in everyday situations.

There is some evidence, however, to suggest that the rapid spread of the SARS-CoV-2 coronavirus is due at least in part to the fact that it can be transmitted by people showing no symptoms.

Rupert Beale, a specialist in infection biology at London's Francis Crick Institute

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UDSM hostels to house quarantined travellers

By Guardian Reporter



Bishop Dr Dickson Chilongani (2nd-L) of the Anglican Church's Dodoma Diocese pictured in Dodoma city yesterday exchanging greetings in style with a member of the congregation, as a precaution against the spread of Covid-19 infections. This was shortly after Palm Sunday mass. Photo: Correspondent Peter Mkwavila

UNIVERSITY of Dar es Salaam students' hostels popularly known as Magufuli Hostels will now be used to host all travellers from countries hit by Covid-19 arriving in Dar es Salaam by air or ship as they undergo a mandatory 14-day quarantine.

Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children minister Ummu Mwalimu said when inspecting the hostels yesterday that the arrivals will be required to stay at the hostels located in the city's Ubungu suburb, just meters from the university's main (Hill) campus.

"The idea is to ensure that we control movements of the travelers," she said, citing reports of a traveller under quarantine in a Dar es Salaam hotel having escaped only to be found hiding in Iringa.

She elaborated: "To ensure that Tanzanians are protected from the coronavirus disease, we have decided to bring all travellers to one area which will be guarded around the clock. The regional commissioner (RC), who doubles as the chairman of the regional security committee, will be in charge of the situation in collaboration with my ministry."

The minister was emphatic that arrivals to be taken to the hostels would not be confirmed or presumed as patients, noting that the government would take them there "only because they come from countries hit by Covid-19".

"They will be at the hostels for 14 days and will be tested (for Covid-19 symptoms), with those found negative left to proceed home and those found positive taken to hospital," said minister Mwalimu.

She further explained that Tanzania has so far

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'Malawian' hid \$10,000 in cash, valid voter card

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

AUTHORITIES in Mbeya Region are holding a Malawian passport holder for attempting to leave the country via Songwe International Airport with undeclared USD 30,000 (68.1m/-) and being in possession of Tanzanian voter registration card.

Regional Immigration Officer, Senior Assistant Commissioner Msafiri Shomari, told reporters yesterday that Tiddy Mwaisemba (48) is being questioned on how he entered the country in the first place, the source of the money and why he registered as a voter in Tanzania while holding a Malawian passport.

The officer said the voter's card was verified as a

valid document issued by the Tanzania National Electoral Commission (NEC), raising questions about the suspect's citizenship.

Shomari said that the law on foreign currency demands that any person coming to Tanzania with a lot of foreign currency must follow procedures at entry point by declaring the money.

"Voter's card issued by NEC is a right only for Tanzanians hence for a non-Tanzanian to possess it means he lied to NEC hence we shall send him to court," he said.

For his part Mwaisemba confessed that he was a Malawian citizen by registration, but he was

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'Covid-19 has affected many water projects'

By Guardian Reporter

WATER projects whose water pumps were imported and installation experts from South Africa failed to come due to the Covid-19 pandemic will now be installed by local engineers.

Water Minister Prof Makame Mbarawa said this yesterday when completing a tour of Pangani and Muheza districts, affirming that contractors

will be addressed to send instruction manuals to enable other people to install the pumps.

He said he cannot say they should wait for foreign experts to come as it is not known when pandemic restrictions will be waived but the government has to decide other alternatives.

"Even if the South Africans had come they still would have instructed our local experts to do the

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SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

Know the facts about coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and help stop the spread of rumors.

FACT 1 Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.
Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

FACT 2 For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.
Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

FACT 3 Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.
For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.



FACT 4 There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Stay home when you are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

FACT 5 You can help stop COVID-19 by knowing the signs and symptoms:

- Fever
 - Cough
 - Shortness of breath
- Seek medical advice if you
- Develop symptoms
- AND
- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

[cdc.gov/COVID-19](https://www.cdc.gov/COVID-19)



UDSM hostels to house quarantined travellers

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20 confirmed cases of the diseases, with one fatality and three recoveries.

Dar es Salaam RC Paul Makonda meanwhile applauded the Health ministry for the manner in which it was responding to the pandemic since it emerged in Wuhan, China, last December, and has since spread to 177 countries and regions globally.

He assured the minister of maximum diligence in implementing the government's directives on the travellers who would be under quarantine at the UDSM hostels.

Meanwhile, Zanzibar Health minister Hamad Rashid Mohammed yesterday confirmed two new Covid-19 cases on the Isles, bringing the number of patients there to seven.

In a signed statement, Mohammed said that both patients are male Tanzanians and are responding well to

treatment.

According to the Zanzibar minister, one is a 33-year-old school teacher from Tanga who entered Zanzibar on March 18 through Mkokotoni Port and the other is a 27-year-old hotel employee who was on vacation in Tanga in February and returned to Zanzibar on March 13 also through Mkokotoni Port.

"Our officers are making a close follow-up on all people who mingled with the two patients," he said.

Following the global Covid-19 outbreaks, Zanzibar has banned international flights from landing at the Sheikh Abeid Amani Karume Airport.

She also assured that so far, Tanzania has 20 confirmed cases of coronavirus, one fatality and three recoveries



East African Legislative Assembly member Pamela Maasai (R) has a word with customs officials at Holili in Rombo District, Kilimanjaro Region, at the weekend when touring the site set aside for the construction of a coronavirus centre. Photo: Correspondent Asraji Mvungi

Study: Masks check coronavirus spread

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who was not directly involved in Cowling's work, said the study offered "strong and compelling evidence" for mask wearing as a means of reducing transmission of some viruses, but that

they were not a magic bullet.

"Mask wearing does not completely prevent transmission and cannot be relied on as a sole measure," he said, "but, combined with other social distancing measures, should form part of the 'exit strategy' from lockdown".

'Covid-19 has affected many water projects'

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job. The government only wants them to give permission to do so to rescue the projects affected by the pandemic," he said.

He said that Covid-19 has come and one item for its prevention is water, hence it is time for the water ministry to do the work fast.

In regard to local procurement experts, the ministry has found that there is a challenge of dilly dallying in implementation, he said.

"You will find work that should have been done in two months takes six months, and a good example here is that the money came last November but up to now pipes have not arrived while there are some regions - Mbeya, Iringa and other areas - where the projects are 70 percent complete," he elaborated.

In Tanga up to now nothing has been done, he pointed out, underlining that the responsible officials will be transferred to other areas and if they

fail to correct themselves there they will be fired.

Earlier, when presenting a report on Ubungu and Mkwajuni water projects, the Acting Manager for the Rural Water and Sanitation Agency (RUWASA) in Pangani District, Eng Sande Batakanwa told Prof Mbarawa that the main challenge was delivery of pumps, along with motors and transformer removed by Tanesco after the project was stuck.

If they get these items the residents will start getting water, he added.

'Malawian' hid \$10,000 in cash, valid voter card

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born in Kyela District in Mbeya Region and decided to be a citizen of Malawi after he invested a lot in that country.

He said in his family he is the only one who is a Malawian citizen, the rest of his family live in Dar es Salaam and he visits them from time to time.

He said the money he was found with is what had remained after purchase of various goods for sale in

Malawi and that he acquired the NEC voter's card because he likes President John Magufuli.

"I have six children all of who live in Dar es Salaam with my wife all are Tanzanians as well as my parents. I am the only one who is a Malawian. But I come to buy goods here for sale in Malawi," he said.

The Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) in Mbeya Region said it was an offence under the law for anybody

to import foreign currency without a permit. Its punishment is confiscation of the currency or deducted 10 percent depending on the amount involved.

TRA Taxpayers Education regional official Selepio Luanda said whoever is arrested upon entering Tanzania with foreign currency not exceeding USD 10,000 will be penalized 10 percent of the amount. If the currency impounded is in excess of USD 10,000 the whole of it will be confiscated, he added.



Mussa Hassan Zungu (R), Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and the Environment), has an audience at the weekend with people living near flood-prone Lake Bosutu zone areas in Hanang District on the damage and destruction floodwaters have inflicted on property and infrastructure. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Malawi president and ministers take 10 pc salary cut to fight coronavirus

LILONGWE

MALAWI'S president and cabinet will take a 10% salary cut and redirect the money towards the fight against coronavirus, President Peter Mutharika said on Saturday as he announced a stimulus package in an address on state television.

Mutharika announced a number of measures aimed at cushioning small- and medium-sized businesses, including tax breaks, a reduction in fuel prices and an increase in risk allowances for health workers.

Mutharika also ordered tobacco markets to be opened and allowed to operate without disruption to protect small farmers and bolster foreign currency receipts. Tobacco is Malawi's chief foreign currency earner.

"The coronavirus attack has a huge negative impact on the economy and businesses everywhere. There are many business people and industry players who are uncertain about the situation as it is unfolding. I know that everyone is worried," he said.

"Therefore, government will take measures to protect jobs and incomes, protect businesses and ensure continuity of the supply chain and the survival of the economy."

Amongst other measures, the president directed the Reserve Bank of Malawi to allow banks to offer a

three-month moratorium on interest payments on loans to small- and medium-sized businesses.

He also ordered the country's Competition and Fair Trading Commission to put in place strict monitoring of price controls and punish anyone found increasing prices at the expense of Malawians.

"The government will continue monitoring and review situation as it unfolds," Mutharika said.

He also ordered all non-essential service providers in both the government and private sector to work from home with immediate effect.

On Thursday, Malawi recorded its first three confirmed cases of the coronavirus. On Saturday, the number rose to four.

The President also directed the central bank to "cushion the foreign exchange market to ensure availability of forex and stability of the foreign exchange rate," and work on an emergency liquidity assistance framework to support banks in the event of worsening liquidity conditions.

The government will also increase loans under the Malawi Enterprise Development Fund that will help micro, small and medium scale businesses that have been seriously affected by the pandemic to 15 billion Malawi kwacha (\$20.69 million) from 12 billion kwacha.

'We must all adhere to infection prevention and control measures'

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

RUVUMA Regional Commissioner, Christina Mndeme has called upon the residents to continue adhering to recommended Covid-19 preventive measures.

Mndeme made the call here yesterday when speaking to business people and

owners of passenger vehicles as part of campaign to educate the residents on how to protect themselves from the global pandemic.

The RC also inspected various places including the main Songea market and bus stand to see how people take precautions against coronavirus. She insisted that if every

individual takes precaution, it will be easy to defeat the disease which has so far killed thousands of people globally.

She said the government will take measures against anyone refusing to use sanitizers or wash hands especially those working at congested places such as markets and bus

stands.

"We will not tolerate anyone declining government orders and recommendations on how to prevent the pandemic. We must all wash our hands frequently with running water or using sanitizers", said the Regional Commissioner.

Mndeme insisted on drivers of

commuter vehicles to ensure all the passengers are seated to control spreading of the disease.

She warned some people who have been diluting soap and sanitizers placed at entrance of their shops, insisting officials will be conducting patrols to ensure all the shops and business premises have the hand

washing facilities.

Chairman of business people at the Songea main market, Leonadi Chunga promised to make sure all the preventive measures were followed by both, buyers and sellers. He said they have put had washing facilities at different places within the market as recommended by health experts.



Juin Company Ltd contractor Innocent Bernard (L) briefs Water minister Prof Makame Mbarawa (R) yesterday on a tank the firm is building in partial implementation of a Muheza District water supply project. Photo: Correspondent Steven William

Govt rules out closure of border over Covid-19

By Guardian Correspondent, Kyela

THE government is not considering closing its borders with neighbouring countries affected with coronavirus disease as the move may affect businesses and people's livelihoods.

Addressing residents at the border post during the visit of Mbeya region's defense and security committee at the weekend, regional commissioner Albert Chalamila said there are procedures in place to protect borders.

He said that the Tanzania-Malawi border will not be closed despite the fact that Malawi is the latest country to be hit by coronavirus. Other neighboring countries with confirmed cases of Covid-19 are Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, DRC and Zambia.

According to Chalamila, businesses at the busy Kasumulu border post in Kyela district will go on as usual with adherence to the recommended measures to minimise the risk of fuelling the spread of Covid-19.

He said Tanzanians who will travel to Malawi conduct any businesses or any other purposes, upon return they will be quarantined for 14 days after which he will be screened and if not without Covid-19 infections will be released.

The RC said there is a special regional committee that has been established to monitor and battle the pandemic's infections.

"Feel free to travel to Malawi but remember when you return you will be isolated for 14 days at your own expenses," Chalamila said.

He said up to now no one has been found with Covid-19 infection in Mbeya region and called on the wananchi to abide by the directives and guidelines issued by health experts.

He said various centres have been established in every district in the region for admitting Covid-19 patients.

For his part, the Mbeya regional medical officer (RMO), Dr Salum Manyatta said as of now they continue to educate residents on how to protect themselves against the disease through the media and physically visiting them in their areas.

He said all passenger buses have been ordered to have running water and soap for passengers to wash their hands before boarding the vehicles.

He also pleaded with the wananchi to avoid shaking hands or hugging when greeting each other as the habit could cause infections.

"We should ignore what other people who are unprofessional say about the pandemic as these are only bent in misleading," said Dr Manyatta.

However some motorcycle (bodaboda) owners complained that some officials were preventing them to conduct business at the Kasumulu Border post while the government had given them green light to do so.

One bodaboda operator Jumanne Mwajumba said they are prevented to do business at the border and those going against are arrested by the police and others fined.

So far, Tanzania has 20 confirmed cases of coronavirus, one fatality and three recoveries.

MP urges govt to ensure free treatment of opportunistic infections in adults, youth

By Getrude Mbago

SPECIAL SEATS legislator (Chadema) Lucy Owenya has called on the government to provide free treatment of opportunistic infections (OIs) among adults and adolescents living with HIV/AIDS in the country.

According to her, as the country struggles to contain the spread of coronavirus infections, it should also not forget about the fight against HIV/AIDS.

Owenya told the House during the

weekend that people living with HIV/AIDS have been falling sick regularly due to opportunistic infections but they find it hard to get treatment due to lack of funds.

Opportunistic infections are infections that occur more frequently and are more severe in people with weakened immune systems, including people living with HIV and they are normally caused by a variety of germs such as viruses, bacteria, fungi, and parasites.

She said that apart from providing

them with free Antiretroviral (ARV) drugs, it is high time also for the government to come up with strong strategy to enable the group enjoy other health services for free in all dispensaries, health centres and hospitals.

"People HIV infection are vulnerable to OIs due to weakened immune system...most of the patients do not engage in income generating activities making them to live a very vulnerable life especially those in rural areas. This should be taken into high

consideration as failure to support this group will continue to affect the country's manpower," she said.

The lawmaker cited an example of countries like Argentina and Brazil which had succeeded to fight the spread of HIV/AIDS as well as reducing mortality rate due to intensive investment they made including providing free medical services to people living with HIV/AIDS.

"Provision of free medical treatment to the groups will also stimulate people to check their health status. It

is the responsibility of every one of us, individually and collectively, to prevent new HIV infections. We therefore appeal to the country as whole to ensure that the next generation is free from HIV, through prevention measures, regular testing and treatment so as to achieve the country's goals by 2030," she said.

Owenya further noted that as of 2018, it was reported approximately 1.6 million people were living with HIV/AIDS in the country with the prevalence rate standing at 4.6 percent to youth aged between 15-49 whereby

new infections were 72,000 and 24,000 deaths per year.

"As per current reports, at least 225 people get infected with HIV every day and 90 percent of them are youth, new infections per month stand at 6,750 which means that nine people get infected every one hour," she noted.

The legislator added that with the shocking statistics, it requires for the government to come up with an emergence strategy to fight the vice and rescue the country's generation and manpower.

'Start relocating following high water levels'

By Guardian Correspondent,

Singida

AUTHORITIES of the central water basin in Singida region have urged people residing near water sources to start relocating following high water levels in three major lakes because of ongoing (masika) rains.

The authorities were concerned that the situation may result into floods and wreak havoc to those living near the water sources as well as around the Kindai, Singidani and Mungang lakes whose water had started overflowing.

The board of the central water basin also urged people residing or conducting human activities within 60 meters from the sources to vacate as it is prohibited in accordance with the Water Supply and Sanitation Act, 2009.

"The rains are likely to continue for a longer period according to weather forecast by the Tanzania Meteorological Agency (TMA), may I request you to relocate

before disasters happen", said William Mabula, water officer at the central drainage basin.

He said they are currently marking water levels at the three rivers, an exercise that will continue throughout the rainy season. He said the aim is to measure water levels as required by the law that governs conservation of lakes in the country.

Senior community development officer, Nelea Bundala insisted the situation is worrisome and may cause disasters to the residents living near the lakes. He said relocation is not an option because the area

has this year received above normal rainfall resulting into flooding in most places.

"You must relocate for your own safety, it is better to take precautions before disasters happen because floods will submerge your houses and destroy your properties", he said noting the rains had so far destroyed infrastructures including roads.

Utemini ward leader, Juma Kanka said they have already started to experience floods in some areas where houses and factories had been submerged. He said the most of the roads are also impassable including the Magereza - Mwanakoko road.



UNHCR
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés

TENDER CANCELLATION NOTICE

Invitation to bid: No. ITB/2020/SUP/002

ESTABLISHMENT OF FRAME AGREEMENT(S) FOR THE SUPPLY OF DIESEL FUEL – BULK DELIVERY


Reference is made to above subject invitation to bid.

Please note that the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Representation Office in Tanzania, has decided to cancel and withdraw the tender ITB/2020/SUP/002 for Establishment of Frame Agreement(s) for the Supply of Diesel Fuel – Bulk Delivery until further notice. The reason for cancellation of this tender is due to the current situation of COVID-19 pandemic.

We appreciate your interest in the tender and your decision to work with us. This is truly a lost opportunity. However, we remain interested in doing business together in future ventures should the occasion arise.

If you had already submitted your offer, please be advised to come and collect your documents from our offices.

Thank you.



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TOL GASES LTD (TANZANIA OXYGEN) wishes to inform all Customers and Distributors and the general public that the Company intends to commence a nationwide exercise of collecting all its oxygen cylinders currently not in use.


The exercise aims at collecting over 5000 cylinders to fill them with medical oxygen for use in hospitals.

If you have TOL cylinders in your possession or know the whereabouts of TOL cylinders, and you have not bought oxygen from TOL Gases in the last two months, you are required to kindly contact the numbers given below stating your location and the number of cylinders in your possession within three days of this notice.

TOL will make arrangements to collect the cylinders from your site and refund your cylinder deposit where applicable.

It is our hope that you will accord this exercise your utmost cooperation.

Numbers: **Baraka Urasa..... 0783 480463**
Glory Theodore.....06873 09237
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LOSS OF LIFE POLICY
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Application has been made to this company for the issue of duplicate of the above numbered policies, the originals having been reported as lost or misplaced. Notice is hereby given that unless objection is lodged to the contrary at the office of the company within thirty days from the date of this notice, duplicate policies will be issued, which will be sole evidence of the contract.

Dated at Dar es Salaam, 12th March 2020



156906



Catholic Church members in Arusha city hold palm leaves yesterday after attending Palm Sunday (the Sunday before Easter) mass. Photo: Correspondent Cynthia Mwilolezi

Govt pledges readiness to support flood victims

By Guardian Correspondent, Manyara

THE government has pledged to take immediate steps to help residents living around Lake Basotu in Hanang District, Manyara region whose settlements had been surrounded by floodwaters.

The minister of state in the Vice President's Office (Union Affairs and Environment) Mussa Zungu gave the pledge yesterday during his visit to the areas that had been hit by floodwaters following the ongoing rains in the country.

During his visit, Zungu who was accompanied by experts from the National Environmental Management Council (NEMC) said the government will use the experts to conduct research and come up with a permanent solution.

Speaking to the flood victims, Zungu promised to consult relevant ministries for implementation.

"We have examined the problem, it calls for immediate attention and expertise. We shall take steps to address the problem. Whole lake area is filled with sediment that made its water overflow", he said.

The Hanang district commissioner Joseph Mkirikiti said the effects from the floods include the destruction of infrastructures such as people's settlements being surrounded by

floodwaters.

He added that for about three weeks now, communication between the area and Hydom has been cut off after the road along the lake was flooded.

He asked for relevant authorities to take immediate steps to rescue the wananchi from more hardships from the floods. "It will be recalled that recently the government directed the Hydom-Katesh road should not be used due to the floods

NEMC acting director of environment research and conservation Lilian Lukambuzi said the problem has also been exacerbated by human activities in and around the lake.

She said: "Research is needed as the minister said including putting in place short and long term plans to rescue the lake.

She said among the steps that should be taken immediately is to stop human activities in the areas that had been hit. The Hanang Member of Parliament (MP) Dr Mary Nagu expressed fears over the lake being filled with sediment from rivers water flowing into it.

She thanked the minister for coming to the area with NEMC experts to see for themselves and hoped that something will be done.

According to the MP, Lake Basotu is the main source of water for the people of Hanang district.

TEMESA directed to follow up construction of new Mafia ferry

By Guardian Reporter

THE chairman of the advisory board of tanzania electrical, mechanical and electronics services agency (TEMESA) Prof Idrissa Mshoro has directed the agency's leadership to make sure they closely follow up the construction and completion of the new ferry that will offer services between Mafia Island and Nyamisati in Coast region.

Prof Mshoro issued the directives at the weekend during his visit to various projects being implemented by TEMESA in the current FY 2019/20 including the construction and renovation of the manager's office and the Vingunguti workshop in Dar es Salaam, renovation of MV Kigamboni ferry, extension of passengers shed for MV Kigamboni and the purchase of the new ferry to ply between Mafia and

Nyamisati.

In the visit Prof Mshoro was accompanied by TEMESA advisory board members.

The Mafia-Nyamisati ferry was supposed to be completed in April this year but various challenges including the eruption of Covid-19 pandemic has caused delay in the procurement of vital spares. The ferry is now set for completion in June.

The ferry is being built by a local firm -- Songoro Marine Transport Boatyard at a cost of 5.3b/- without VAT.

Earlier TEMESA advisory board members visited Dar es Salaam regional workshop at Vingunguti and was satisfied with the ongoing construction and renovation of the manager's office, saying despite many challenges including the ongoing rains the contractor intends to hand over the

project at the end of April this year. The project will cost 234m/-.

The board members also inspected the extension work of the passengers' shed at Kigamboni that will cost 260m/- which is slated for completion in June this year.

In regard to repairs to MV Kigamboni ferry, the board members hailed the contractor -- Songoro Marine Transport Boatyard for

building various ferries in the country but also for installing two new engines for MV Kigamboni ferry.

On his part, TEMESA managing director eng Japhet Maselle said the coming of MV Kigamboni ferry will enable the agency to remove any ferry among the three ferries plying between Magogoni and Kigamboni for repairs whenever such needs arise.

AfDB approves gender equality trust fund and risk-sharing mechanism to improve women's economic empowerment in Africa

By Special Correspondent, Abidjan

THE Board of Directors of the African Development Bank Group has approved a new Gender Equality Trust Fund (GETF) aimed at pushing forward gender equality and women's empowerment across the continent.

Funded by donors, the GETF will support the delivery and scale-up of the Bank's Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA) programme and promote gender transformative lending and non-lending operations. It is the first thematic fund on gender in the Bank Group's history. The Fund will be established for an initial period of 10 years.

AFAWA is the Bank's flagship pan-African initiative which aims to bridge the \$42 billion financing gap facing women in Africa. Through AFAWA, the Bank is spearheading a major push to unlock women's entrepreneurial capacity and economic participation for maximum development impact.

Also on Tuesday 31 March, the Board of Directors of the Bank approved a Risk-Sharing Mechanism - an innovative financial instrument to de-risk women-empowered businesses, enhance their profile with banks and support them to grow and thrive as entrepreneurs.

Anchor investors in the GETF are the governments of France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

"It's a great day for us as a Bank. It is a great day for the continent and the women of Africa as this facility provides innovative ways to tackle the access to finance challenges for African women business owners," said African Development Bank President Akinwumi Adesina.

The Africa Guarantee Fund (AGF) has been chosen as the first implementing partner to facilitate access to finance for women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). AGF is a pan-African entity that provides financial institutions with guarantees and other

financial products to support SMEs in Africa. AGF has a network spread out over 42 African countries and 150-plus financial institutions, which AFAWA will leverage. This first transaction is expected to unlock up to \$2 billion in credit for women-empowered businesses across the continent.

Vanessa Mounzar, Bank Director, Gender, Women and Civil Society, described the approval as "the largest effort ever to bridge the gap in access to finance for women in Africa's history" and said the Fund's resources and the Risk-Sharing Mechanism would prioritize women's economic empowerment and high-impact women's initiatives.

Mounzar said the partnership with AGF is a starting point for mobilizing other financial institutions and increasing access to finance for women entrepreneurs on the continent.

Apart from the G7 donors and the Netherlands, other countries are showing strong interest in contributing to the initiative, including Rwanda and Sweden. The Bank Group will continue to mobilize resources in order to unlock \$5 billion worth of financing for women-empowered businesses in Africa. AFAWA is also an implementing partner of the Women Entrepreneurship Finance (We-Fi) Initiative.



It's a great day for us as a Bank. It is a great day for the continent and the women of Africa as this facility provides innovative ways to tackle the access to finance challenges for African women business owners



Convoy of Hope International Tanzania officer Winfrida Roman (R) looks on as an orphanage centre official washes his hands during a Covid-19 sensitisation session in Arusha city yesterday. Shortly later, the charity presented foodstuffs and various other items for use by the 530 children cared for at the facility. Photo: Correspondent Cynthia Mwilolezi

TPSF to evaluate corona impact on economy

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) -- the umbrella association of the private sector -- is conducting a survey to assess the impact of corona pandemic on Tanzanian economy, the TPSF chairperson, Angelina Ngalula has said.

She told reporters in Dar es Salaam recently that the foundation would use its 14 clusters to make successful and useful appraisal. The clusters are agriculture, industries, tourism, financial institutions, minerals,

services, women entrepreneurs, Zanzibar traders, construction and engineering, oil and gas, transportation, companies, trade and vending.

"We have our 14 clusters to feed us information. We shall appoint experts to evaluate the impact of the pandemic on the activities of clusters. Then we shall forward the expert views to the government for intervention to help highly hit clusters," she explained.

She called on members of business community and employers to be patient as the foundation assesses the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on all

sectors of the economy, appealing to members refrain from doing their own assessments and sending complaints to the government.

The chairperson said agriculture and tourism clusters, especially horticulture, had been hit hard by the pandemic because clusters were dependent heavily on external factors and activities in other nations have been stopped. She said closure of industries and airports in other countries affected the businesses of the two clusters.

The chairman said the foundation

and the government were working jointly to find remedial measures.

"Let our members be patient, for TPSF is in the forefront and is cooperating with the government, in the struggle to ensure the economy remains on sound footing," she assured, emphasizing the joint efforts were heading in the right direction.

Ngalula said TPSF has taken several steps that include providing education on how the Covid-19 virus is spread and encouraging stakeholders to provide resources to fight the pandemic and in protecting workers.

‘Storage, sale of petrol in homes pose several risks’

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

RESIDENTS of Ulowa Ward in Ushetu district, Shinyanga region have complained about the risks of some dealers to store and sell petrol in residential houses.

Speaking to reporters at the weekend they said the dealers endanger their own lives and of those surrounding them due to the highly inflammable nature of the fuel.

One of the residents Mlekwa Kashindy said of late there has been rampant storage of fuel in residential areas that endangers the lives of residents of the ward.

“We do not oppose the trading in fuel but what we fear are the consequences that may occur from storage of petrol as many of those in the vicinity are often unaware of the inflammable fuel within their midst to take precautions,” Kashindy said.

Ulowa Ward Councilor Paschal Mayenga said apart from fuel trade posing danger to people’s lives, it is also conducted illegally as the dealers thereof do not pay due taxes to the Tanzania Revenue Authority and the district council.

“Years ago there was one man who stored petrol inside a guest house. Then two people broke in and started stealing the fuel using gallons while unknowingly a person who was smoking a cigarette approached and then suddenly there was an explosion that killed two people and the entire house was gutted down,” he said.

From these complaints TRA authorities in Kahama district made a follow up and were able to seize 13 drums of petrol in the house of one businessman, John Jaji whose house is surrounded by other residents.

The Kahama district commissioner Annamringi Macha said the Fire Brigade and Rescue Services, in conjunction with the police and Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) will conduct a special operation to apprehend who rampantly trade in fuel or those storing it in residential areas as there are laid down procedures for selling fuel other than via petrol stations.

When approached for comment the Shinyanga Regional Police commander Deborah Magiligimba said currently they are already conducting a special operation to nab all those selling fuel illegally.

EWURA public relations officer Titus Kago said they dealers with fuel storage facilities and petrol stations are licensed but they also issue special permits to minor fuel selling centres, otherwise it is illegal for anyone to store or sell fuel in residential areas.

“We do not oppose the trading in fuel but what we fear are the consequences that may occur from storage of petrol as many of those in the vicinity are often unaware of the inflammable fuel within their midst to take precautions”



This car was involved in an accident in Old Shinyanga at the weekend. It then skidded into the small ‘dam’, leaving the four people on board dead. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

‘Tanzanians must develop good investor relations’

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

The investment sector had made a significant contribution in the country’s socio-economic development due to many investors paying taxes and increased employment opportunities which in turn had driven the country’s economic development as well as wananchi’s livelihoods.

This was expressed at the weekend by the manager of Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) Venance Mashiba when he spoke to journalists on the situation of investments in the southern highlands regions.

Mashiba said the wananchi are

supposed to develop good relations with investors in the areas they live as many of them have been big beneficiaries from the investors via employment opportunities and other social services.

He said the TIC office has been making extra efforts to make sure it mobilizes investors within and outside the country to come and invest in the southern highlands regions since there are many investment opportunities in the areas, including agriculture. “Apart from agriculture, the regions have many other opportunities including mining and food processing hence it was time for local and foreign investors

to grab the opportunities,” he said.

He said it was now time for local investors to go to TIC centres for more information about the available investment opportunities and added that local investors need to have USD 100,000 as capital while for foreign ones the initial capital is USD 500,000.

“TIC’s aim is to see investors both investors and the government benefit from the country’s investments, as well as the wananchi in the areas where they had invested,” he added.

He said the TIC zonal office has been making efforts mobilise Zambia and Malawi based investors come to invest in the southern highlands

regions as well as other areas of the country and that last year there was a huge investment forum in Mbeya that brought together investors from Malawi and Tanzania.

Mashiba said the TIC office has very good relations with other government institutions whose aim is to see investors do not experience obstacles while pursuing investment opportunities.

He also congratulated regional and district commissioners in regions served by TIC office from their efforts in mobilising prospective investors in their areas including those from neighbouring countries.

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'Ilemela playing leadership role in issuance of land title deeds'

By Guardian Correspondent, Ilemela

ILEMELA district in Mwanza region is leading in land surveying, formalisation and issuance of title deeds, according to Deputy Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development, Dr Angelina Mabula.

According to her, authorities in the district had so far prepared 58,000 land use diagrams, surveyed a total of 52,000 land plots and issuance of 1,508 title deeds. She expressed satisfaction with the land formalisation process which will also help to reduce disputes.

The deputy minister reminded private firms doing land surveying to make sure they complete formalisation of the remaining areas as per directives issued by Land Minister, William Lukuvi. She insisted the government would want to see all the areas within the district are surveyed with property owners given title deeds.

Mwanza city planning officer, Deogratias Kalemenze said previously in the 1990s people who constructed houses on un-surveyed plots were required to demolish them, but now the government has simplified the process whereas owners pay a small sum to facilitate formalisation of the areas as well as processing documents.

"We now formalise all the areas including residential premises which were previously not surveyed", said Kalemenze.

Acting district executive director who is also the district land officer, Shukran Kyando informed the deputy minister that they are progressing well with the land formalisation process despite some challenges including lack of enough

payments from the residents.

He said they already announced a grace period of 30 days for the residents to complete payments for surveying and formalisation processes.

One of the residents, Veronica Byengo from Ghana Street thanked the government for issuing them with title deeds insisting formalisation of land will reduce disputes. She said the title deeds will also help them to access loans from banks and financial institutions.

Last year, the Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlement Development, William Lukuvi announced to cut down expenses of surveying and formalisation of land from the current 250,000/- to 150,000/-.

According to him, the move came following a number of complaints from people claiming that the charges were too high thus making most of them leave their land informal for years.

He was also concerned that over 70 per cent of land owners in the country are not recognised by the government and state was losing lot of incomes.

Lukuvi called on all land owners whose lands were yet to be formalised to utilize the opportunity so as to live comfortably and happily.



We now formalise all the areas including residential premises which were previously not surveyed



Morogoro Municipal Council employee Stephen Gabi (in goggles) sprays a disinfectant at the entrance of Morogoro municipality's Msamvu bus terminal yesterday as a precaution against the spread of Covid-19 infections. Photo: Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

TWELVE regions have been tasked to prepare investment guidelines and ensure they are posted on the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) website in the next six months

Presenting the budget speech of the PMO here, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa called on the regions to emulate 14 regions that had already published their investment guidelines, namely Ruvuma, Songwe, Coast, Lindi, Kagera, Mtwara, Geita, Kilimanjaro, Simiyu, Manyara, Dodoma, Mwanza, Kigoma and

12 regions ordered to make investment blueprints on TIC website by September

Morogoro regions.

The prime minister said Tanzania was geographically well-placed to conduct businesses with world, explaining that regions were therefore obliged to expose investment opportunities to the rest of the world and have the opportunities posted on the TIC website.

"When we have investment guidelines exposed to the rest of

the world, it is easy for prospective investors to know the opportunities available and identify areas of their choice for investments," he told the House.

The prime minister gave the 12 regions until September, this year to have their investment guidelines posted on the TIC website. He said TIC was the institution tasked to promote investment opportunities available in

Tanzania.

The TIC was a one-stop centre because, he said, an investor is served by representatives of 10 institutions under a single roof.

Until February this year, the PM said, some 146 investment projects had been registered, with an estimated total value of 1,514.57 million US dollars that are expected to generate 26,384 direct jobs.

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Railways Corporation (TRC) has launched a new simplified electronic ticketing system that will see the firm enhancing revenue collections as well as efficiency.

The e-ticketing system was launched over the weekend by Minister for Works, Transport and Communications, Eng Isaac Kamwele during an event that was attended by TRC board chairman, Prof John Kondoro and several government officials.

Eng Kamwele was optimistic that TRC will improve efficiency and control expenditures. He said the government had recognised the importance of using technology in service delivery, including ticketing.

He applauded the corporation for coming up with the electronic ticketing and e-cargo systems which had been designed in collaboration with e-government agency.

"We are now doing without the manual tickets", said the minister noting that in 2018/2019 TRC was

TRC ventures into e-ticketing to boost revenue collections

collected 39.7bn/- but collections had now increased to 44.7bn/-.

TRC board chairman, Prof John Kondoro said the government had directed the firm to establish an e-ticketing system in December last year. He said they had completed installation of the system, and they are working on other directives which he said are meant to improve efficiency in service delivery.

He said the system was designed by local experts from TRC and e-government agency thus enabling the firm to save monies which were to be paid to hired experts from abroad.

Acting TRC director general, Focus Sahani said the new e-ticketing system will enhance revenue collections as the corporation was collecting a small sum with hand written passenger tickets. He said for the few months that the system operated on trials, TRC had collected a

good income despite presence of the global Covid-19 pandemic outbreak in the country.

Director of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Senzige Kisenge said passengers can now book their tickets online using tablets. He added that one doesn't need to visit TRC offices to get a ticket since the online process has been simplified to enable anyone to get the tickets.

Director of ICT management services, E-Government Agency, Benedict Ndomba said all measures were aimed to improve service delivery to the public. He said the new system was tested at 71 railway ticket selling points countrywide and had been efficient.

"We operated the e-ticketing on trials for almost a year, we are satisfied that it can work properly and enhance services provision", said Ndomba



Abdulaswamad Abdulrahim (with mask), chairman of members of the Zanzibar business community united in the fight against Covid-19, briefs Mohamed Aboud Mohamed (to his right, Minister of State in the Zanzibar Second Vice President's Office, before handing over to him their donation in support of the cause. Photo: Correspondent Rahma Suleiman

The Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania

For Wildlife Research, Education & Conservation

INVITATION FOR TENDER TO SUPPLY SMARTPHONES, BACKPACKS & RAINCOATS

The Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania for Wildlife, Research, Education and Conservation (JGI Tanzania) intends to use part of the funds to procure Smartphones, Backpacks & Raincoats for the implementation of its project for the Landscape Conservation in Western Tanzania.

The specifications for Smartphones, Backpacks & Raincoats is as listed below:

Item	Brand	Quantity/Units
Smart phones	1. Infinix Note 5 with the following specifications: - 3GB of RAM. - 32GB of internal storage - OS Android 8.1 Oreo or higher - Battery 4500mAh.	60
	2. Glass screen protectors and covers for the aforesaid phone brand.	
Backpacks	Kingson Laptop Bag (KF0047W)	60
Raincoats	WORKMAN	60

The Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania now invites sealed bids from reputable and registered firms that wish to tender for the supply of the above items under the following conditions:

1. Bidders are must tender for all items as a complete system.
2. Application for the bid is free of charge.
3. Tender will be conducted in accordance with the JGI Tanzania policies and procurement procedures.

Sealed Bids marked clearly 'TENDER TO SUPPLY SMARTPHONES, BACKPACKS & RAINCOATS' shall be addressed to:

Executive Director
The Jane Goodall Institute Tanzania
Mikocheni, Serengeti Road - Plot # 375
P.O. Box 70728
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

And be deposited into the Tender box located JGI Tanzania - Mikocheni office, Dar es Salaam.

4. The deadline for the submission of tender is Seven (7) Days from the date of the advertisement.
5. Electronic and/or late applications shall not be accepted for evaluation irrespective of the circumstance.

SECRETARY, JGI TANZANIA TENDER BOARD



Central Basin water board engineer Moses Salumbi (L) puts a mark at a floodwater edge at Lake Kindai in Singida Region at the weekend. Others are civil and environment engineers and a community development officer. Photo: Correspondent Dotto Mwaibale

'Online links share responses from private and public issues'

By Guardian Correspondent in Dodoma

THE government and the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) have established online link to help them collect and process complaints and share responses from either side in order to smoothen the progress of investment and improve business environment in the country. The link becomes operational in 2020/2021 fiscal year.

This was revealed by Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa in his budget speech for the year 2020/2021 he presented here yesterday. He told MPs that Tanzania's efforts towards building a modern economy were not in vain.

Tanzania had done extremely well in improving the investment environment and climate for doing business, a fact appreciated by the World Bank, the prime minister told the national assembly to the thumbing of MPs and to the smiles and nodding of members of the public in the public gallery.

"I have pleasure to this august house that the investment climate and the environment for doing business have improved steadily in our country. This is evident in the WB's 2020 report. In that report

Tanzania is put in the 141st position, up from the 144th position. I believe the online link we have established will raise to even a higher level of efficiency in promoting investment and doing business in our country," the PM told the house.

The PM called on all public institutions to support the business community in all possible ways in order to raise the level of investment and improve conditions for doing business and commended regions for what he describe as great efforts being done by regional leaders in exposing investment opportunities.

He told the house that 854, 821 hectares had been set aside countrywide for investment adding that 'Investment Guidelines' had been unveiled in Ruvuma, Songwe, Coast, Lindi, Mtwara, Kagera, Geita, Kilimanjaro, Simiyu, Manyara, Dodoma, Mwanza, Kigoma and Morogoro.

The TPSF is the umbrella organisation of the private sector and has 14 clusters to facilitate representation in the apex body. The clusters are agriculture, industries, tourism, financial institutions, minerals, services, women entrepreneurs, Zanzibar traders, construction and engineering, oil and gas, transportation, companies, trade and vending.

Covid-19: Big challenge for young girls, women - TGNP

By Guardian Correspondent

THE coronavirus disease pandemic has brought new challenges for families and communities, most especially women and young girls currently at home after schools were ordered closed recently.

A statement released yesterday by the Tanzania Gender Network Programme (TGNP) Executive Director Lilian Liundi said that girls are at risk of early pregnancy and various forms of sexual violence at this time when they are out of school.

"Children (girls and boys) remain at home, and their parents go to work. In this case sexual abuse can develop and lead to early pregnancy," Lilian said.

The TGNP report indicates that approximately 60 percent of sexual violence occurs at home, and those committing such acts are either close relatives or neighbours.

"Overall, sexual violence is particularly prevalent during tragedies like corona, not only for girls but for women at large," Lilian said.

The TGNP statement shows that many women in the country work in the informal sector, doing various activities such as house work, vending in market, and hawking that force them to leave their homes and go out to meet people, sometimes crowded environments.

Lilian said that such a situation puts women at risk of getting Corona virus-Covid 19, adding that it is now very important to put in place effective prevention strategies, and get them the right services.

"In terms of maternal and child health, the truth about a pregnant woman is that her immune system is very unstable especially during breastfeeding. For hospitals with female nurses under one year experience, we recommend that they should not care Corona patients," Lilian said.

She explained that in antenatal care for children and children, where there is often crowded people, it is important to emphasize preventive measures such as proper washing of hands and social distancing as they queue for services.

"It is important to ensure that hospital services remain the same by ensuring that maternal and child services continue to be prioritized to reduce maternal and child mortality," said Lilian.

She called upon parents and guardians to protect themselves as appropriate when undertaking their obligations because an infected parent can infect children and make the entire task of protecting children fail or backfire.

According to statistics released by the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 2006, more than 80 per cent of women work in the informal sector - and there they are at high risk of contracting the disease.

A report released by UNESCO last year showed that the level of adult education is 77.82 per cent, of which men are 83.2 per cent, and the rest are women.

These figures are clear evidence that women have been left behind in various issues, noted Lilian.

This diversity of women in the background will also be seen in the field of timely access to accurate information, such as newspapers, radio, television and social networks.

This is largely due to the society's lack of equal distribution of responsibilities, she added.

"Women are largely burdened with the responsibilities of raising families and providing careers that lead to a complete lack of economic, political, and even timely information," Lilian said.



It is important to ensure that hospital services remain the same by ensuring that maternal and child services continue to be prioritized to reduce maternal and child mortality



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AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2019

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019 TZS'000	2018 TZS'000
Gross written premium	22,160,007	19,434,126
Premium ceded to re-insurers	(11,529,978)	(10,080,202)
Net written premium	10,630,029	9,353,924
Change in gross unearned premium provision	32,099	(2,519,114)
Re-insurers' share of technical provisions and reserves	62,565	1,141,515
Net unearned premium	94,664	(1,377,599)
Net insurance premium revenue	10,724,693	7,976,325
Commission income	3,219,730	2,934,602
Investment income	1,232,133	865,028
Other income	1,188	178,270
Net income	15,177,744	11,954,225
Insurance claims	(10,493,368)	(26,022,130)
Re-insurers' share of claims and benefits incurred	6,401,471	22,186,842
Net insurance claims	(4,091,897)	(3,835,288)
Acquisition costs	(3,495,290)	(3,106,139)
Administrative expenses	(4,721,277)	(3,098,969)
Profit before taxation	2,869,280	1,913,829
Taxation expense	(710,603)	(578,859)
Profit/ (Loss) for the year	2,158,677	1,334,970
Other comprehensive income / (loss)	-	-
Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the year	2,158,677	1,334,970

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019 TZS'000	2018 TZS'000
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Profit before taxation	2,869,280	1,913,829
Adjustments for:		
- Provision charge for bad debts	57,079	29,283
- Depreciation	106,521	104,383
- Amortisation	106,930	83,013
- Gain on disposal of property and equipment	(2,001)	-
Operating Profit before working capital changes	3,137,809	2,130,508
Changes in:		
- Insurance contract liabilities	(1,451,478)	24,871,611
- Receivables arising out of direct insurance arrangements	(330,136)	(898,630)
- Receivables arising out of reinsurance arrangements	(377,432)	105,582
- Reinsurer's share of technical provision and reserves	1,485,664	(21,608,915)
- Other receivables	(43,758)	(2,711)
- Payables arising out of reinsurance arrangements	(118,946)	(990,198)
- Other payables	1,007,024	670,506
- Deferred acquisition cost	17,844	(271,783)
Cash generated from operating activities	3,326,592	4,005,970
Payment of lease liability interest	(42,377)	-
Income tax paid	(656,022)	(887,439)
Net cash generated from operating activities	2,627,193	3,118,531
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Proceeds from disposal of property and equipment	4,356	-
Acquisition of items of property and equipment	(121,908)	(32,150)
Acquisition of intangible asset	(365,584)	(71,692)
Investment in government securities	(1,190,174)	(1,591,631)
Proceeds from / (Investment in) deposits with financial institutions	832,004	(883,520)
Net cash used in investing activities	(841,306)	(2,578,993)
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Payment of lease liability principle	(148,135)	-
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents	1,637,748	539,538
Movement in cash and cash equivalents during the year is as follows:		
Cash and cash equivalents as at 1 January	3,391,976	2,852,438
Cash and cash equivalents at 31 December	5,029,724	3,391,976

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019

	2019 TZS'000	2018 TZS'000
Assets		
Intangible assets	815,770	237,562
Deferred acquisition cost	427,719	169,065
Investment in government securities	1,641,108	1,658,953
Deposits with financial institutions	3,958,840	2,768,666
Reinsurers' share of technical provisions and reserves	12,384,368	11,336,385
Insurance receivables	25,501,023	26,986,687
Other receivables	2,653,462	2,002,973
Deferred tax	61,596	17,838
Income tax receivable	481,457	71,027
Cash and bank balances	-	264,273
	5,058	247,297
Total assets	47,930,401	45,760,726
Liabilities		
Insurance contract liabilities	34,386,621	35,838,099
Payables arising from reinsurance arrangements	2,594,460	2,713,406
Other payables	3,271,888	1,891,204
Income tax payable	200,738	-
Total liabilities	40,453,707	40,442,709
Net assets	7,476,694	5,318,017
Shareholders' equity		
Share capital	4,000,000	4,000,000
Retained earnings	1,538,128	44,251
Capital and contingency reserves	1,938,566	1,273,766
Total shareholders' equity	7,476,694	5,318,017

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019

	Share capital TZS'000	Contingency reserves TZS'000	Retained earnings TZS'000	Total TZS'000
Balance as at 1 January 2019	4,000,000	1,273,766	44,251	5,318,017
Balance as at 1 January 2018	4,000,000	690,742	(707,695)	3,983,047
Profit for the year	-	-	1,334,970	1,334,970
Transfer to contingency reserves	-	583,024	(583,024)	-
Balance as at 31 December 2018	4,000,000	1,273,766	44,251	5,318,017
Profit for the year	-	-	2,158,677	2,158,677
Transfer to contingency reserves	-	664,800	(664,800)	-
Balance as at 31 December 2019	4,000,000	1,938,566	1,538,128	7,476,694

The above extracts are from financial statements of the Company for the year ending 31 December 2019 which have been prepared in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS). The financial statements were audited by KPMG, Certified Public Accounts and received Unqualified Audit Report. The financial statements were approved and authorised for issue by Board of Directors in the Board Meeting held on 31 March 2020 and signed on its behalf by:

JAYESH G. SHAH
Chairman

DAVID A. SAWE
Director

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Sports has immense potential to foster peace, development

SPORT includes all forms of competitive physical activity or games which, through casual or organised participation, at least in part aim to use, maintain or improve physical ability and skills while providing enjoyment to participants, and in some cases, entertainment for spectators.

Sports can bring positive results to one's physical health. Hundreds of sports exist, from those between single contestants, through to those with hundreds of simultaneous participants, either in teams or competing as individuals.

In certain sports such as racing, many contestants may compete, simultaneously or consecutively, with one winner; in others, the contest (a match) is between two sides, each attempting to exceed the other. Some sports allow a "tie" or "draw", in which there is no single winner; others provide tie-breaking methods to ensure one winner and one loser.

A number of contests may be arranged in a tournament producing a champion. Many sports leagues make an annual champion by arranging games in a regular sports season, followed in some cases by playoffs.

International Day of Sport for Development and Peace is an opportunity to raise the banner for the power of sport for development and peace.

Sport is a passion shared by women and men across the world. It is a force for physical well-being and social empowerment. It is an engine for equality, especially gender equality, for including everyone, especially the most disadvantaged. There is no more powerful platform than sport to nurture the values we all share - solidarity, responsibility, respect, honesty,

teamwork, equality motivation and self-esteem... Sport is a way to include everyone, including refugees and migrants, to fight against stereotypes, to strengthen the foundations for peace in healthy societies.

As the world takes forward the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, we must do everything to support sport to leave no one behind. This is the spirit driving UNESCO's International Charter for Physical Education, Physical Activity and Sport, to ensure respect for the fundamental right to sport for every woman and man without discrimination. This same spirit inspires the work of volunteers across the world, dedicated to supporting sport for development and peace, whose work we commend today.

Physical inactivity leads every year to an estimated 3.2 million deaths. This is why UNESCO has joined forces with the World Health Organisation to combat sedentary lifestyles, starting with inclusive and equitable quality physical education at school. This calls for new commitment and resources from all actors - to ensure public policies, especially in the fields of health, education, urban planning, infrastructure and transport, work also with the private sector in the development of legislation, regulations and national plans for sport.

This is the goal of the 6th Conference of Ministers and Senior Officials responsible for Physical Education and Sport (MINEPS VI) organized by UNESCO, in partnership with the Russian Federation, in Kazan, from 13 to 15 July 2017.

We must catalyse real action where it is needed. We must all get moving to make sport for all a reality - this has never been so vital.

We must attack the roots of violence and genocide

APRIL 7, 2004 was recognised as an international observance of the International Day of Reflection on the 1994 Rwandan genocide by the United Nations. Commemorative events were held in several major cities including Kigali, Rwanda; New York City, United States; Dar-es-Salaam and Geneva, Switzerland.

All member states of the UN were invited to join in one minute of silence in memory of the victims. In a speech given by former UN Secretary-General the late Kofi Annan given at the Assembly Hall of the Palais des Nations, he called for actions to prevent future genocides.

"Genocide almost always occurs during war. Even apparently tolerant individuals, once they engage in war, have categorized some of their fellow human beings as enemies, suspending the taboo which forbids the deliberate taking of human life. And in almost all cases they accept that civilians may also be killed or hurt, whatever efforts are made to limit so-called "collateral damage".

"Unless we are very careful, this can be the beginning of a swift descent into a different moral universe, where whole communities are designated as the enemy, and their lives held to be of no account. And from there, it is only one more step to the actual and deliberate elimination of these communities: one more step, in other words, to genocide." Said Annan.

So one of the best ways to reduce the chances of genocide is to address the causes of conflict. Annan's plan therefore embraced, and expanded, the recommendations on prevention of armed conflict, which have been endorsed by both the Security Council and the General Assembly.

We must help countries strengthen their capacity to prevent conflict, at local and national levels. We must do

more at the regional level, to prevent conflict spilling over from one country to another.

We must give greater attention to environmental problems and tensions related to competition over natural resources. We must work together with the international financial institutions, with civil society, and with the private sector, to ensure that young people get the chance to better themselves through education and peaceful employment, so that they are less easily recruited into predatory gangs and militias.

"We must protect the rights of minorities, since they are genocide's most frequent targets. By all these means, and more, we must attack the roots of violence and genocide: hatred, intolerance, racism, tyranny, and the dehumanizing public discourse that denies whole groups of people their dignity and their rights.

"Wherever we fail to prevent conflict, one of our highest priorities must be to protect civilians. The parties to conflict -- not only states but also non-state actors -- need to be constantly reminded of their responsibility, under international humanitarian law, to protect civilians from violence.

"In more and more conflicts we see that civilians, including women and children, are no longer just "caught in the crossfire". They become the direct targets of violence and rape, as war is waged against a whole society.

"Wherever civilians are deliberately targeted because they belong to a particular community, we are in the presence of potential, if not actual, genocide.

"We can no longer afford to be blind to this grim dynamic. Nor should we imagine that appeals to morality, or compassion, will have much effect on people who have adopted a deliberate strategy of killing and forcible expulsion.



The Covid-19 pandemic is no time for fiscal distancing

By Akinwumi A. Adesina

THESE are very difficult days, as the world faces one of its worst challenges ever: the novel coronavirus pandemic. And it seems that almost no nation is spared. As infection rates rise, so does panic across financial markets as economies drastically slow down and supply chains are severely disrupted.

Extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. As such, it can no longer be business as usual.

Each day, the situation evolves and requires constant reviews of precautionary measures and strategies. In the midst of all this, we must all worry about the ability of every nation to respond to this crisis. And we must ensure that developing nations are prepared to navigate these uncharted waters fully.

That's why I support UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres' urgent call for special resources for the world's developing countries.

In the face of this pandemic, we must put lives above resources and health above debt. Why? Because developing economies are the most vulnerable at this time. Our remedies must go beyond simply lending more. We must go the extra mile and provide countries with much-needed and urgent financial relief - and that includes developing countries under sanctions.

According to the independent global think tank ODI, in its report on the impact of economic sanctions, for decades, sanctions have decimated investments in public health care systems in quite a number of countries.

Today, the already stretched systems as noted in the 2019 Global Health Security Index will find it difficult to face up to a clear and present danger that now threatens our collective existence. Only those that are alive can pay back debts.

Sanctions work against economies but not against the virus. If countries

that are under sanctions are unable to respond and provide critical care for their citizens or protect them, then the virus will soon "sanction" the world.

In my Yoruba language, there is a saying going thus: "Be careful when you throw stones in the open market. It may hit a member of your family."

That's why I also strongly support the call by UN Secretary General that debts of low-income countries be suspended in these fast-moving and uncertain times.

But I call for even bolder actions, and there are several reasons for doing so. First, despite years of great progress, the economies of developing countries remain extremely fragile and ill-equipped to deal with this pandemic. They are more likely to be buried with the heavy fiscal pressure they now face with the coronavirus.

Second, many of the countries in Africa depend on commodities for export earnings. The collapse of oil prices has thrown African economies into distress. According to the AfDB's 2020 Africa Economic Outlook, they simply are not able to meet budgets as planned under pre-coronavirus oil price benchmarks.

The impact has been immediate in the oil and gas sector, as noted in a recent CNN news analysis.

In the current environment, we can anticipate an acute shortage of buyers who, for understandable reasons, will reallocate resources to addressing the Covid-19 pandemic. African countries that depend on tourism receipts as a key source of revenue are also in a straightjacket.

Third, while rich countries have resources to spare, as evidenced by trillions of dollars in fiscal stimulus, developing countries are hampered with bare-bones resources.

The fact is that, if we do not collectively defeat the coronavirus in Africa, we will not defeat it anywhere else in the world. This is an existential challenge that requires all hands to be on deck. Today,

more than ever, we must be our brothers and sisters' keepers.

Around the world, countries at more advanced stages in the outbreak are announcing liquidity relief, debt restructuring, forbearance on loan repayments, and relaxation of standard regulations and initiatives.

In the United States, packages of more than \$2 trillion have already been announced, in addition to a reduction in Federal Reserve lending rates and liquidity support to keep markets operating. In Europe, the larger economies have announced stimulus measures in excess of 1 trillion Euros. Additionally, even larger packages are expected.

As developed countries put in place programmes to compensate workers for lost wages for staying at home for social distancing, another problem has emerged - fiscal distancing.

Let's think for a moment what this means for Africa. The African Development Bank estimates that Covid-19 could cost Africa a GDP loss between \$22.1 billion, in the base-case scenario, and \$88.3 billion in the worst-case scenario.

This is equivalent to a projected GDP growth contraction of between 0.7 and 2.8 percentage points in 2020. It is even likely that Africa might fall into recession this year if the current situation persists.

The Covid-19 shock will further squeeze fiscal space in the continent as deficits are estimated to widen by 3.5 to 4.9 percentage points, increasing Africa's financing gap by an additional \$110 to \$154 billion in 2020.

Our estimates indicate that Africa's total public debt could increase, under the base case scenario, from \$1.86 trillion at the end of 2019 to over \$2 trillion in 2020 - compared to \$1.9 trillion projected in a 'no pandemic' scenario.

According to a March 2020 AfDB report, these figures could reach \$2.1 trillion this year under the worst case scenario.

This, therefore, is a time for bold

actions. We should temporarily defer the debt owed to multilateral development banks and international financial institutions. This can be done by re-profiling loans to create fiscal space for countries to deal with this crisis.

That means that loan principals due to international financial institutions in 2020 could be deferred. I am calling for temporary forbearance, not forgiveness. What's good for bilateral and commercial debt must be good for multilateral debt.

That way, we will avoid moral hazards, and rating agencies will be less inclined to penalise any institution on the potential risk to their Preferred Creditor Status. The focus of the world should now be on helping everyone, as a risk to one is a risk to all.

There is no coronavirus for developed countries and a coronavirus for developing and debt-stressed countries. We are all in this together.

Multilateral and bilateral financial institutions must work together with commercial creditors in Africa, especially to defer loan payments and give Africa the fiscal space it needs.

We stand ready to support Africa in the short term and for the long haul. We are ready to deploy up to \$50 billion over five years in projects to help with adjustment costs that Africa will face as it deals with the knock-on effects of Covid-19, long after the current storm has subsided.

But more support will be needed. Let's lift all sanctions, for now. Even in wartime, ceasefires are called for humanitarian reasons. In such situations, there is a time to pause for relief materials to reach affected populations. The novel coronavirus is a war against all of us. All lives matter.

For this reason, we must avoid fiscal distancing at this time. A stitch in time will save nine. Social distancing is imperative now. Fiscal distancing is not.

Akinwumi A. Adesina is President of the Abidjan-based African Development Bank Group.

Covid-19 projected to slash Ethiopia's GDP by USD 1.2 bln

By Kaleyesus Bekele

THE economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Ethiopia - in regards to the airline industry and allied businesses - could cost the country some USD 1.2 billion in GDP and affect more than 323,000 jobs, a global airline body disclosed.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) highlighted the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on Africa and Middle East. IATA strengthened its call for urgent action from governments in Africa and the Middle East to provide financial relief to airlines as the association's latest scenario for potential revenue loss by carriers in

Africa and the Middle East reached USD 23 billion (19 billion in the Middle East and four billion in Africa). This translates into a drop of industry revenues of 32 percent for Africa and 39 percent for the Middle East for 2020 as compared to 2019.

IATA revealed that Ethiopia will have 1.6 million fewer passengers resulting in a USD 0.3 billion revenue loss, risking 327,062 jobs and USD 1.2 billion in contribution to Ethiopia's economy. In 2017 the country's passenger journey was 7.3 million.

IATA's economic report identified Ethiopia's air transport and tourism as significant economic enablers. Air transport and foreign tourists arriving by air currently support 5.7 percent of the nation's GDP valued at USD 4.2 billion and

about 1.1 million jobs.

The airline association portrays the impacts of the pandemic on African and Middle Eastern countries. South Africa will have 10.7 million fewer passengers resulting in a USD 2.29 billion revenue loss, risking 186,850 jobs and USD 3.8 billion in contribution to South Africa's economy. Nigeria - 3.5 million fewer passengers resulting in a USD 0.76 billion revenue loss, risking 91,380 jobs and USD 0.65 billion in contribution to Nigeria's economy. Kenya - 2.5 million fewer passengers resulting in a USD 0.54 billion revenue loss, risking 137,965 jobs and USD 1.1 billion in contribution to Kenya's economy. In Africa air transport employs 6.2 million people and contributes USD 55.28 billion to the continent's GDP.

IATA stated that to minimize the broad damage that these losses would have across the African and Middle East economies, it is vital that governments step up their efforts to aid the industry. "Many governments in the region have committed to provide relief from the effect of COVID-19. And some have already taken direct action to support aviation. But more help is needed," the association said. IATA called for direct financial support, loans, loan guarantees and support for the corporate bond market and tax relief.

In a video conference held on Thursday, Muhammad Al Bakri, IATA's Regional Vice President for Africa and the Middle East, said that several governments in the region are providing some financial and tax reliefs.

Covid-19 – and the American flight attendant who fears being grounded

By Michelle Legro

THIS is the story of one of the people in the US who have had their lives tipped over or who are experiencing the stress of the unknown during this time of the Covid-19 pandemic – as interviewed for a new GEN series.

David Nicholas Rigel is a 27-year-old flight attendant from London, Kentucky, who is in the second year of his career at American Airlines. Air travel is down as many planes fly at half capacity or nearly empty, and flight attendants like David are staring down a potentially devastating loss of work. His story:

I am a flight attendant for American Airlines. We have nine airlines in the United States, and American Airlines is one of the big three along with Delta and United.

We're a legacy airline. It's a little surreal to wrap my brain around the past week. Even just two weeks ago, the members of my crew were talking about which routes would be affected. But we were mostly chalking it up to media hysterics and people overreacting. If we can learn to wash our hands, practise basic hygiene, and not be disgusting, we thought it would be fine – that everything was going to be fine.

In January, people were wearing face masks; then, people were wearing gloves, too. We started to alter our service on the plane to be more hygienic and more thoughtful of the virus.

We went from people having no consideration of cleanliness on a plane to being hyperaware. American (Airlines) is teaching us all the time about how attendants can transition our service to accommodate people and their health.

We suspended the hot towel service and using glassware in the first-class cabin; now, we're just using plastic cups. We're also no longer refilling cups or recycling cans on the plane.

Being in the airline business, I am on the front lines, so we're constantly changing everything to figure out the best way to take care of people and their health.

It was a running joke between all of us that people love not to wear their shoes when they go to the bathroom. I don't know why, but they do. Now people are not only wearing their shoes, but they're wearing gloves, they're wearing face masks.

A week ago is when it hit the fan. American tells us in training that flight attendants are supposed to be palm trees – no matter where the wind blows, no matter what hurricane we end up in, we are supposed to go with the flow. But to be honest, this situation is something that hasn't occurred in the aviation industry since 9/11.

American began to expand the list of routes affected by the virus. First, they suspended flights to China. Then, cut Milan back. Our JFK to Rome was supposed to start at the end of March, so they pushed that back. Then we lost Paris.

All of a sudden, all of Europe was basically quarantined. That's when we all were like: "Okay, this is legit." Right now, all of us are clutching our pearls, wondering when domestic travel will cease and hoping it doesn't happen.

We don't have full flights any more. My flights during the last week have gone from being super full to half full, and then it's just wavering depending on the route.

People are so afraid of everything. They don't want a glass of water. They don't want a pre-wrapped cookie. They don't want anything during the food and drink service, which is why service is going so quickly.

People are just trying to get from point A to point B. In the past week and a half, there's hasn't been a line to the bathroom on a flight. I'm terrified airline workers are going to get furloughed because of the domino effect of the airlines losing money and travel restrictions.

Last night when I got home from JFK at 10:30 p.m., I saw that United Airlines' CEO sent all employees an email saying they're reducing their workforce by a certain percentage. Norwegian Air, which is in Europe, is shuttering 90 per cent. Flybe, a regional airline in the UK, just collapsed because of the coronavirus. Now it's United saying: "Hey, we may have to furlough 50 per cent of our workforce."

A furlough is when a company says you're getting laid off, but whenever we rebound, that's when you have a job again. You don't know when you're going to get the letter that you're on the front lines again.

It could be two months from now; it could be six months from now or ten years. You could get furloughed multiple times. They bring you back, something else happens, they furlough you again.

I have always loved aviation. I am from Eastern Kentucky, where having a career is almost impossible because there are not many opportunities. As a flight attendant, I have health insurance, I have a savings account. These are things that most people in Eastern Kentucky don't have.

I'll be 27 in two weeks, and I'm the breadwinner of my immediate family. If I get furloughed, I go from having job security to not having a career overnight. That is why we are terrified right now in the aviation industry.

I could get a text or an email from the company in the middle of the night, which means I won't be able to pay rent and I won't have health insurance. I will have to jump through hoops to get pay protected for the trips lost or to collect unemployment benefits.

Being a flight attendant is not just a job, it's a career. It's not easy to become a flight attendant. Not only did I have application processes and interviews, I had weeks and weeks of safety training.

I'm not just there to pour your Coke; I'm there in case anything happens. It's not like we're just pulled off the street. We are truly educated and trained.

We put so much hard work into this career. That's



why it's so surreal for all of us to wrap our brains around this situation – wow, this could be gone in an hour.

Say I'm working tomorrow and I have an overnight in Atlanta or the Caribbean, and then all of a sudden they furlough or there's a quarantine or all of New York City is locked down. Am I stuck in this hotel in Atlanta for the foreseeable future? How do I get home? What happens then? The heaviest part of it all is the unknown.

• **GEN**, where Michelle Legro is Deputy Editor, is a San Francisco Medium Daily Digest publication about politics, power, and culture based in San Francisco.

Heritage Insurance Co					
THE HERITAGE INSURANCE COMPANY TANZANIA LIMITED					
STATEMENTS OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019					
	Notes	2019 TShs'000	2018 TShs'000		
Gross premium written		54,958,985	43,041,012		
Insurance premium revenue	7	52,585,468	42,127,064		
Insurance premium ceded to reinsurers		(37,113,448)	(29,640,882)		
Net insurance premium revenue		15,472,020	12,486,182		
Investment income	8	2,457,567	2,153,494		
Commission earned		6,579,725	4,381,406		
Fair value gain		32,427	334,746		
Other income	9	156,413	579,344		
Net income		24,698,152	19,935,172		
Insurance claims	10	(18,761,148)	(12,763,043)		
Insurance claims recovered from reinsurers	10	13,006,145	7,922,164		
Net insurance claims	10	(5,755,003)	(4,840,879)		
Operating expenses	11	(7,923,644)	(6,187,929)		
Commission expense		(7,559,990)	(4,401,824)		
Profit from operations		3,459,515	4,504,540		
Finance cost	16	(44,725)	-		
Profit before income tax		3,414,790	4,504,540		
Income tax expense	12	(1,228,961)	(1,402,640)		
Profit for the year		2,185,829	3,101,900		
Other comprehensive income		-	-		
Total comprehensive income for the year		2,185,829	3,101,900		
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2019					
	Notes	2019 TShs'000	2018 TShs'000		
ASSETS					
Property and equipment	15(a)	1,061,988	450,767		
Intangible assets	15(b)	497,697	441,015		
Equity investment at fair value through profit or loss (unquoted)	17	917,941	897,999		
Receivables arising out of reinsurance arrangements	6	4,444,790	2,277,291		
Reinsurers' share of insurance liabilities	18	26,034,505	19,793,392		
Deferred acquisition cost	19(a)	1,937,742	2,024,321		
Deferred tax asset	20(a)	924,599	1,042,698		
Income tax recoverable	20(b)	529,061	-		
Other receivables	21	1,520,920	278,042		
Government securities at fair value through profit or loss	22	3,947,893	4,099,978		
Corporate bonds at fair value through profit or loss	23	148,270	161,013		
Deposits with financial institutions	24	30,051,505	24,478,876		
Cash and bank balances	25	1,911,040	4,345,769		
Total assets		73,927,951	60,291,161		
LIABILITIES					
Insurance contract liabilities	26	19,880,572	15,896,425		
Unearned premiums	27	15,439,704	13,066,561		
Lease liabilities	16	692,137	-		
Creditors arising from direct insurance		81,534	151,592		
Payables arising from reinsurance arrangements	28	11,024,009	4,959,315		
Deferred acquisition income	19(b)	1,578,787	1,948,359		
Other payables	29	10,299,784	8,462,941		
Income tax payable	20(b)	-	60,373		
Total liabilities		58,996,527	44,545,566		
EQUITY					
Share capital		8,000,000	8,000,000		
Contingency reserve		7,228,498	6,791,332		
Retained earnings		(297,074)	954,263		
Total equity	14	14,931,424	15,745,595		
Total equity and liabilities		73,927,951	60,291,161		
The financial statements on pages 18 to 70 were approved for issue by the board of directors on 30 March 2020 and were signed on its behalf by:					
YOGESH M. MANEK CHAIRMAN GODFREY KIOI DIRECTOR N. SHANMUGARAJAN CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER					
STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019					
		Share Capital TShs'000	Contingency reserve TShs'000	Retained earnings TShs'000	Total TShs'000
Year ended 31 December 2019					
Balance at 1 January 2019		8,000,000	6,791,332	954,263	15,745,595
Total comprehensive income for the year					
Profit for the year		-	-	2,185,829	2,185,829
Other comprehensive income net of tax:		-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year					
Transfer to contingency reserve		-	437,166	(437,166)	-
Transactions with owners:					
Payment of interim dividend 2019		-	-	(3,000,000)	(3,000,000)
Total transactions with owners					
		-	437,166	(3,437,166)	(3,000,000)
Balance at 31 December 2019		8,000,000	7,228,498	(297,074)	14,931,424
Year ended 31 December 2018					
Balance at 1 January 2018		8,000,000	6,170,952	1,572,743	15,743,695
Total comprehensive income for the year					
Profit for the year		-	-	3,101,900	3,101,900
Other comprehensive income net of tax:		-	-	-	-
Total comprehensive income for the year					
		-	-	3,101,900	3,101,900
Transfer to contingency reserve		-	620,380	(620,380)	-
Transactions with owners:					
Payment of dividend for 2018		-	-	(3,100,000)	(3,100,000)
Total transactions with owners					
		-	620,380	(3,720,380)	(3,100,000)
Balance at 31 December 2018		8,000,000	6,791,332	954,263	15,745,595
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2019					
	Notes	2019 TShs'000	2018 TShs'000		
Cash flows from operating activities					
Cash generated from operations					
Dividend received		24,771	50,919		
Interest received		2,434,963	528,200		
Tax paid		(1,700,296)	(641,823)		
Net cash generated from operating activities		6,497,888	3,600,987		
Cash flows from investing activities					
Purchase of items of motor vehicles and equipment	15(a)	(85,630)	(98,086)		
Purchase of items of intangible assets	15(b)	(222,418)	(455,831)		
Purchase of bonds		-	(481,302)		
Proceeds from disposal of items of motor vehicles and equipment		76,435	38,349		
Net change in investments		3,798,753	3,754,846		
Proceeds from disposal of quoted shares		-	2,080,684		
Proceeds from sale of bonds		175,146	426,600		
Net cash generated from investing activities		3,742,286	5,265,260		
Cash flows from financing activities					
Payment of lease liabilities	16	(303,521)	-		
Dividends paid		(3,000,000)	(3,100,000)		
Net cash used in financing activities		(3,303,521)	(3,100,000)		
Net increase in cash and cash equivalents		6,936,653	5,766,247		
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the year		13,644,489	7,878,242		
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the year	25	20,581,142	13,644,489		

Seven ways to fix Nigeria's leadership crisis

By Kingsley Moghalu,

THE Coronavirus Disease-2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has changed the world as we knew it. By the time this is all over and, hopefully, treatment and vaccine developed, economies will lie prostrate, globalization will be in retreat, and governments may rise and fall. Leadership and its responses have been tested from Beijing to Rome, from Seoul to Washington DC, and from Abuja to Pretoria. Well beyond the roving virus, Nigeria has long been afflicted with its own, pre-COVID ailment: a scarcity of leadership combined with a preponderance of toxic politics that has left us a broken country. The economy has long been anemic. Poverty reigns. Sectarian agendas, distrust and conflict, promoted by individuals in positions of authority, have prevented our country from becoming a nation with any unity of purpose. Boko Haram has waged war on us, undefeated, for the past decade.

How will we select our leaders in the post-COVID world, seeing how we have for decades failed to invest in our health system? Nigerians are so poor they refuse to stay at home to protect their health because absence from their daily hustle is equal to death from hunger. No electricity. No running water to wash our hands. And in many parts of the country, "social distance" is a strange joke. The physical and communal warmth in our cultures will brook no interference from COVID. Some imams and pastors, steeped in conspiracy theories, remain completely oblivious to public health and science by insisting on holding worship congregations.

Leadership determines the progress or failure of nations. It is a sacred responsibility. We have a choice to seek its real emergence in the Nigerian polity in a proactive manner, or to wallow in short-term thinking and activity, going around in circles and ever remaining an "under-developmental" state. Here are seven ways we can fix our leadership crisis.

First, we need to be clear in our minds about what leadership really means, what we should have but don't. Leadership is the ability to inspire, motivate, and mobilize a unit of human beings - family, organization, institution, state or country - to make steady and measurable progress. This ability is strongly linked with vision.



President Muhammadu Buhari

To inspire and mobilize, the leader must have a clear destination in mind. Where are we coming from? Where are we going? Where do we need to get to, and how do we get there? What values, ambitions and strategies to attain those ambitions will drive this journey?

Without this worldview, a strategic ambition placed in the context of domestic and external realities, a country like ours can exist, alright. We have plodded along for a while now, "surviving", frequently on the edge of the precipice but (so far) always pulling back from the brink. But this pattern won't take the 100 million Nigerians living in extreme poverty anywhere near prosperity. Instead, we should be thriving. This is the difference between becoming the "black China", on the one hand, and the strategic war-game scenarios in Western intelligence agencies that "an implosion of a country of 200 million people will unleash a flood of refugees", on its region and the world. In one scenario, we take our destiny in our hands and create the future we want. In another, we are a problem that the world's strategic thinkers worry about.

Leadership also calls for an ability to manage risk. As a summary of Dr. Ben Carson's book "Take the Risk" puts it: "No risk, pay the cost; know risk, reap the reward". Choices have to be made,

and all choices have consequences. Sound, informed, strategic choices lead to progress. The complacent worship of the familiar, the gods of small things like crude-oil dependency, the pursuit of ethnic and religious hegemony in a plural and secular state, lead only to poverty and conflict.

Second, we must now make our politics a real leadership selection process. It is increasingly obvious that the current contradictions of the Nigerian state cannot be sustained for much longer. Something will have to give. Who has the vision, the capacity and the competence to lead Nigeria into the 21st Century as a modern, prosperous and stable nation? This is the central issue we must address, as our politicians joust for power in 2023.

Third, Nigeria's next political leadership should emerge through a process of negotiated consensus, and then placed into an electoral process in all or the leading political parties. This is what happened in 1999. It is not ideal, but the times call for it. Our politics has become so broken in the past decade that, left to itself, and with "democratic" outcomes determined mainly by financial

inducement, it is unlikely to produce the leader Nigeria needs now. Realistically, this negotiation needs to take place within and across the political parties, ethnic blocks, civil society, traditional rulers, elder statesmen including our former presidents, youth, and gender. While, for now, the APC and the PDP are the dominant parties, we cannot write off the possible emergence of a strong third force combining "new breed" with disaffected members of the old order.

Fourth, the role of equity and justice in nation-building must be frontally addressed. It's possible to do so without compromising the emergence of competent leadership. The unique political positioning of the Igbo of South-eastern Nigeria since the civil war 50 years ago, and the need to achieve true national reconciliation from that trauma, is an important factor in the future of Nigeria. Candidates from the major ethnic groups - Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani - and a Niger Delta minority, have been voted into office by every part of Nigeria, the Igbo Southeast included. But Nigeria has yet to elect an Igbo as its president.

Beyond the sad reality of its ethnic geo-politics, what Nigeria needs most is good, competent leadership. That possibility abounds in every part of our country, including the Southeast. But, given Nigeria's quest for nationhood and the country's already frayed existence, the opportunity exists to kill two birds with one stone. Even more fundamental is the imperative of a new constitution that returns Nigeria to a true federal structure. Without a constitutional restructuring of Nigeria, the country has no future, as economic progress and political stability will remain elusive. Our next national political leadership selection must squarely address these related issues of national equity and constitutional reform.

Fifth, fixing Nigeria's leadership crisis requires that the middle class, intellectuals and youth consciously engage in politics. Ideas rule the world - at least in the parts of it that are making

real progress. Our independence struggle and post-independence politics were led by intellectuals and professionals from the middle class. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Obafemi Awolowo and Ahmadu Bello wrote tomes to express their ideas. Today, philistines and "mumultuals" have largely replaced thinking people as leaders. If we are to secure the future of our children, Nigeria's middle class must reclaim its surrendered space and retire from its self-inflicted political apathy. That future is threatened by weak economic management and a return to debt slavery. Our youth should take its future in their own hands. They should (a) join political parties and engage in structural politics, as opposed to just activism or an ineffectual obsession with social media; (b) register to vote and vote in elections, regardless of distractions and obstacles; and (c) run for office where they have the relevant qualifications and experience.

Sixth, electoral reform is job number one in Nigeria today. Without it, we have a democracy in name only, a hollow ritual. The recommended negotiated consensus towards new political leadership in 2023 must include extensive reform of our electoral laws and institutions before the end of 2020.

Finally, reading is essential for leaders, because leadership can be learned from reading and from training. I recall my interview on CNN Television on this subject some years ago. The program "Reading for Leading", anchored by the inimitable Richard Quest, interviewed global business and economic leaders on how reading made them better leaders. As Admiral James Stavridis (rt), former Supreme Allied Commander of NATO and until recently Dean of The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University writes in "The Leader's Bookshelf," his book on leadership, reading is essential for good leadership because it helps us evaluate ourselves ("what would I have done in that situation?"), allows us to think deeply about who our heroes and role models

are, sharpens our written communication skills, and improves our leadership skills.

We have excellent leadership in the Nigerian private sector, but we need much more of that leadership caliber in the public sector in order to create the enabling environment for mass wealth creation. Nigerian corporations train their staff in leadership to a far greater extent than the public sector. The Central Bank of Nigeria in my time was a major exception. We invested heavily in leadership and other training for the staff and management, and I hope it has remained so. My leadership vision was shaped in the reserve bank by such rich executive education programs in leadership as Harvard Business School's "Making Corporate Boards More Effective," Harvard Kennedy School's "Leading Economic Growth," and the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania's "Global Strategic Leadership."

Leadership training should be more institutionalized in the civil service. Rare for an African country, Ethiopia has a civil service university. Political parties should have their officials and candidates trained in leadership at home and abroad. In early 2019, I concluded consultations on my planned presidential run with a visit to my old boss at the United Nations, the late former secretary-general Kofi Annan. When I mentioned this matter of leadership training and preparedness for aspiring or serving political leaders as we chatted in his office in Geneva, the sage diplomat smiled. With a twinkle in his eye, he gave me advice: "Don't call it 'leadership training.' Kingsley." "African politicians don't believe they have anything to learn from anyone. What you do is to invite them to a 'leadership conference.' Wisdom. Three gbasos to 'leadership conferences!'"

Kingsley Moghalu, a former deputy governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria and a presidential candidate in 2019, is the Convener of To Build a Nation (TBAN), a non-partisan citizen's movement for electoral and constitutional reform.

Covid-19: Restricting dog walking, exercise and alcohol could be detrimental to mental health

By Leandri Hattingh

THE reason, I suspect, why many cling so passionately to the possibility of being able to go for a walk or a jog amid the initial confusion about the regulations is because it seemed to be their last available coping tool.

At a time of suffering for everyone, the vulnerable are at risk of suffering exponentially. As we grapple with unprecedented events amid the Covid-19 pandemic, those facing mental health challenges are particularly vulnerable and the number of people who fall in this category will increase.

Judging by the trivialisation of the matter by the ministers of police and transport and the absence of provision for support for mental health challenges and exacerbations as a consequence of this situation, there appears to be little regard for mental health in the South African government's lockdown plan. The country's history of mental health neglect continues, even in the face of what is possibly its gravest threat to mental health to date.

The lockdown and extremity of the regulations released by the government on 25 March effectively strip people of their capacity to self-determination. According to the UN's Inter-Agency Standing Committee, "persons in quarantine who can make choices during their day (eg meal choices), have access to structured activities, (and) have a routine... are likely to cope better than individuals confined to an isolated area with decreased autonomy."

Amid the panic of an invisible mortal threat, armed forces being deployed to make sure people don't live their lives as normal, with lim-

ited access to only the most basic of services and goods, and sudden financial insecurity for many, South Africans now also have very limited options in coping with their distress. They are separated from family and close human interaction. They are confined to one space with no chance of escape. The reason, I suspect, why many cling so passionately to the possibility of being able to go for a walk or a jog amid the initial confusion about the regulations is because it seemed to be their last available coping tool.

And though this may seem trivial compared to dying on a ventilator, it is not. In its advice on mental health during the Covid-19 outbreak, the World Health Organisation encourages people to "engage in healthy activities that (they) enjoy and find relaxing", and to exercise regularly. While some - especially those who are well resourced and live on large properties - will still find ways to do this, many will not. Other governments have recognised this, and some have made specific provisions in their isolation approaches to include limited outdoor exercise and dog walking.

The sudden ban on alcohol sales and transportation will have mental health consequences as well. While an alcohol-free society may theoretically be a mental health panacea, such an abrupt change may have dangerous mental and physical health consequences. Sudden alcohol withdrawal may lead to aggressive behaviour, and can, in severe cases, be fatal. Those who had the means to stockpile alcohol prior to the lockdown may turn to excessive consumption as a coping mechanism. It seems that the government is also



underestimating the potential impact of this decision and has provided no indication of additional support for those suffering from alcohol misuse problems. The lockdown also means that Alcoholics Anonymous and other support meetings have abruptly halted. Many people in recovery from alcohol and other substance misuse problems are reliant on these. Yet, the minister of police simply warns people to stay sober.

While it is understandable that the government aimed to keep the regulations as simple as possible to ease enforcement, the derisive attitude of the leadership of the enforcers sug-

gests a lack of appreciation for the gravity, extremity and potentially harmful consequences of the regulations. Whereas there has been recognition and an attempt to mitigate the economic impact, mental health has been treated with indifference.

While the grave suffering it can cause cannot be discounted, mental illness can be fatal too. Social isolation is a strongly associated risk factor for suicide. Coupled with unprecedented, worldwide anxiety and uncertainty, and the sudden stripping of normal coping mechanisms, it would be foolish not to expect dire and significant mental health conse-

quences. Government has a responsibility to protect us all, and especially the vulnerable. Those with mental illness are particularly vulnerable under these circumstances.

As per the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, mental health and psychosocial support should be a core component of any public health response to the Covid-19 outbreak:

"Understanding and addressing mental health and psychosocial considerations will be key to stopping transmission and preventing the risk of long-term repercussion on the population's well-being and capacity to cope with adversity."

We can be sure of significant adversity facing our country in the coming years. We cannot afford to neglect our mental capacity to do so. While we engage in the most extreme measures to limit deaths from Covid-19, we cannot watch idly as suicide rates rise.

This article by the University of Cape Town's Alan J Flisher Centre for Public Mental Health makes useful suggestions on mitigations of the mental health impact. Dying from Covid-19 disease is not our only present threat. This is not a time to continue our neglect of mental health.

Need for govt's SME relief package to ensure fair deal for non-citizens

By Nomfundo Ramalekana and Sandy Fredman

ONLY by keeping the values of Ubuntu, equality, love and care at the front and centre of our response to Covid-19 will we be able to get through this epidemic as a global community. This applies in particular to support to people in SMEs and the informal sector who are foreign migrants.

The South African government's Debt Relief Finance Scheme is a lifeline for small businesses struggling to survive the lockdown. The scheme, launched by the Department of Small Business Development, is

designed to support small and medium enterprises "which are negatively affected, directly or indirectly, due to the coronavirus pandemic to mitigate against job losses and the expected harsh economic impact".

But many SMEs are left to face the crisis alone, even though they legally own businesses, provide vital local services, and employ people. This is because, in order to benefit from the relief scheme, a business must be 100% South African owned and 70% of its employees must be South African citizens.

In the midst of an unprecedented crisis, it remains crucial for the government to heed its

constitutional obligations.

Discrimination against non-citizens was declared unfair by the Constitutional Court over 20 years ago in *Larbi-Odam*, when it struck down a scheme requiring teachers to be citizens as a condition of permanent employment. Distinctions on the ground of citizenship, like those on the ground of race and gender, were recognised as capable of impairing the "fundamental human dignity of persons as human beings".

Nor, for this purpose, was there a distinction between non-citizens who were permanent residents and those who were temporary. In 2004, in *Khosa v*

Minister of Social Development, the court emphasised again that in the light of the inherent "equal dignity" of all, nobody should be unfairly discriminated against on the grounds of their citizenship.

The government might argue that, given that resources are limited, they should be reserved for South African citizens. But a similar argument, namely that it was legitimate to discriminate against non-citizens to reduce unemployment among South African teachers, was rejected by the Constitutional Court in *Larbi-Odam*. Although reducing unemployment for citizens might sometimes be legitimate,

it could not compromise the primary aim.

If the purpose of the Debt Relief Finance Scheme is to provide support to businesses negatively affected by Covid-19, in particular to mitigate job loss, the exclusionary criteria are arbitrary. In its current form, the relief scheme is likely to have a devastating impact on workers employed by businesses that do not meet the 100% South African ownership threshold or do not employ a minimum of 70% South African citizens. The South African government's Debt Relief Finance Scheme is a lifeline for both citizens and non-citizen workers. In a country which already has a

high-level of unemployment, this will have a devastating impact on the lives of many workers. Of course, the worst affected will be the black poor.

All SMEs, regardless of the patterns of ownership or employment, contribute to the economy, through providing employment, services and taxes. If the government is genuinely concerned to tie the relief to measures designed to secure jobs and keep the small and medium business running, there are clearly other, non-discriminatory means to do so.

The *Khosa* case is particularly pertinent here. In that case, the court was considering the con-

stitutionality of the exclusion of permanent residents from accessing social welfare. Finding the exclusion unconstitutional, the court reasoned that, in light of the contribution that non-citizens make to the welfare system through the payment of taxes, their exclusion from receiving social benefits creates the impression that they are inferior to citizens and less worthy of social assistance.

The same can be said about the government's Covid-19 relief package. The determining factor of whether a policy amounts to unfair discrimination is its impact on the person or group discriminated against.

Conservation groups fear wildlife trade will resume as China lifting restrictions

By Steve Sandford, Krabi, Thailand

CONSERVATION groups are concerned the wildlife trade will be allowed to resume as China begins to ease restrictions on movement and work in areas of the country hit hardest by COVID-19, which could pose a threat to human health.

The wildlife trade in Asia is big business; China's annual wildlife trade market is estimated to be worth more than \$7 billion, "and this goes up tenfold when you include the business surrounding it," according to Steve Galster, founder of Freeland, a Bangkok-based environmental conservation and human rights organization.

Most experts are calling for a permanent ban on the trade and consumption of wild animals.

"We're not talking about banning deer or duck hunting. We're talking about ending the global commercial

trade in wild animals," Galster said.

Asia's appetite for pangolins and other wildlife led to several virus outbreaks in the early 2000s including the SARS pandemic and bird flu.

Coronavirus transmission was believed to have occurred from bats to civets and pangolins, whose scales are highly valued in traditional Chinese medicine.

China temporarily shut down wildlife markets in January, warning that eating wild animals posed a health and safety threat. The country took similar action in 2003 during the spread of SARS, severe acute respiratory syndrome.

None of the past animal-borne diseases have had the coronavirus's devastating effect, though.

Dr. Wittaya Reongkovit, a Thai public health officer was working in Bangkok during the SARS outbreak that began in November 2002 and



A man wearing a protective face mask walks by a government poster promoting the protection of wildlife animals following the coronavirus outbreak, in Beijing, China.

spread to 29 countries, including Thailand.

"This pandemic is spreading faster right now but we also have better and faster communication in the era of big data on a real timeline and that is helping develop our newer biotechnology," Wittaya said.

"If they can ban the wildlife trade permanently it will be good because many people in

Asia like to eat the wildlife meat raw or barely cooked because it is in their tradition," he said.

"If you cook and clean the meat properly it is much safer but people in the poorer areas of Asia are without access to proper hygiene and nutrition."

As China continues easing restrictions in former COVID-19 hotbeds, conservation groups

say they will continue applying pressure to ban wildlife trade and the deadly viruses that come with it.

"There are divisions within the Chinese government now on whether to keep a strict ban, or eventually loosen it up," Galster said.

"If we don't treat the cause of this mess, current efforts will amount to expensive Band-Aids that need frequent changing," adds Galster.



NIDA streamlines its staff operations

By Francis Kajubi

THE National Identification Authority (NIDA) has pledged to continue transferring its staff to other public entities in efforts to solve complaints raised by the public and foster efficiency in its daily operations.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam over the weekend, NIDA's Director General, Dr Anorl Kihale told the press that his office was committed to seeing every department of the authority adhere to duties effectively especially at the present moment that millions of Tanzanians whom have already registered await for their national IDs.

"In a move to attract efficiency and transparency in the authority's operations I

have transferred 25 workers from the list of my staff to other public entities and get new ones from such entities to replace them. The transfer had been done between the 2nd and 3rd of April this year and they have all reported at their new places of work," said Dr Kihale.

According to him, the overnight immediate transfer of staff was the implementation of the directives issued by the Minister for Home Affairs George Simbachawene on 1st April that stressed on immediate actions to be put in place what he had portrayed as negligence by some of the authority's employees for not being fully responsible for their assigned duties hence tainting the institution image before the public.

The minister however ex-

plained that he would himself conduct a serious reshuffle if nothing was not done in a short time and would not hesitate to take stern actions.

"I would like to see NIDA playing its role accordingly rather than raising doubts and questions from the public against the authority's delivery capacity," said the minister last Wednesday when he spoke to the press in Dodoma.

Simbachawene further said that as of March 27 this year, about 21 million Tanzanians had been identified and registered out of the 27 million targeted in the process. Out of them 17.8 million Tanzanians had already received their national identification number (NIN) and six million have so far received their identity cards.

IEA calls for continued climate solutions investments amid COVID-19

PARIS

THE Executive Director of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Dr Fatih Birol, has urged stakeholders to not lose sight of climate change challenges as they tackle the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

He said that while the spread of COVID-19 "is turning into an unprecedented international crisis, with serious repercussions for people's health and economic activity... the effects are likely to be temporary."

Birol continued: "Meanwhile, the threat posed by climate change will remain. We should not allow today's crisis to compromise our efforts to tackle the world's inescapable chal-

lenge."

The IEA executive noted that as governments continue to draw up stimulus plans to counter the economic damage from coronavirus, these packages "offer an excellent opportunity to ensure that the essential task of building a secure and sustainable energy future doesn't get lost amid the flurry of immediate priorities".

He urged that large-scale investment to boost the development, deployment and integration of clean energy technologies such as solar, wind, hydrogen, batteries and carbon capture should be "a central part of governments' plans because it will bring the twin benefits of stimulating

economies and accelerating clean energy transitions.

"The progress this will achieve in transforming countries' energy infrastructure won't be temporary - it can make a lasting difference to our future."

Opportunities for investments

The IEA director highlighted that hydrogen and carbon capture, in particular, are in need of major investment to scale them up and bring down costs.

"This could be helped by current interest rate levels, which were already low and are declining further, making the financing of big projects more affordable. Governments can make clean energy even more

attractive to private investors by providing guarantees and contracts to reduce financial risks."

Birol said these steps are "extremely important because the combination of the coronavirus and volatile market conditions will distract the attention of policy makers, business leaders and investors away from clean energy transitions".

"This situation is a test of governments and companies' commitment. Observers will quickly notice if their emphasis on clean energy transitions fades when market conditions become more challenging."

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Birol also warns that the cor-

onavirus brings other dangers for clean energy transitions. "China, the country most heavily affected by the virus initially, is the main global production source of many clean energy technologies, such as solar panels, wind turbines and batteries for electric cars.

The Chinese economy was severely disrupted during the government's efforts to contain the virus, especially in February, causing potential supply chain bottlenecks for some technologies and components.

"This is why governments need to make sure they keep clean energy transitions front of mind as they respond to this fast-evolving crisis."

He cited IEA analysis that

shows that governments directly or indirectly drive more than 70% of global energy investments.

"They have a historic opportunity today to steer those investments onto a more sustainable path."

Join discussions on Investment and Strategy at the African Utility Week and POWERGEN Africa conference. Click here to register to attend or for more information about the event.

Birol concedes that we may well see CO2 emissions fall this year as a result of the impact of the coronavirus on economic activity, particularly transport, but adds that "it is very important to understand that

this would not be the result of governments and companies adopting new policies and strategies. It would most likely be a short-term blip that could well be followed by a rebound in emissions growth as economic activity ramps back up".

He stressed that governments "can use the current situation to step up their climate ambitions and launch sustainable stimulus packages focused on clean energy technologies.

The coronavirus crisis is already doing significant damage around the world. Rather than compounding the tragedy by allowing it to hinder clean energy transitions, we need to seize the opportunity to help accelerate them".

Coronavirus proves need for free healthcare for all – now

By Winnie Byanyima and Agencies

THE multi-layered crisis of the Coronavirus epidemic has been a dramatic shock to everyone. But, to communities affected by HIV and AIDS, the crisis has not only brought a further shock to already vulnerable people, it has brought other reactions too – a troubling sense of déjà vu, and a passionate, empathetic, fierce solidarity with all those affected by Coronavirus.

No two pandemics are the same. All require a specific, tailored, response. But we also have a duty, when dangerous, unjust and unsustainable structural weaknesses are exposed by one pandemic, left unresolved, and then jeopardize the fight against a second pandemic, to ensure that we don't wait for the third.

Everyone involved in the fight against AIDS is determined to do everything we can to support all those affected by the Coronavirus epidemic. We are by your side. We waited years for many of the breakthroughs we fought for, and we are still waiting for many others; we refuse to let leaders make you wait in this new crisis as they have made us wait. The time to fix the rips in our social fabric is now.

The HIV community has joined the emergency response in solidarity with those affected, and has joined too in insisting that leaders recognize that healthcare is a public good – that the health of each of us depends on the health of all of us.

Healthcare must be provided to all, free of charge, funded by public revenue. Quality health care is a human right, not a privilege, and should never depend on how much money you have in your pocket.

Governments must provide publicly funded health care for all people, through progressive tax systems in which everyone, including the super-rich and large corporations, pay their fair share. Public health systems must deliver services that reach people most in need.

As part of this, governments must support services which are community-led AND publicly-funded. Cutting-edge medicines and health care must be delivered affordably and to scale, to everyone no matter where they live.

User fees are false economy and a grave injustice – they are a tax on the sick that increases mortality and morbidity, and exacerbates poverty and inequities.

Decades of experience have shown that these charges deter people, especially low-income households, from using the health services they need, deepen poverty, and are highly inefficient and regressive ways to finance health care.

Their most obscene incarnation sees, in several countries, hospital wards turned into debtors' prisons of patients chained to their beds until their families sell assets or borrow from money-lenders to release their loved ones.

Even in other, more "moderate", incarnations user fees see families bankrupted or left landless and powerless by the costs of care, and people left to die because they can't afford the fees. Three people every

second are pushed into extreme poverty from paying for healthcare.

Charging for healthcare does not only hurt those directly affected – it puts all of us at risk. Covid-19 won't be stopped if some people can't afford testing or treatment.

As (former UN Secretary-General) Ban Ki-Moon noted in January, before this epidemic exploded: "Out-of-pocket health spending has been rising, meaning that more people are being impoverished because of health costs."

This not only undermines achieving universal health care, it is also a threat to global health security. High private health spending also inhibits progress towards other Sustainable Development Goals including eliminating poverty, reducing inequality and achieving gender equality."

After the horrors of World War II, several European countries and Japan introduced universal health care. After the financial and AIDS crises hit, Thailand did. All these universal health coverage (UHC) reforms delivered massive health and economic benefits to the people.

Now, in this crisis, leaders across the world have an opportunity to build the health systems that were always needed, and which now cannot be delayed any longer.

Countries don't have to be rich to provide free health care for all – as Sri Lanka has long shown. And the impact from removing fees is proven and profound. Jamaica saw improved access to health services among children and teenagers after it changed its policy on user fees in 2007, with the poorest people benefiting the most.

Sierra Leone showed that even in fragile settings, fee removals, properly planned and implemented, improve health systems and protect the vulnerable.

But globally the pace of progress is much too slow, and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic is testimony that financial leaders have underestimated the economic risks of low investments in equitable health.

In addressing the current crisis, one major practical action that leaders can implement immediately is to launch truly universal, publicly-financed health care reforms to cover their entire population – not only for Covid-19 services but for all services.

This would cost around 1-2% GDP in the short-term, not enormous compared with some of the massive fiscal stimuluses already being planned.

The international community too has a profound moral obligation, and collective self-interest, in backing the expansion of universal healthcare by supporting moratoriums on debt repayments to free up resources of developing countries to invest in their healthcare systems.

As the UN Secretary-General has urged leaders to remember, "we are only as strong as the weakest health system in our interconnected world."

Bilateral donors and international financial institutions including the World Bank and IMF should also offer grants – not loans – to address the social and economic impacts of the pandemic on the poor and most vulnerable groups, including informal sector workers and marginalized populations.

Most low-income countries are already highly indebted; it is immoral to push them to take more loans to fight an existential threat that the whole world is facing. A broad and equitable debt relief process is urgently needed not only to respond to the Covid-19 crisis but to shorten the recovery period and create conditions for growth.

Before Coronavirus hit, defenders of the unfair and unsustainable status quo in health claimed that the current patchwork, fragmented and wealth-



Kansime and her daughters arrive at the Mbarara Hospital. The three family members all live with HIV and go to the clinic regularly to collect their medication. "When I go to hospital, I am surrounded by other women who have come for treatment. We are there for the same reason," Kansime says. "This has helped me overcome stigma and given me strength." Credit: UNICEF

based system worked just fine. But the damage of that system has now been exposed to everybody. Health for all is central to resolving this pandemic.

The best time to provide health for all has already passed. And the second-best time is now.

Healthcare in Uganda

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia Jump to navigation Jump to search Uganda's health system is composed of health services delivered to the public sector, by private providers, and by traditional and complementary health practitioners. It also includes community-based health care and health promotion activities.

Structure of health system

The not-for-profit providers are run on a national and local basis and 78 per cent are religiously based. Three main providers include the Uganda Catholic Medical Bureau, Uganda Protestant Medical Bureau, and the Uganda Muslim Medical Bureau. Nongovernmental organizations have emerged as the prominent not-for-profit organizations for HIV/AIDS counseling and treatment. The for-profit providers include clinics and informal drug stores. Formal providers include medical and dental practitioners, nurses and midwives, pharmacies, and allied health

professionals.[2] Traditional providers include herbalists, spiritual healers, traditional birth attendants, hydro therapists, etc.

Uganda's health system is divided into national and district-based levels. At the national level are the national referral hospitals, regional referral hospitals, and semi-autonomous institutions including the Uganda Blood Transfusion Services, the Uganda National Medical Stores, the Uganda Public Health Laboratories and the Uganda National Health Research Organization (UNHRO). The aim of Uganda's health system is to deliver the national minimum health care package. Uganda runs a decentralized health system with national and district levels.

The lowest rung of the district-based health system consists of Village Health Teams (VHTs). These are volunteer community health workers who deliver predominantly health education, preventive services, and simple curative services in communities. They constitute level I health services. The next level is Health Center II, which is an out-patient service run by a nurse. It is intended to serve 5000 people. Next in level is Health Center III (HCIII) which serves 10,000 people and provides in addition to HC II services, in-patient, simple diagnostic, and maternal health services. It is managed by a clinical officer. Above HC III is the Health Center IV, run by a medical doctor and providing surgical services in addition to all the services provided at HC III. HC IV is also intended to provide blood transfusion services and comprehensive emergency obstetric care.

In terms of governance, the MOH is currently implementing the HSSIP, which is the third iteration of health sector strategies. The MOH coordinates stakeholders and is responsible for planning, budgeting, policy formulation, and regulation.

According to a 2006 published report, the health sector at the district and sub-district level is governed by the district health management team (DHMT). The DHMT is led by the district health officer (DHO) and consists of managers of various health departments in the district. The heads of health sub-districts (HC IV managers) are included on the DHMT. The DHMT oversees implementation of health services in the district, ensuring coherence with national policies. A Health Unit Management Committee (HUMC) composed of health staff, civil society, and community leaders is charged with linking health facility governance with community needs.

In addition, the Uganda Medical Association (UMA) seeks to "provide programs that support the social welfare and professional interests of medical doctors in Uganda and to promote universal access to quality health and health care." However, the government's failure to improve the compensation of doctors, as well as failing to conduct a review of the supply of medicines and other equipment in health centres across the country, led to a UMA strike in November 2017, effectively paralysing Uganda's health system.

Health system reforms

At the beginning of the 21st century, the government of Uganda began implementing a series of health sector reforms that were aimed at improving the poor health indicators prevailing at the time. A Sector-Wide Approach (SWAp) was introduced in 2001 to consolidate health financing. Another demand side reform introduced in the same year was the abolition of user fees at public health facilities, which triggered a surge in outpatient attendances across the country.

Decentralization of health services began in the mid-1990s alongside wider devolution of all public administration, and was sealed in 1998 with the definition of the health sub-district. Implementation of the health sub-district concept extended into the early 2000s.

To improve medicines management and availability, the government of Uganda made medicines available to private-not-for-profit (PNFP) providers. With decentralization of health services, a "pull" system was instituted in which district and health facility managers were granted autonomy to procure medicines they needed in the required quantities from the national medical stores, within pre-set financial earmarks. The result was better availability of

medicines.

Health system performance

A comprehensive review of Uganda's Health System conducted in 2011 by USAID uncovered strengths and weaknesses of the health system, organized around the six technical building blocks of health system that were defined by the WHO. In summary, the assessment found that whereas significant efforts are being implemented to qualitatively and quantitatively improve health in Uganda, more needs to be done to focus on the poor, improve engagement of the private-for-profit sector, enhance efficiency, strengthen stakeholder coordination, improve service quality, and stimulate consumer-based advocacy for better health.

The Ministry of Health (MOH) also conducts annual health sector performance appraisals that assess health system performance and monitor progress in delivery of the UNMHCP. The 2011 USAID report assessing Uganda's health care system pointed to the fact that the UNMHCP often sets health sector targets and activities without an adequate analysis of the costs involved or the implementation of measures to allocate required resources appropriately.

A number of factors affect the quality of services in Uganda, including the shortage of healthcare workers and lack of trust in them, a lack of needed treatments, high costs, and long distances to facilities. In 2009, a survey conducted of Ugandan patients indicated a decline in the performance of the public sector health services. These were indicated through comments about poor sanitation, a lack of professionals and drugs and equipment, long wait times, inadequate preventative care, a poor referral system, rude health workers, and lack of services for vulnerable populations like the poor and elderly. The quality of services affects utilization in different ways, including preventing patients from seeking out delivery services or leading them to see traditional providers, self-medicate, and decide not to seek formal care or seeing private providers.

Health workforce

There is a significant shortage of health workers in Uganda. A Human Resources for Health Policy is in place to guide recruitment, deployment, and retention of health staff. In spite of this, shortages of health workers persist. According to a 2009 published report, there is one doctor for every 7,272 Ugandans. The related statistic is 1:36,810 for nurse/midwifery professionals. The shortages are worse in rural areas where 80 per cent of the population resides, as 70 per cent of all doctors are practicing in urban areas. There are 61 institutions that train health workers, with five medical colleges, twenty-seven allied health training schools, and twenty nine nursing schools.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 81 00--

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

3 LETTERS: CRY, ICE, ORE
 4 LETTERS: LOAD, SOME, ODDS, RACE, AIDE, GOLD, MALL
 5 LETTERS: ADAPT, DODGE, SEMEN, ACRES, CHEER
 6 LETTERS: EMPIRE, MAIDEN, AGENDA, ASSIST, ENDURE
 7 LETTERS: MANDELA
 8 LETTERS: CLIMATES
 10 LETTERS: SUGARCANES

CLUES: Across
 1 New country in Africa
 5 laid by female birds
 7 a church decree
 8 a tripod frame used to support an artist's canvas
 10 deploy as a means of achieving something
 11 to choose
 13 a chemical substance soluble in water, sour in taste
 15 a piece of writing on a topic
 17 officials who watch matches to ensure that rules are adhered to
 19 a thought
 20 something forming an edge or border

Down:
 1 stalk of a plant
 2 to try to make someone to do something
 3 a kind of freehold tenure based on interrupted possession
 4 to awaken
 6 the exchange of goods for money
 7 part in the middle
 9 responded to something
 12 Lake Victoria in Kenya
 14 fear, horror
 16 a soft lustre on a surface
 17 one of many narrow bones
 18 money charged for something

WORD-FIT

CROSSWORD

SOLUTIONS

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WIRED

Vodacom's director assures businesses of connectivity in spite of Covid-19

By Guardian Reporter

AS the country grapples with the coronavirus outbreak with a partial lockdown ordered by President John Magufuli almost two weeks ago, Vodacom Tanzania Plc has assured customers of improved connectivity to learn and work from homes.

Vodacom's Business Director, Arjun Dhillon said the company is well positioned to support businesses, learning institutions and organizations continue operations but also keeping people connected during these unprecedented times.

"Vodacom Tanzania provides critical connectivity and communications infrastructure across the country. We have invested billions improving our infrastructure in the past 20 years and in recent days we have seen how critical it is, we con-

tinue to improve our capacity and minimizing congestions as more customers' demand ICT infrastructure to work remotely," Dhillon said in a statement on Friday.

He said the telco is stretching every resource available to the maximum to ensure that customers stay connected, and that organizations in both the private and public sectors continue to operate efficiently whilst working remotely.

"In response to helping our business and corporate clients reduce unnecessary movements, we have introduced DocuSign e-signature platform to assist with the signing of various company documents electronically," he said.

Dhillon further pointed out that with the new technology, company directors and managers can remotely sign and approve documents for customers without hav-

ing to meet them physically which will not only improve efficiency in terms of time saved but also protect customers and staff from Covid-19 contracting.

"We also have digital channels that can help our customers and businesses to work from home ensuring they stay connected at all times.

My Vodacom App, M-Pesa App and Vodacom Business portals allow customers to do more without having to move from their homes,

for example buy airtime and bundles, pay employee wages, make service etc," the Vodacom Business Director added.

The local market leading telco also provides customers with mobile connectivity or through fixed data networks, cloud and hosting or Internet of Things (IoT).

"Our internet is available for businesses and prepaid customers to support remote working. Our SME customers can now use Kasi which gives them unlimited data bundles

without need for contract signing," he noted.

On her part, Vodacom's Director Corporate Affairs, Rosalynn Mworira said with schools closed with children still in need of keeping their minds occupied, the company is offering home internet using fixed lines, Mifi of routers.

"In addition to zero rating critical websites for Tanzanians to access reliable information on the status of corona virus, we have also zero rated some learning websites that

students can use to study while at home with no internet such as Instant Schools and Shule Direct," Mworira noted.

She further added that the telco is taking a flexible approach to support its customers while remaining safe too - with additional support channels, emails and phone numbers.

"Our guarantee to business customers is that we are doing our utmost to ensure you get quality and reliable connectivity," she added.



Vodacom's Business Director, Arjun Dhillon

CONTINGENCY

EcoGraf implements actions to preserve shareholder funds amid COVID-19 pandemic

SYDNEY

ECOGRAF Ltd (ASX:EGR) has implemented several actions to preserve shareholder funds amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic while maintaining the positive business progress that has been achieved in recent months.

Non-executive directors have agreed to waive their fees and the managing director, executive director and management salaries will be reduced by 50% with salary payments currently suspended. The executive director

salary reduction is in addition to the 50% reduction made last year to reduce costs in Tanzania.

Additionally, since the beginning of the year, EcoGraf has reduced all non-essential project development expenditure in Tanzania as it focuses on progressing the US\$60 million KfW-IPEX Bank debt financing proposal.

In its latest business and financing update, the company stated that the measures it is taking reflect their commitment to aligning interests with long-term shareholders and stakeholders

as well as their determination to build a successful graphite business to become a major, long-term supplier of responsibly produced graphite products.

"Business as usual" basis

In recent weeks, the company's personnel have transitioned to remote working arrangements in accordance with government requirements. EcoGraf continues to operate on a 'business as usual' basis, using video and teleconferencing facilities to progress project development programs and discussions with potential

customers, debt financiers and external consultants.

Kwinana Battery Graphite facility

The company's key focus is to finalise funding arrangements for the Kwinana Battery Graphite facility. The Australian government agency Export Finance Australia has confirmed, subject to completing a detailed assessment of the project, it will consider the provision of debt finance for the new US\$72 million development.

EcoGraf is currently assisting Export Finance Australia to

complete the necessary commercial and technical due diligence processes for the potential debt financing arrangements, while also engaging with potential customers to secure offtake arrangements, finalising construction arrangements and completing permitting for the 6.7ha industrial site.

Epanko financing

On March 20 the company submitted a US\$60 million financing proposal to the Government of Tanzania for the construction of the new Epanko Graphite Mine.

The proposal was developed in conjunction with KfW IPEX-Bank with the aim of simplifying and fast-tracking the entire debt financing process in Tanzania.

With an operating life of more than 40 years, the Epanko Graphite Mine is forecast to provide intergenerational benefits for the regional community and will directly contribute over US\$2 billion to Tanzania through local procurement of goods and services, employment, royalties, taxes, dividends and inspection fees.

Subject to reaching an agree-

ment with the Government of Tanzania, the company and KfW IPEXBank are ready to proceed to prepare formal loan documentation that will enable the proposed financing arrangements to be implemented. The on-going support the company has received from KfW IPEX-Bank and offtake customers in Germany and Asia has been critical to this process and EcoGraf remains committed to establishing Epanko as a new supplier of responsibly produced, high-quality natural flake graphite products.

FEARS

As China reopens, Africa's woes threaten to starve its factories

JOHANNESBURG

ON a typical workday, hundreds of thousands of men clad in overalls and carrying safety equipment and head lamps assemble at South Africa's mine shafts. They crowd into cramped elevators to be lowered miles underground, where they hack at seams of gold or platinum and haul ore in intense heat and humidity. After hours of backbreaking labour, they return to the surface to shower in communal areas, and many share meals and bed down in crowded hostels.

These aren't typical days.

South Africa on March 26 imposed a three-week lockdown to fight the coronavirus, confining millions in their homes and shuttering most businesses - including the mines that are the first link in a global supply chain that passes through smartphone factories in China and auto plants in Detroit, Turin, or Tokyo, and ends in stores and showrooms around the world.

Even as Asia slowly reopens after its lockdown, factories there risk running short on supplies as the virus spreads to countries that produce vital raw materials. And nowhere is the problem a bigger issue than in Africa, which provides the metals and minerals needed for just about every industrial product, and where countries heavily reliant on trade with China have been suffering from a collapse in commodity prices.

While the number of confirmed coronavirus cases across Africa remains low compared to other parts of the world - some 7 000 cases on a continent of 1.3 billion people - social distancing is a luxury the region can scarcely afford. Most governments lack the resources to enforce effective containment measures, and health systems risk buckling if the disease reaches Africa's crowded shantytowns and slums.

"For Africa, it will be much harder than you imagine," said Auret van Heerden, chief executive officer of Equiception, a supply-chain consultancy in Geneva. "They've survived Ebola, they cope with malaria and tuberculosis, but I don't think they've had anything quite this infectious."

The African mines that produce raw materials for factories across the globe are bracing for the arrival of the virus. In South Africa, Kumba Iron Ore, the continent's largest iron-ore producer, and Anglo American Platinum and Sibanye Stillwater, the world's top platinum vendors, have curtailed most of their output. Chrome and manganese mines, which supply ingredients for steel, have been largely shuttered.

In Luabala, a province of Democratic Republic of Congo that is a major provider of copper and cobalt used in rechargeable batteries, mines remain open but the work force has been limited to essential personnel to minimise the risk of contagion. Tenke



Lights from miners safety helmets illuminate the mine shaft during a media tour of the Sibanye-Stillwater Khuseleka platinum mine, operated by Sibanye Gold.

Fungurume, a mine owned by China Molybdenum, has been put into isolation, with about 2 000 people ordered to stay on site and avoid "contact with the outside world," according to a memo circulated to staff.

Even facilities that keep producing risk interruptions in getting their goods to market. In the best of times, Africa's transport networks are fragmented and inefficient, and its ports and customs services are notoriously slow. Today, most African countries have closed their borders, and several have limited internal travel or im-

posed lockdowns. While cargo is usually exempted from the restrictions, increased security controls, sanitation measures, and reduced staff at ports and railways threaten severe delays.

Most copper and cobalt from Congo's mines, for instance, moves via truck through Zambia and then to ports in South Africa and Tanzania. While cargo carriers can still cross into Zambia, new sanitation measures have led to 25-mile backups at the border.

In Kenya, a dusk-to-dawn curfew

has resulted in a pileup of goods at ports, driving up freight costs by almost a third, according to Dennis Ombok, chief executive of the Kenya Transporters Association, which represents truck-fleet owners. Even though essential goods are officially exempted, drivers are being harassed by police, Ombok said.

"It's taking up to three days to clear at the border between Kenya and Uganda," he said. "The police need to tone down how they're handling transporters. We're carrying food and raw materials. These are essential."

In South Africa, the port of Durban, the busiest in sub-Saharan Africa and serving landlocked Zambia and Zimbabwe, limited operations to essential cargo, and police stopped all trucks carrying other goods for several days. On Thursday, the order was reversed to help ease massive congestion at the port. Amid the confusion, First Quantum Minerals, which accounts for more than half of Zambia's copper production, says it has started making alternative shipping plans.

At the main crossing between Zambia and Congo, more than 1 000 trucks carrying food, equipment, and supplies for mines had to queue last week after a partial lockdown came into effect. For now, Zambia has managed to help ease massive congestion at the port. Amid the confusion, First Quantum Minerals, which accounts for more than half of Zambia's copper production, says it has started making alternative shipping plans.

And global trade moves in many directions these days, so mines are facing potential shortages of crucial imports needed to keep operating as suppliers worldwide curtail production; sulfuric acid, for instance, is critical in copper processing.

Both Zambia and Namibia, which ships copper and uranium to China, have raised the alarm over looming shortages of key chemicals for their mines. "Most if not all our mining companies get inputs from China," said Veston Malango, head of Namibia's Chamber of Mines. "And we have not been able to do that."

CONFIDENCE

Prof Mwandosya salutes new Stanbic CEO

By Guardian Reporter

AS a new CEO takes over at Stanbic Bank Tanzania Limited, Board Chairperson Professor Mark Mwandosya has expressed confidence in Kevin Wingfield saying he will continue with strong

performance of the bank.

In a statement on Friday, Prof Mwandosya said Wingfield who took over from Ken Cockerill starting April 1 has the qualifications and experience to maintain good performance of the bank which is one of the most stable in

the market.

"Wingfield has the leadership, expertise and years of experience working in various markets throughout Africa. We are confident that the bank will continue to grow and contribute towards helping the country attain its

development vision under his leadership," the veteran politician said.

Wingfield takes over from Ken Cockerill who was recently appointed as CEO for Standard Lesotho Bank. Wingfield joined the Standard Bank Group in 1998 and

has since held various positions within the group.

With over 20 years banking experience, Wingfield brings a wealth of expertise from his various roles which include; Director Customer Strategy and Channel Development, Personal and Busi-

ness Banking, Standard Bank Africa; Head Personal and Business Banking, Stanbic Bank Ghana; and Head Personal and Business Banking and Executive Director, Stanbic Bank Uganda.

In his new role, Wingfield is expected to drive the

bank's growth and continue to spearhead innovations that will empower the financial success of individuals and businesses in Tanzania as well as support the country's economic growth plans to industrialize and develop essential infrastructure.



New Stanbic Bank Tanzania Limited's CEO, Kevin Wingfield.

CHARITY

Covid-19: Local manufacturer donates 6000 rapid testing kits

KIGALI

AMIDST the ongoing efforts to contain the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, C&D Pink Mango, a local textile industry, has donated different medical supplies to the government of Rwanda.

The support includes 6,000 rapid test kits which Denis Ndemezo, the company's Deputy Managing Director says were very impactful to contain the virus in China. China was the first country that was ravaged by the virus, at the beginning of the year.

"These kits helped China contain the virus because they take a very short time to return the results; it only takes five minutes or less," he said in an interview with The New Times. The

support also comprises 10,000 masks dedicated to health professionals who might contract the virus in different ways of providing care to patients.

According to him, the population's health comes first for the textile firm. "Our main concern is not just about business and profit-making, we employ more than 1,000 Rwandans whose health has to be maintained through good working conditions.

Therefore, it is in our interest to participate in the government's plan to mitigate the pandemic," Ndemezo added. He told the media that 5,000 test kits are already in the country, adding that the remaining 1,000 are also on the way.

C&D Pink Mango is a textile industry located in Kigali Special Economic

Zone. Its major products are exported and it is owned by a Chinese national Gordon Gu and his Rwandan partner Maryse Mbonyumutwa.

Dr Sabin Nsanzimana, the Director-General of Rwanda Biomedical Centre hailed the donation and confirmed the utility of those kits accordingly. "The RDTS were validated for use in patients with advanced infections and follow up after antibodies are informed. Therefore, we confirm their useful utility," he said.

Rwanda has so far registered 89 confirmed cases of people infected with COVID-19, a pandemic that has reached 180 countries across the globe. Globally, over a million people have been diagnosed with the virus, while the current death toll stands at 59,000.

WARNING

Cigarette ban could force 11 million smokers to seek illicit traders, industry warns

CAPE TOWN

GOVERNMENT'S decision to ban cigarette sales during the coronavirus lockdown period will unintentionally give rise to illicit trade in tobacco as smokers are highly likely to end up buying from underground traders selling illicit products, SA tobacco manufacturer British American Tobacco South Africa (BATSA) warned on Saturday.

In its view, this would result in a setback for the recent strides made by government to try and clamp down on the illicit tobacco trade. Earlier this week, SA Revenue Service commissioner Edward Kieswetter said it would have to "start from scratch" in its efforts to find a service provider that can help it clamp down on illicit cigarette trade. He said revenue collections for the 2019/20 tax year include taxes on cigarettes which grew 9.3% to R127 billion.

BATSA has 78% of the market share of the legal cigarette market in SA. It sells its cigarettes through 50 000 outlets in the country. In 2019, BAT South Africa contributed R13 billion in total taxes, of which R10 billion was tobacco excise.

"[The cigarette sales ban] will unintentionally force 11 million smokers to go outside of their neighbourhoods in search of outlets willing to defy the ban, as we've seen in some media reports," BATSA says in a statement.

"This would lead to greater movement of people and more interactions than if smokers were able to buy cigarettes at their nearest legal outlet at the same time as buying all their other essential goods."

While the company says it supports governments efforts to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, it would like to



SA Revenue Service commissioner Edward Kieswetter

see practical and enforceable solutions implemented. "We recommend that smokers be allowed to purchase cigarettes as part of their purchases of essential goods at a supermarket, grocer, petrol forecourt and spaza closest to their home," urges BATSA.

Furthermore, the company is

concerned that a recent lifting of restrictions on the movement of non-essential freight across the country's borders, actually opens the door to the smuggling of illicit tobacco as this is one of the ways through which these cigarettes reach the SA market, according to BATSA.

"While we support the need to facilitate continued trade, we are deeply concerned that allowing cargo imports, on the one hand, while preventing local manufacturers such as BAT from manufacturing or selling their own products, on the other, will further penalise local manufacturers, to the benefit of illicit imports," it says.

It also points out that BATSA exports to some countries which are not currently under lockdown. The Fair Trade Independent Tobacco Association (Fita), also urges government to reconsider the nationwide prohibition of the sale of cigarettes.

It said in a statement on Saturday that it fully supports a recommendation by the Democratic Alliance (DA) to national government for the unbanning of the sale of "non-essential" goods in retail stores that are currently trading.

It hopes more clarity will be provided after a government meeting apparently set to take place on Saturday. Fita believes the benefits of such a step would far outweigh the

negatives. It too acknowledges that the lockdown measures have been put in place for a good reason.

Yet, it feels a need to provide government with more input in this regard on proposals which, in its view, would better suit trading in the current situation. "It is also of great concern that there have been increases in incidents of break-ins and thefts from shops and storage facilities which stock these so-called 'non-essential' goods," states Fita.

"We have no doubt that this, in turn, will feed underground markets and overload an already struggling and overloaded criminal justice system were the perpetrators to be apprehended by law enforcement agents."

Like BATSA, Fita foresees that, out of desperation, people will contravene the lockdown regulations in order to obtain goods deemed as "non-essential." "Those involved in the illicit trading of these goods have exploited the 'gap in the market' and are supplying citizens who are now

resorting to acts of criminality to obtain these goods at all costs," says Fita.

"Uplifting the ban would, amongst other things, bring more money into the state coffers, stimulate the economy, and decrease the psychological impact on South Africans of the lockdown period." Last year SARS issued a tender to find a service provider for production management of a "track-and-trace" solution that would be used to monitor the movement of cigarettes from production to sale. This is to ensure that no tax revenue would be lost to SARS through the illicit economy.

News24 reported that on Thursday Police Minister Bheki Cele warned that the police will crack down on businesses selling cigarettes in the Western Cape. This after the DA-led Western Cape government lifted it on Wednesday, saying cigarettes may be sold during the lockdown, but only together with essential goods. Cele emphasised that the ban on cigarette sales is nationwide.

OUTSTANDING

Britam emerges from loss with over 3.5 billion shillings profit

KIGALI

BRITAM Holdings #BRTM has emerged from a loss to post an all-time high net profit of Sh3.54 billion helped by growth in insurance revenue and appreciation in value of financial assets such as shares on the Nairobi bourse.

The profit recorded in the financial year ended December 2019 is a recovery from a loss of Sh2.21 billion posted the previous year. The latest earning is the best in the history of the diversified financial services firm. The last time it posted a net profit close to this was in 2010 when profit was at Sh2.71 billion.

Britam will be under pressure to maintain the performance, with Group managing director Benson Wairegi saying that 2020 is presenting a challenging business environment. "There are a number of key global and regional risks that affect the group including Covid-19, locusts' invasion and a decline in the stock market performance," said Mr Wairegi.



Group managing director Benson Wairegi.

"We are optimistic that there will be concerted effort to mitigate effects of these adverse developments to the

economies and the world at large." Net earned revenue from premiums and fund management fees rose by 8.9 per-

cent to Sh23.65 billion.

Gains on financial assets improved significantly to Sh4.78 billion in con-

trast with previous year's loss of Sh3.05 billion. This was a key driver in Britam's strong bottom-line. The financial assets include shares listed at the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE), unquoted ordinary shares, government securities, corporate bonds, unit trust and investment in property funds.

The value of investment assets such as stocks, bonds and real estate, collectively rose by Sh22.9 billion or 27 percent to Sh107.8 billion. The listed firm said that it posted improved returns from equities and fixed income investment at the NSE. Last year, the NSE market capitalisation was up 21.44 per cent or Sh400 billion to hit Sh2.5 trillion, meaning that the value of shares was on a rise.

Britam Life Assurance, which offers life covers, posted a net profit of Sh2.54 billion from a Sh567.6 million loss. Its total income grew by 51 percent to Sh22.4 billion during this period. However, Britam General Insurance, also part of Britam Holdings, saw its net loss widen 3.6 times to Sh185.4 million on reduced income and increased expenses.

Britam Asset Managers, another company within Britam Holdings, posted a loss of Sh124.3 million from a profit of Sh41.9 million the previous year as income dropped and expenses rose. Assets under management grew by 55 percent to Sh227 billion during the reporting period.

WORLD

Pope Francis opens Holy Week amid pandemic; says now is the time to serve

VATICAN CITY

POPE Francis marked a surreal Palm Sunday in an empty St. Peter's Basilica, urging people living through the coronavirus pandemic not to be so concerned with what they lack but how they can ease the suffering of others.

The service, kicking off Holy Week events leading to Easter, usually attracts tens of thousands of people to a St. Peter's Square bedecked with olive and palm trees. The service normally includes a long procession of cardinals, priests and faithful carrying palm fronds.

This time, it was held from a secondary altar behind the main one Francis normally uses and attended by only about two dozen people, including a few aides, nuns and a scaled-down

choir, all practicing social distancing. The symbolic procession was only several meters long and a few potted olive trees were brought in.

The Mass was broadcast on television and over the internet to many millions. Churches in countries around the world were holding similar, virtual services this week because of restrictions on gatherings.

Cutting a solitary figure, Francis listened as three priests read the gospel account of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and being hailed as the messiah.

Holy Week marks the period when Christians commemorate events surrounding the key tenets of their faith - that Jesus was betrayed, crucified and rose from the dead.

In his sermon, Francis urged his listeners to turn to God "in the tragedy of



Pope Francis leads the Palm Sunday mass in St. Peter's Basilica without public participation due to the spread of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), at the Vatican yesterday. REUTERS

a pandemic, in the face of the many false securities that have now crumbled, in the face of so many hopes betrayed, in the sense of abandonment that weighs upon our hearts".

The pandemic could help transform fear into service, he said.

The Vatican has been in its own lockdown, mostly mirroring that in Italy, where more than 15,500 people have died since the outbreak of the new coronavirus epidemic in northern Italy on Feb. 21.

There are nearly 125,000 cases of the virus in Italy and seven in the Vatican. The pope and his closest aides have tested negative.

"The tragedy we are experiencing summons us to take seriously the things that are serious, and

not to be caught up in those that matter less; to rediscover that life is of no use if not used to serve others. For life is measured by love," Francis said on Sunday.

"May we reach out to those who are suffering and those most in need. May we not be concerned about what we lack, but what good we can do for others," he said.

All of the pope's Holy Week services, which normally draw tens of thousands of pilgrims and tourists to Rome, will take place in the empty basilica in a scaled-down version.

The Good Friday Via Crucis (Way of the Cross) procession, which normally takes place around Rome's Colosseum, will instead be held in the relatively small atrium of the basilica.

Trump steps up oil tariff threat amid Saudi-Russia rift

WASHINGTON



US President Donald Trump said on Saturday he would impose tariffs on crude imports if he has to "protect" US energy workers from the oil price crash that has been exacerbated by a war between Russia and Saudi Arabia over market share.

"If I have to do tariffs on oil coming from outside or if I have to do something to protect our ... tens of thousands of energy workers and our great companies that produce all these jobs, I'll do whatever I have to do," Trump told reporters in a briefing about the coronavirus outbreak.

Oil prices have dropped by about two-thirds this year as the pandemic crushes demand and as major producers Russia and Saudi Arabia boost output in a war over market share.

The United States in recent years has become the world's biggest oil producer, at times putting its exports in competition with Russia and members of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries, or OPEC.

As oil prices drop, many heavily leveraged US energy companies face bankruptcies and workers are at risk of layoffs. After meeting with industry executives on Friday, Trump said he was not considering tariffs at the moment, but it was a tool that could be used "if we're not treated fairly."

Two major industry groups, the American Petroleum Institute and American Fuel & Petrochemical Manufacturers, told Trump in a letter on Wednesday that tariffs on oil imports would jeopardize the domestic refining business as some plants depend on crude from abroad.

The US imported more 1 million barrels per day of oil from Russia and Saudi Arabia combined in 2019, according to the US Energy Information Administration.

Trump reiterated on Saturday that Saudi Arabia had told him it had agreed with Russia to jointly reduce output by an unprecedented 10 million barrels per day or more. The countries have not confirmed the plan, other than saying they would discuss ways to stabilize global oil markets.

OPEC and Russia have postponed a Monday meeting to discuss oil output cuts until April 9, OPEC sources said, due to a Saudi-Russia dispute over who is to blame for plunging crude prices.

When oil prices started dropping last month, Trump initially emphasized it would be good for motorists. On Saturday he said gasoline prices could fall to 90 cents a gallon and conceded that the oil price crash is "going to hurt a lot of jobs in our country."

Agencies

Planned \$1 billion US aid cut would hit Afghan security force funds

WASHINGTON

A PLANNED \$1 billion cut in U.S. aid to Afghanistan would come from funds for Afghan security forces, according to three U.S. sources, a step experts said would undercut both Kabul's ability to fight the Taliban and its leverage to negotiate a peace deal with them.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced the reduction on March 23 and threatened to slash the same amount next year to try to force Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his political rival Abdullah Abdullah to end a feud that has helped stall U.S.-led peace-making efforts in Afghanistan.

After nearly 20 years of fighting the Taliban, the United States is looking for a way to extricate itself and to achieve peace between the U.S.-backed government and the militant group, which controls more than 40% of Afghan territory.

Pompeo and other U.S. officials have declined to publicly detail how the cut would be made. The State Department declined to comment on its plans.

Two U.S. congressional aides,

speaking on condition of anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter, said State Department officials told Congress the \$1 billion would come from a \$4.2 billion Pentagon fund that underwrites about three quarters of the Afghan security forces' annual budget.

"The idea they would cut security forces funding goes against U.S. national security interests," said one aide, arguing the money is needed to maintain the U.S.-backed government's ability to fight the Taliban while preserving its bargaining power in peace talks.

Most of the fund pays for salaries, food, fuel, equipment and infrastructure to support Afghan troops and national police.

Congress appropriated at least \$86.4 billion for Afghan security assistance between fiscal years 2002 and 2019, according to a March 11 Congressional Research Service report.

"That's the only fund large enough to support a \$1 billion cut," said the third source, a former U.S. military official who also requested anonymity.

U.S. civilian aid is far lower, with the State Department requesting



Afghan National Army (ANA) soldiers stand guard at a check point near the Bagram Airbase north of Kabul, Afghanistan April 2, 2020. REUTERS

\$532.8 million this year, mainly for general economic support as well as for counter-narcotics and law enforcement.

Pompeo announced the cut as he flew home from Kabul after failing to persuade Ghani and Abdullah to end a dispute over Afghanistan's September 2019 presidential election.

Both men claim they won and have held rival inaugurations.

Pompeo said the cut could be reversed if the two resolved their dispute, which had stymied naming an Afghan delegation to negotiate peace with the Taliban after decades of war.

His threat appears to have had some impact.

On March 26, Ghani announced a negotiating team including Abdullah allies and Abdullah endorsed the slate on March 31.

Government and Taliban officials have also agreed to start prisoner releases as a prelude to peace talks envisaged under a Feb. 29 U.S.-Taliban deal for a phased U.S. troop withdrawal.

Laurel Miller, a former State Department official handling Afghanistan policy, said a \$1 billion cut would take time to be felt but would hurt Afghan security operations and morale.

It would also allow the Taliban to start peace talks "riding high," said Miller, now at the International Crisis Group think tank.

In the meantime, the Ghani-Abdullah dispute has persisted.

"THEY WILL BE TOAST"

A U.S. defense official, who said the administration was still weighing where to make the cut, described "huge concern" within the Pentagon about slashing funding for Afghan forces.

"We really don't want to have to do this," said the official on condition of anonymity, while acknowledging it made sense to target those funds because of the leverage it gave Washington.

"That is the pain point. That is what they care about a lot," said the official, adding that there were internal talks about whether enough progress has been made for Pompeo to withdraw the threatened cut.

The former U.S. military official said the proposed cut reflects U.S. President Donald Trump's determination to bring U.S. forces home from the longest conflict in American history.

Agencies

Germany, France say Americans play dirty over masks

BERLIN

THE scarcity of safety equipment essential to the coronavirus fight is fueling tensions between longtime transatlantic allies, with local officials in France and Germany accusing unnamed Americans of using unfair means to obtain protective masks.

Berlin's state interior ministry blamed the US for confiscating 200,000 masks ordered from a US producer when they were in transit through Bangkok. French officials have accused unidentified Americans of paying over the odds to secure masks in China that had already been earmarked for France.

The US embassy in Paris said any suggestion that the federal government was involved in such practices was "completely false." There was no immediate response to the allegations from the White House or the State Department.

"We view this as an act of modern piracy," Berlin Interior Minister Andreas Geisel said. "You cannot act in such a way among transatlantic partners. Such wild west methods can't dominate, even in a time of global crisis."

With hundreds of western citizens dying each day, the incidents highlight the fundamental distrust between the US and Europe. It risks hampering efforts to collectively tackle the damage unleashed by a virus that has brought the world's economy to a standstill.

French Prime minister Edouard Philippe said Thursday that his administration has seen orders canceled as a result of the global shortage of protective gear. Some French officials are blaming unidentified Americans for swooping in to outbid them as they try to secure supplies.

"A load was taken from us by Americans who overbid on a batch that we had identified," Valerie Pecresse, regional president of Paris, told broadcaster LCI Thursday. "We pay on delivery because we want to see the masks, while Americans pay cash and without looking." She didn't say whether the people involved were federal officials, company representatives or private individuals.

The pandemic has left governments, companies, charities and individuals around the world competing for scarce supplies of protective kit and medical equipment as health care systems face an unprecedented surge of highly infectious patients with acute, sometimes deadly respiratory problems.

Russia seeks constructive talks on stabilising global oil market

MOSCOW

RUSSIA is set for constructive negotiations aimed at stabilizing global energy market, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in an interview with "Moscow Kremlin. Putin" TV program on Rossiya-1 TV channel.

"Russia did not back the termination of OPEC+ deal. President Vladimir Putin and the Russian side in general are determined for a constructive negotiating

process, and there is no alternative to it in terms of stabilizing international energy market," Peskov (pictured) said.

According to Peskov, under the current conditions Russia's Saudi Arabian partners have introduced an unprecedented discount and boosted oil production. This led to a situation when "all oil storage facilities in the world" could be filled.

"Tankers are already used not for shipping oil but as floating



canisters. Finally, we will just get an absolutely minimum oil price, which is not advantageous for any country," Peskov noted.

The OPEC + deal, which has been based on the agreement between Russia and Saudi Arabia for three years and allowed to maintain oil prices at \$ 60 per barrel by limiting production, ceased to work on March 31, 2020.

It was not possible to extend it due to the opposing positions

of the two largest participants: Russia suggested extending the agreement on the same terms and only for the second quarter of 2020, and Saudi Arabia - to increase the reduction by 1.5 mln barrels per day until the end of the year.

The termination of the agreement led to a sharp drop in oil prices, which was exacerbated by the falling global demand due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Agencies

COVID-19 damage to Africa's economy worse than expected

NAIROBI

THE ongoing coronavirus outbreak is hitting Africa's economy much harder than anticipated, with business activity plummeting to record lows, according to the latest surveys and expert opinions.

The Stanbic Bank Kenya Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI), which covers the East African country's private economy, plunged to 37.5 in March from

49.0 in February, a report from global information provider IHS Markit revealed Friday.

The reading was the second-lowest recorded in the survey's history, signaling a sharp deterioration in business conditions in Kenya. Readings above 50 indicate expansion, otherwise meaning contraction.

"Employment was lowered for the first time in 11 months, as companies reported less pressure on both current workload

requirements and backlogs," said IHS Markit.

Jibrán Qureishi, a regional economist for East Africa at Stanbic Bank, said the tourism and floriculture sectors, Kenya's two main sources of foreign exchange, have been hit the hardest due to global cross border travel restrictions and waning luxury spending in Europe.

Kenya is one of the biggest flower exporters in the world, with the European Union its big-

gest market, importing 70 percent of its flowers.

According to the Kenya Flower Council, movement restrictions in Europe have led to sharply slashed flower orders, with Kenyan flower farms drastically reducing export volumes by 80 percent.

The coronavirus impact on the economic output this year will be significant amid supply chain disruptions and negative demand shocks, said Qureishi,

adding that "the longer the duration, the more acute or severe the impact will be." Gerrishon Ikiara, senior economics lecturer at the University of Nairobi, told Xinhua that Kenya's GDP growth rate could slump to about 2 percent by the end of 2020, depending on how long the coronavirus epidemic takes to be brought under control at the global, regional and individual country levels.

The IHS Markit survey also

showed that business performance of South Africa's private sector dropped at the quickest pace in the survey's history to a record low, as the private sector faces its deepest contraction in new orders against a backdrop of the rapidly evolving coronavirus pandemic alongside the ongoing power cut problem.

IHS Markit South Africa PMI fell from 48.4 in February to 44.5 in March, the lowest level seen in the survey's history since July

2011. The reading has remained below the level of 50 that separates expansion from contraction for the 11th consecutive month, suggesting that South Africa's economy is on the edge. The most industrialized economy on the African continent confirmed its first coronavirus case on March 5, and by far has the largest number of COVID-19 infections on the continent.

Xinhua

Securing a victory over COVID-19 through joint efforts

MAJOR infectious disease is the enemy of all. Currently, the COVID-19 outbreak is spreading worldwide, posing enormous threat to lives and health and bringing formidable challenge to global public health security. No country could deal with the crisis alone and the international community needs solidarity and cooperation more than before.

While attending the Extraordinary G20 Leaders' Summit via video link in Beijing on March 26, Chinese President Xi Jinping delivered a speech titled "Working Together to Defeat the COVID-19 Outbreak".

Guided by the vision of building a community with a shared future for mankind and based on China's experience in containing COVID-19, the President put forward a series of important proposals for strengthening global cooperation and stabilizing the world economy. The speech injected confidence in the global fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and received warm response from the international community.

The Chinese government and Chinese people remained undaunted in the face of the sudden outbreak, and the government always put people's lives and health first. The country has acted according to the overall principle to stay united to take



A patient of novel coronavirus pneumonia bows to medical staff after being discharged from Huainan First People's Hospital, east China's Anhui province, March 6. He is one of the last three patients discharged from the hospital. Photo by Chen Bin/People's Daily Online

science-based and targeted measures and fight the epidemic with confidence.

It has mobilized the whole nation, set up joint control and treatment mechanisms and acted with openness and transparency, launching a people's war against the outbreak.

The country has put up a strenuous struggle and made tremendous sacrifices. Now the situation in China is moving steadily toward a positive direction, and people's life and work are quickly returning to normal.

The international society believes that China's forceful measures on controlling COVID-19

have achieved remarkable results, offered useful experience to other countries, and injected hope and power to the globe for a final victory over the pandemic.

Viruses respect no borders, and the pandemic is a public enemy. When the disease is exacerbating globally, the international society needs to firm up confidence, stay united and cope with the situation through cooperation, so as to win the war against the major infectious disease.

In his speech, Xi introduced Chinese experience, put forward Chinese proposals, raised Chinese initiatives, and made Chinese contributions, which are

significant in coordinating global action against COVID-19. The speech projected China's image as a responsible major country, and injected important energy into conducting global cooperation to contain COVID-19 and boosting market confidence.

Under the concerted efforts of all countries concerned, the G20 special meeting achieved positive results and sent an encouraging signal to the world.

At a time when the exacerbating pandemic severely impacts the growth of world economy and trade, China's pragmatic proposals and initiatives are of great significance.



The second batch of medics from Xingtai, north China's Hebei province dispatched to help the COVID-19 epicenter Hubei pose for a picture before returning home, March 20, 2020. Photo by Huang Tao/People's Daily Online

To battle the COVID-19 pneumonia, the international community should step up actions and take resolute efforts to curb the spread of the pandemic. In particular, countries need to jointly help developing countries with fragile public health systems enhance preparedness and response.

All countries must work together to build a strongest global network of control and treatment, support international organizations, such as the World Health Organization (WHO), in playing their active roles, develop science-based and proper

control and treatment and minimize cross-border spread.

We must also enhance international macro-economic policy coordination, implement effective fiscal and monetary policies, better coordinate financial regulation, reduce tariffs, remove barriers, facilitate the unfettered flow of trade, maintain the stability of the global industrial chain and supply chain, and guarantee the basic living of the people.

At the most difficult moment in China's fight against the outbreak, the country received assistance and help from a lot of members of the global commu-

nity. Such friendship will always be remembered and cherished by the Chinese people.

China will be more than ready to share its good practices, conduct joint research and development of drugs and vaccines, and provide assistance where it can to countries hit by the growing outbreak, Xi said.

The country will also increase its supply of active pharmaceutical ingredients, daily necessities, and anti-epidemic and other supplies to the international market. It has set up an online COVID-19 knowledge center that is open to all countries.

To ensure openness, stability, security of global industrial, supply chains

By He Yin

THE sudden outbreak of the novel coronavirus pneumonia is shocking global trade and industrial chains.

At a recent meeting on COVID-19 held recently, G20 trade and investment ministers agreed in a joint statement that emergency measures designed to tackle COVID-19, if deemed necessary, must be targeted, proportionate, transparent, and temporary, and that they do not create unnecessary barriers to trade or disruption to global supply chains. The joint statement echoes the consensus reached by G20 leaders at a previous meeting.

Such voice signals the urgency for global countries to work together to minimize the impacts from the disease on global economy and prevent secondary hazards from impeding the world's efforts to defeat the virus.

In an era of economic globalization, all economies share the same future in the global division of work and cooperation. At present, COVID-19 has hampered global industrial and supply chains, throwing global trade and outbound investment into disorder.

According to a report by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, outward foreign direct investment may face a shrinkage of 40 percent this year due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Now, the world is seeing a surging demand for disease control materials, the production and cross-border logistics of which concern people's lives and health.

Therefore, to jointly enhance the hedge from macro policies, reduce the impacts on global production and demand, make investment environment free, fair, non-



Workers of a factory in east China's Zhejiang province manufacture cast metal products to be exported to Belt and Road countries, March 18, 2020. Photo by Xie Shangguo/People's Daily Online

discriminatory, transparent, expectable and stable, and maintain an open market, is a choice that has to be made by every country.

According to traditional Chinese medicine, pain is relieved with improved blood circulation. To maintain openness of trade and flow of investment as a way to guarantee sufficient supply and reasonable price is of vital significance for the revival of world economy.

Just as Director-General of the WTO Roberto Azevedo said, no country is self-sufficient, no matter how powerful or advanced it may be. It's becoming clearer and clearer that whether measures are taken to reduce tariffs, cancel barriers and make trade unimpeded is an important criterion for measuring a country's sense of international responsibility.

As an important part on the global industrial and supply chains, China has always kept its promise of pursuing openness and cooperation, offering strong support with concrete actions for countries to jointly combat the pandemic and make coordinated efforts.

As the country is seeing improved situation at home and accelerating the restoration of economic and social orders, it is constantly expanding production of epidemic control materials, guaranteeing sufficient supplies for other countries to fight the pandemic and making Chinese contribution to the final victory over the virus.

For instance, China is a major supplier of bulk drug in the world. Over 80 percent of the enterprises in the sector have restored production, and over 80 percent of major products are being manufactured



An employee of Xiangyang Gotoo Machinery & Electronic Appliance Co., Ltd. debugs a thermal imaging system, March 9, 2020. Photo by Li Xuhui/People's Daily Online

at full capacity. The daily output of medical protective suits grew forty-fold in just two months, and around 200,000 infrared thermometers are being delivered each day, up from the previous 15,000. Besides, China, while meeting the needs at home, has offered more than 1,700 invasive ventilation devices for foreign countries, and over 20,000 have been ordered.

In a short period of time, China has turned its production capacity into power to fight the COVID-19 pandemic, and its economic circulation has ensured smooth global supply chain. This shows that to keep the global industrial and supply chains open, stable and safe is of great importance to protect health and well-being of all mankind.

Openness and cooperation conform to the law of global economic operation,

and remain important weapons to defeat COVID-19. Some countries fanned up the so-called "economic decoupling", claiming to relocate industrial chains, and some even tried to cut the chains. However, any attempt that goes against the trend of time or economic laws will finally be in vain.

According to a recent survey by the American Chamber of Commerce in the People's Republic of China, China still remains a major market for most of the U.S. enterprises in the country. China, as a world-recognized major manufacturer, is also a major country producing and exporting epidemic prevention and medical materials. The country's achievements in containing the disease, as well as its practices to offer medical materials indicate that it is an indispensable power on the global industrial and supply chains.

Traditional Chinese medicine used to treat over 90 percent of COVID-19 patients

By Han Xin

COMPREHENSIVE and in-depth participation of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in treating patients of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has been a highlight of China's fight against the epidemic.

A total of 74,187 confirmed patients, which account for 91.5 percent of the total infections on the Chinese mainland, have received TCM treatment, said Yu Yanhong, Party chief of the National Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, at a press conference held by the State Council Information Office on March 23 in Wuhan.

In Hubei, TCM treatment has been given to 61,449 COVID-19 patients, which account for 90.6 percent of the total infections in the province. Over 90 percent of COVID-19 patients in China have shown improvement during clinical observation, Yu said.

TCM has effectively relieved symptoms, cut the rate of patients developing into severe

conditions, raised the recovery rate, reduced the mortality rate and boosted patients' recovery, Yu told People's Daily.

Over 4,900 medics from TCM hospitals and institutions across China have been sent to aid the fight against the epidemic in Hubei, accounting for about 13 percent of all medics dispatched to the province. The scale and strength of the TCM aid team are unprecedented.

TCM has effectively alleviated the progression of the disease at the early stage of infection, helped in the recovery process of patients, and effectively relieved the symptoms of severe and critical cases when it was combined with Western medicine.

TCM drugs and prescriptions, including Jinhua Qinggan Granule, Lianhua Qingwen Capsule, Xuebijing Injection, Lung Cleansing and Detoxifying Decoction, HuaShiBaiDu Formula and XuanFeiBaiDu Formula have proven to be effective in the treatment of COVID-19 cases.

The course of COVID-19 is like



Pharmacists at a traditional Chinese medicine hospital in Nantong, east China's Jiangsu province dispense medicines according to prescriptions of a kind of Chinese herbal tea which has proven effective on the prevention of COVID-19, March 5, 2020. Photo by Xu Peiqin/People's Daily Online

a parabola, and TCM is effective at both ends of the curve, said Zhang Boli, an academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering (CAE) and president of

Tianjin University of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

None of the 564 patients in the TCM-oriented Fangcang temporary hospital in Jiangxia district

of Wuhan saw their health condition deteriorating into severe after receiving integrated treatment of TCM and Western medicine, according to Zhang.

TCM treatment was therefore applied to patients in other Fangcang hospitals, enabling the rate of patients developing into severe conditions to be substantially reduced to between 2 percent and 5 percent, said Zhang.

In fact, the efficacy of a batch of TCM has been evaluated by internationally recognized randomized controlled trials.

Rigorous randomized controlled study has shown that Jinhua Qinggan Granule can significantly shorten the fever time of influenza patients, while Qiliqiangxin Capsule can significantly improve the cardiac function of chronic heart failure, said Qiu Haibo, vice president of Zhongda Hospital of Southeast University.

Data from clinical research have indicated that the Lung Cleansing and Detoxifying Decoction has played a positive role in preventing mild and common cases from developing into severe and critical cases, said Huang Luqi, an academician of the CAE and president of China Academy of Chinese Medical Sci-

ences.

The XuanFeiBaiDu Formula has shown obvious efficacy in controlling inflammation and increasing lymphocytes, Huang said, disclosing that the HuaShiBaiDu Formula was developed by the TCM team of the China Academy of Chinese Medical Sciences at Wuhan Jinyintan Hospital on the basis of the recommended formulas of the early national diagnosis and treatment plan as well as experiences from clinical practice.

At present, the number of COVID-19 patients in Hubei and Wuhan has been substantially reduced.

The treatment of critical cases of COVID-19 is important to further reduction in the mortality rate of the disease, said Liu Qingquan, head of the Beijing Hospital of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

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Plagues, zombies and vampires: How Hollywood handles deadly viruses

By Emma Jones, Talking Movies

THERE is one part of the film industry booming after the onset of Covid-19 - movies that deal with infections, particularly on a global scale.

Docuseries such as *Pandemic: How to Prevent an Outbreak* on Netflix, and films such as Steven Soderbergh's *Contagion* from 2011 have been enjoying unprecedented streaming numbers as audiences seek to understand current events.

Featuring an ensemble A-list cast including Gwyneth Paltrow, Kate Winslet, Matt Damon, Lawrence Fishburne, Jude Law and Marion Cotillard, *Contagion* documents the spread of a virus which originates in Asia and causes global lockdown. However, its sober tone is the opposite to the bombast of the traditional "disaster" movie, and it was made with the input of medical experts at Columbia University.

"I didn't want to show 200 people dropping dead at the same time in one scene," director Steven Soderbergh explained at the time of the film's release.

"As soon as you make it feel like a movie, you give the audience the ability to step away from it, and put a barrier in between them and what they are seeing - and we didn't want to do that."

Contagion may have set a gold standard in terms of movie realism - nevertheless, historically a whole film subculture has historically been rooted in fear of infection and disease.

The "monster" movie, part of the wider horror genre, has acquired new relevance. It's about the fear of being bitten, and so infected with a contagion that's irreversible.

"If you look at werewolf films, such as 1981's *An American Werewolf in London*, that's about the fear that something will bite you and you'll pass the infection on to someone else," says BBC Culture film critic Nicholas Barber.

"Then you've got vampire films, which are even more closely linked to disease and epidemics. In the 1922 *Dracula* adaptation, Nosferatu, there's a scene where rats pour out of a coffin, and people start dying in the village and they blame the plague. Vampire films really are about infection and plague and disease."

Audiences watching zombie movies such as Danny Boyle's *28 Days Later*, or Marc Forster's 2013 epic *World War Z*, starring Brad Pitt, might find they resonate in a new way.

In one scene at the start of *28 Days Later*, actor

Gillian Murphy stands in a deserted London, silent after being ravaged by a mysterious, incurable virus.

"Zombies used to be these shambling, reanimated corpses that lurched through graveyards and they tended to comment on consumerism and social unrest," explains Barber.

"That really changed with 2002's *28 Days Later*. In that, zombies are actually called 'the infected', they're no longer reanimated corpses, they are people who have been infected by a virus.

"*World War Z*, on the other hand, is really about globalisation, and how these infections don't just take over a city, they spread throughout the world, as we're seeing now. That was the zombie movie that covered it, and that's what is so unprecedented about what we are seeing now."

The loneliness of isolation after infection has also been covered by Hollywood - most famously by 2007's *I Am Legend*, directed by The Hunger Games's Francis Lawrence and starring Will Smith.

An adaptation of a 1954 novel by Richard Matheson, Will Smith seems to be the only uninfected survivor in New York City after a virus, originally a new cure for cancer, kills billions of people and turns nearly everyone else into cannibalistic mutants called Darkseekers.

Perhaps creating the horrible and fantastical in film has been the human way of dealing with our vulnerability to viruses as a species.

Nevertheless, the idea of the victory of the human spirit - which can defeat and outsmart even a deadly virus - was seen most recently in 2016's *93 Days*, a film directed by Steve Gukas and starring Danny Glover. It was based on a true story of how a dedicated medical team managed to prevent an Ebola outbreak in Nigeria by containing it, even if it meant sacrificing their own lives.

"That idea of human triumph against impossible odds is likely to be a recurring theme in the films that emerge from screenwriters' self-isolation.

"There's a lot coming out of the coronavirus to inspire countless screenplays to come," says Nigel M Smith, movies editor for *People* magazine.

"If you look at what happened after 9/11, it was only a year or so when Hollywood began making films out of these stories. The industry has a tendency to do things like that."

But perhaps it's just as well that a sequel to *World War Z* was cancelled last year. Would the public pay to watch a pandemic full of infected zombies, after living through the time of *Coronavirus*?

BBC

Kobe, Duncan, Garnett headline Basketball Hall of Fame class

By TIM REYNOLDS

KOBE Bryant's resume has yet another entry to validate his greatness: He's now, officially, a Hall of Famer.

And he's got plenty of elite company in the 2020 class, one that may be as glitzy as any.

Bryant, who died in a helicopter crash on Jan. 26, and fellow NBA greats Tim Duncan and Kevin Garnett headlined a nine-person group announced Saturday as this year's class of enshrinees into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

"An amazing class," Duncan said.

They all got into the Hall in their first year as finalists, as did WNBA great Tamika Catchings. Others had to wait a bit longer for the good news: Two-time NBA champion coach Rudy Tomjanovich finally got his call, as did longtime Baylor women's coach Kim Mulkey, 1,000-game winner Barbara Stevens of Bentley and three-time Final Four coach Eddie Sutton.

They were the eight finalists who were announced in February, and the panel of 24 voters who were tasked to decide who merited selection wound up choosing them all. Also headed to the Hall this year: former FIBA Secretary General Patrick Baumann, selected as a direct-elect by the international committee.

"He was the head of FIBA and this was a way to honor him," Hall of Fame Chairman and enshrinee Jerry Colangelo said. "It was a special thing done through that committee."

Bryant died about three weeks before the Hall of Fame said - as if there was going to be any doubt - that he was a finalist. Duncan and Garnett were also widely perceived to be locks to be part of this class; they were both



Kobe Bryant

15-time NBA All-Stars, and Bryant was an 18-time selection.

Bryant's death has been part of a jarring start of the year for basketball: Commissioner Emeritus David Stern died on Jan. 1, Bryant and his daughter Gianna were among nine who died in the crash in late January, and the NBA shut down March 11 as the coronavirus pandemic began to grip the U.S.

"Obviously, we wish that he was here with us to celebrate," Vanessa Bryant, Kobe's wife, said on the ESPN broadcast of the class announcement. "But it's definitely the peak of his NBA career and every accomplishment that he had as an athlete was a steppingstone to be here. So we're incredibly proud of him."

Bryant was also a five-time champion with the Los Angeles Lakers, just as Duncan was with the San Antonio Spurs.

"This is an incredibly special class, for many reasons," Colangelo said.

Garnett is the only player in NBA history with at least 25,000 points, 10,000 rebounds, 5,000 assists, 1,500 blocks and 1,500 steals. He also was part of Boston's 2008 NBA title.

"This is the culmination," Garnett said. "All those hours... this is what you do it for, right here. To be able to be called 'Hall of Famer' is everything."

Duncan spent the entirety of his career with the Spurs, and is now back with the team as an assistant coach under Gregg Popovich.

"It's kind of the end of the journey here," Duncan, on the broadcast, said of his enshrinement. "It was an incredible career that I enjoyed so much. To call it a dream come true isn't even doing any justice to it. I never dreamt I'd be at this point."

Duncan, Garnett and Bryant were similar in many ways as players: The longevity of their careers, the eye-popping numbers, almost perennial inclusion on award lists. They also shared a dislike for touting personal accomplishments.

But even the Hall would have touched Bryant, those closest to him said.

"No one deserves it more," Lakers Governor Jeanie Buss said.

Added Lakers general manager Rob Pelinka, Bryant's former agent: "All of us can trust that this Basketball Hall of Fame honor is one Kobe would, and will, deeply appreciate."

Catchings was a 10-time WNBA All-Star and four-time Olympic gold medalist. Tomjanovich, who had overwhelming support from NBA peers who couldn't understand why it took so long for his selection, was a five-time All-Star as a player, guided Houston to back-to-back titles and

took the 2000 U.S. Olympic team to a gold medal.

"It's a scary time and families are being shattered by this pandemic. To get something positive right now is so wonderful," Tomjanovich said.

Mulkey has three NCAA titles as a coach, won two others as a player and had Baylor in position to vie for another championship this season had the global coronavirus pandemic not forced the shutdown of virtually every sport around the globe. Stevens has coached for 43 years and is a five-time Division II coach of the year. Sutton won more than 800 games in nearly four decades, and Baumann was one of the most powerful voices in international basketball until his death in 2018.

"The incredible emotions that I felt after receiving the call from the Hall of Fame Friday afternoon, I can't even put into words," Stevens said.

The enshrinement ceremony in Springfield, Massachusetts, is scheduled for Aug. 29. Should the pandemic force a delay, there is a tentative plan for an October ceremony as well.

For this year, largely because of the star power of this class, the Hall chose to enact a one-year suspension of direct elections from the Veteran's, Women's Veteran's, Early African-American Pioneers and Contributors categories.

With Bryant, Duncan and Garnett as perhaps the top NBA trio to ever enter simultaneously, the Hall wanted to make sure that no enshrinee would be overlooked.

"We didn't need to water it down," Colangelo said. "Next year is another year for many."

AP

At least I can be Wimbledon champion for two years, says Halep



FILE PHOTO: Jul 13, 2019; London, United Kingdom; Simona Halep (ROU) poses with her trophy after defeating Serena Williams (USA) in the women's singles final on day 12 at the All England Lawn and Croquet Club. (Agencies)

LONDON

SIMON Halep is trying to look on the bright side regarding the suspension of the tennis season due to the coronavirus pandemic, which means at least she will be referred to as reigning Wimbledon champion for two years.

The Romanian former world number produced a flawless performance to beat Serena Williams in last year's final but this week's cancellation of the grasscourt Grand Slam means she will not get to defend her title this summer.

Halep, 28, is currently back in her native Romania where she has been locked down at home for 22 days, only popping out briefly to jog around the grounds of her residence.

Asked about the Wimbledon cancellation, announced on Wednesday, Halep told Eurosport's

Tennis Legends podcast: "I take it positively, because I am now the defending champion for two years. So, I have to live with that for one more year so that's a good thing again."

"I am excited that I will be able to play the first match on (the) Tuesday I think on Centre Court. So, I really want to make this experience. It's going to be great for sure."

The WTA Tour and ATP Tour have been shut down until the middle of July, at least, but Halep is geared up for a longer suspension of the season, possibly the whole year.

"I know that the worst scenario in my head is that this year is going to be cancelled and, yeah, I'm sure we're going to overcome this period if we listen and stay home safely," she said.

"For the moment, I think it's going

to be longer than July. We hope for the U.S. Open (scheduled for Aug. 31 to Sept. 13) but it's not sure because New York is struggling now."

LOTS OF SLEEP

After so many years jet-setting around the globe, Halep said the enforced time off from the Tour had been welcome in some respects, even if the circumstances were dreadful.

"It's the longest period that I haven't touched a racket. Not the ball, the racket - since Dubai," she said. "And I want to keep it that way for one more month."

"I just kept it very safe because I am a little bit scared about it. And I just want to stay chilled. I wake up at around 10 or 11. It's very good to have a lot of sleep."

"No alarm clock, no schedule, so I just wake up. I have a late breakfast and then I do some running here in the complex. Because we are allowed to do it, it's a private residence."

"In the house I work on my core and my other exercises. So, every day I am working and I feel fit yes."

Halep said that while she missed her job, it was right that sport had faded into the background at a time of global crisis.

"It's just a world problem and I just want to say that it's safer that everything got cancelled. It's not a small problem, it's a huge problem. And we just have to listen to what they say, to stay home and being very safe," she said.

"Tennis is not everything in my life."

REUTERS

World T20 organisers hopeful despite potential clash with other sports

MELBOURNE

ORGANISERS expect this year's Twenty20 World Cup to be a success even if it has to vie with Australian rules football and rugby league for viewers due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the head of the organising committee said on Sunday.

The Oct. 18-Nov. 15 tournament was slotted into Australia's sports calendar between the end of the football season and the beginning of summer cricket to draw maximum attention.

With both the Australian Football League (AFL) and National Rugby League (AFL) seasons suspended due to the pandemic, they may now clash with the Twenty20 World Cup when they resume.

"In the event they have extended seasons...we still think the World Cup is a really strong proposition that might not come here again for 10 or 20 years," Nick Hockley, CEO of the organising committee, told Australian Associated Press (AAP).

"People love a World Cup. Cricket is Australia's national sport ... and T20 is the format that appeals to the broadest possible demographic," he said.

"We're very encouraged already by the take up in terms of ticket sales."

The women's tournament proved a big success, with hosts Australia beating India in the March 8 final to defend their title.

The organisers expect the men's tournament to replicate that success despite uncertainty around it.

The governing International Cricket Council (ICC) has maintained there is no change in its plans, and Hockley hoped they would not require any either.

"We're wanting to give ourselves the best possible chance of going ahead as planned, so there's no imminent or quick decision," he said.

"Hopefully it's all resolved and we go ahead. In the event that it isn't completely resolved, we are looking at all the different scenarios. Which is only prudent," he added.

REUTERS

Liverpool blasted in virus furlough move, players in £200m wage cut warning

LONDON

EX-players blasted Liverpool for their move to furlough non-playing staff during the coronavirus pandemic on Saturday as Premier League stars warned of a £200 million (\$245 million) shortfall in government coffers if 30 percent wage cuts were introduced.

The Premier League leaders said they would top up the public money made available from the government to ensure staff on furlough received their full salaries.

It follows similar moves by Newcastle, Tottenham, Bournemouth and Norwich to take advantage of the scheme, under which employers can claim for 80 percent of furloughed employees' wages.

But former Reds players Jamie Carragher and Stan Collymore strongly criticised the move by the European champions, who in February announced pre-tax profits of £42 million (\$51 million) for 2018/19. "(Manager) Jurgen Klopp showed compassion for all at the start of this pandemic, senior players heavily involved in @premierleague players taking wage cuts. Then all that respect & goodwill is lost, poor this @LFC," tweeted Carragher.

Collymore was even more forthright, tweeting: "I don't know of any Liverpool fan of any standing that won't be anything other than disgusted at the club for furloughing staff."

Liverpool said staff would be paid 100 percent of their salaries to ensure nobody was financially disadvantaged.

A statement from the club said: "Even prior to the decision on staff furloughing, there was a collective commitment at senior levels of the club -- on and off the pitch -- with everyone working towards a solution that secures jobs for employees of the club during this unprecedented crisis."

"Effect on Health Service" - Meanwhile, the Professional Footballers' Association warned of a £200 million (\$245 million) shortfall for British government tax coffers if a 30% pay cut was introduced for players.

"All Premier League players want

to, and will, play their part in making significant financial contributions in these unprecedented times," said a PFA statement after a meeting with the Premier League.

"We welcomed the opportunity to discuss this with the Premier League today and we are happy to continue talks." However, the PFA insisted it was too simplistic to criticise multi-millionaire players for not easily agreeing to salary cuts.

"The proposed 30 percent salary deduction over a 12-month period equates to over £500m in wage reductions and a loss in tax contributions of over £200m to the government," the PFA statement added. "What effect does this loss of earning to the government mean for the National Health Service?"

The Premier League has been seen as lagging behind other European leagues in its response to coronavirus and was accused by one British lawmaker of operating in a "moral vacuum".

In Spain, Barcelona and Atletico Madrid players have agreed to pay cuts of 70% while the stars of Italian champions Juventus will be paid a reduced amount for the next four months.

England defender Danny Rose, on loan at Newcastle from Tottenham, told the BBC players were "keen to make something happen".

"I can only speak for myself but I would have no problems whatsoever contributing some of my wages to people who are fighting this on the front line and to people who have been affected by what's happening at the minute," he said.

On Friday, a hospital in London identified Rose as the individual behind a £19,000 donation.

Liverpool skipper Jordan Henderson has led talks between Premier League club captains over what action they could take, a move that began before Britain's Health Secretary Matt Hancock on Thursday joined those singling out footballers.

"It was just not needed for people who are not involved in football to tell footballers what they should do with their money," added Rose. "I found that so bizarre."

AFP

Spanish league and players still far apart on salary cuts

MADRID

THE Spanish league and players are still far apart on the size of the salary cuts they need to take to help reduce the financial impact caused by the coronavirus outbreak, with the footballers saying the organization wants them to carry nearly half the total losses.

The league and the players' association have been in talks to try to find ways to mitigate losses that could reach nearly 1 billion euros (\$1.08 billion) if the season cannot be restarted because of the pandemic.

The players have said they are willing to reduce their salaries, but not as much as the league or the clubs want.

"After analyzing the current circumstances of the sector and given the distance in conversations with the players' association, it is necessary to adopt measures in view of the serious economic crisis that COVID-19 is causing in the Spanish soccer industry," the league said in a statement.

It also added that government furloughs are "an exceptional mechanism to avoid and mitigate the negative impact that COVID-19 is having on the sector, and thus guarantee its subsequent recovery."

According to media reports, the league expects losses of 957 million euros (\$1.03 billion) if the season is canceled, with 303 million euros (\$327 million) lost if it resumes with games in empty stadiums and 156 million euros (\$168 million) of deficits if it continues with fans.

The players said the total cuts in salaries requested by the league would account for 451 million euros (\$487 million) if the top flight cannot restart.

The reduction in salaries being discussed reportedly varies depending on the clubs, and also on whether they are playing in the Champions League or the Europa League.

Team captains met with the players' association late Friday to discuss their options after the league earlier in the day called for all clubs to put the footballers on government furloughs to reduce labor costs while the stoppage of play continued. The furloughs help the clubs and guarantee players their jobs once the crisis is over.

The league said it is responsible for preserving an industry that represents 1.37 percent of the nation's gross domestic product and employs about 185,000 people.

Atletico Madrid and Barcelona were among the clubs to resort to the furloughs in recent days. Both reached an agreement with players to reduce their salaries by 70 percent, and guaranteed the wages of other employees were unaffected.

There are nearly 125,000 cases of the new coronavirus in Spain, which on Saturday surpassed Italy as the country with the second-most infections behind the United States. The death toll in the nation stands at 11,744.

The government is expected to extend lockdown measures until April 26, likely keeping the Spanish league suspended until then.

The league has said the season won't resume until authorities deem it safe for everyone's health. It said it will recommend a "minimum of 15 days" of practice before the games can restart, though it suggested recently the training period may begin with restrictions before the lockdown is removed.

AP

How Atalanta's feel-good story became a 'biological bomb' for coronavirus in Italy, Spain

By Nicky Bandini, ESPN

AT the end of their sensational and surreal Champions League elimination of Valencia in Spain on March 10, a 4-3 second-leg win (8-4 on aggregate) in an empty stadium Atalanta's players gathered in front of a TV camera, holding up a T-shirt with a dedication written across the chest. "Bergamo, this is for you," it read. "Móla mía."

Written in local dialect, that last phrase translates to "never give up". It could have been a fitting slogan for soccer's latest fairytale story. Atalanta, an Italian team from a city of 120,000 people, had just gategashed the final eight of Europe's most prestigious club competition. They had done it in style, too, scoring four goals in each leg of their first-ever Champions League knockout tie.

This was their way: attack, attack, attack. A club whose annual wage bill (around \$40 million) would not buy you half of Cristiano Ronaldo was averaging more goals per game in 2019-20 than any other team in Europe's top-five leagues except Bayern Munich, who spend more than seven times as much on player salaries. And Atalanta truly did embody that "Móla mía" mindset. They had lost their first three games in the group phase by a combined 11-2 scoreline, drew the fourth, then progressed by winning the final two.

Yet the words on that T-shirt were not intended in a self-congratulatory way. The players were sending a message of support to their hometown, as it faced up to a tragedy of unimaginable proportions. One that soccer itself might, unwittingly, have helped to spread.

The city of Bergamo is situated in a province of the same name, with a total population of just over 1.1 million. On March 10, the day of Atalanta's return game against Valencia, the number of confirmed coronavirus cases in the province rose to 1,472. Across Lombardy, the region containing Bergamo and also Milan, there had already been 468 deaths.

The sense of an accelerating crisis was present before Atalanta flew to Spain. Bergamo was part of a northern quarantine zone established by the Italian prime minister, Giuseppe Conte, on March 8, and the team required special dispensation to travel a day later. The previous weekend's fixtures in Serie A -- including one of the most hotly anticipated showdowns in years between Juventus and Inter -- had taken place behind closed doors; their game in Valencia would be too. Even so, reality hit players hard upon their return.

Hours after Atalanta departed, Italy's lockdown was expanded to cover the whole country. By the time they arrived home, the government was drafting tighter restrictions, obliging the vast majority of businesses, besides food stores and pharmacies, to shut down.

"We were happy at first," recalled the defender Mattia Caldara in an interview with the city's leading newspaper, L'Eco di Bergamo. "To reach the quarterfinals of the Champions League would have been unimaginable even a few months earlier. But as soon as we touched down in Bergamo, that happiness vanished almost completely."

"To arrive in a semi-deserted airport, when normally there would have been fans waiting for us, and then find the streets empty was a blow to the heart."

The blows have kept coming. Official figures show that 2,050 people died of COVID-19 in the province of Bergamo in March, but an investigation by L'Eco di Bergamo found that the true figure was likely twice as high, taking in people who died at home or in care facilities without ever receiving an official diagnosis. In total, more than 5,400 people had lost their lives in the province: six times as many as did in March 2019.

Hospitals have been overwhelmed; so too have coffin-makers and cemeteries. Residents have watched convoys of military vehicles come to collect bodies and take them away to be cremated elsewhere.

Doctors have died after continued exposure while treating the sick; beloved public figures have passed, too. On Sunday, the former boxer Angelo Rottoli succumbed to the virus at the age of 61. A former European champion, he fought his one world title fight against Carlos De Leon in Bergamo in 1985. He lost, but to the locals he would always remain their very own Muhammad Ali.

Compounding the horror, doctors have now raised a grim possibility: that Atalanta's nights of European glory might directly have contributed to the virus's spread. The first leg of that tie against Valencia took place at San Siro, in Milan. Atalanta played all of their Champions League home games at the venue this season, allowing for attendances more than twice as large as would have been possible at their own Stadio Atleti Azzurri d'Italia.

Roughly 40,000 fans made the 35-mile journey from Bergamo to Milan for the Valencia game. Kids were taken out of school, with parents' mischievous notes to teachers explaining that their offspring needed to participate in a "cultural-historical" moment making international headlines. Just to play in such a game, for a club of Atalanta's means, was already a cause for celebration.

Fabiano di Marco, chief pneumologist at Bergamo's largest hospital, fears it was also the start of catastrophe.

"I have heard a lot [of theories for why the virus has spread so aggressively in the region], I'll



Bergamo, home to Atalanta, has been hard hit in terms of confirmed positive cases and deaths, but the 40,000 fans who traveled to Milan for the first leg vs. Valencia on Feb. 19 game led to one prominent doctor calling the encounter 'a biological bomb.' (Agencies)

say mine," Di Marco told the newspaper Corriere della Sera. "On Feb. 19, 40,000 Bergamaschi [people from Bergamo] went to San Siro for Atalanta-Valencia. In buses, cars, on trains. A biological bomb, unfortunately."

The risks could not easily have been perceived back then, and certainly not by the clubs or players involved. There were only three confirmed coronavirus cases in all of Italy before that first leg was played on Feb. 19. It was only that same day that the wife of a man who had come to hospital with a fever in Codogno, a little less than 40 miles south of Milan, remembered that he had been in contact with a friend who'd recently returned from China. He became the first person diagnosed with the virus in Lombardy. The first case in Bergamo would be reported within a week.

A Spanish journalist who travelled to the game would later become the second person infected in the Valencia region, according to a report by The Associated Press. More than a third of Valencia players would eventually test positive for COVID-19 and as of Friday, Spain has since become the European nation with the highest number of cases, recently surpassing Italy.

For Atalanta's players, hindsight risks becoming a burden.

"I think it's all down to that first game against Valencia," said Alejandro "Papu" Gomez, Atalanta's captain and charismatic forward, in an interview with the Argentinian newspaper Olé, recalling how it had taken his wife three hours to make what is normally a 40-minute trip to San Siro on account of the vast numbers of traveling fans. He was frustrated by the lack of health checks made ahead of the second leg, at a point in time when more countries were aware of the risks. Although that game took place behind closed doors at the Mestalla, roughly 2,000 Valencia fans still gathered outside before kickoff to welcome their team.

One night later, Liverpool would host Atlético Madrid before a full-house of 52,000 fans at Anfield. More than 3,000 had travelled from Spain. The decision to allow spectators into the ground drew criticism at the time but appears even more questionable in light of what has

happened since.)

There has been only one confirmed case among Atalanta's players. Goalkeeper Marco Sportiello is typically a backup but started the second leg against Valencia. He tested positive for COVID-19 on March 20 and, although asymptomatic, had to live in isolation from his family for a time, occupying the ground floor of his home while his wife and 3-year-old daughter stayed upstairs.

A soccer club, though, is more than its players. Atalanta's president, Antonio Percassi, told the radio station RTL 102.5 on Saturday that "we have had eight cases of people who worked for Atalanta and that has been such a hard and sad thing." He compared the experience of Bergamo to living through a world war.

The worry that those two games against Valencia contributed to the spread of coronavirus sits in awkward co-existence with the thought that the things they achieved on the pitch might also be a source of cheer to supporters during a bleak time.

"Speaking from a footballing perspective, the memory of qualifying remains a happy one, even if today it all appears grey," said midfielder Marten de Roon. "This is a club that shares a close bond with its city, one that has for years sent out a free club shirt to every baby born in the province."

"I hope, with all my heart, that the things Atalanta have conquered recently can give our people a smile," Percassi said in his interview with RTL 102.5. L'Eco di Bergamo has suspended subscription fees for its soccer blog.

Corner, and continues to run posts analysing the team's recent rise. In a piece on their website last week, Roberto Belingheri explained their decision to carry on talking about soccer, writing that: "We cannot, and do not want to, speak only of this cursed virus."

Gomez, always an active presence on social media, has been posting even more regularly while in lockdown, sharing everything from light-hearted, crafty "life hacks" -- repurposing used plastic bottles as organisers for your desk or bathroom -- to pick-up soccer games with his kids and examples of his daily workout. For the most part, his tone has remained

positive, if often accompanied with reminders to his followers to "stay home." But one post from his wife Linda, walking through a deserted city, provided a vivid glimpse at how different life looks in Bergamo.

"Today I went out after weeks to get some milk for Milo at the pharmacy," she wrote. "In Bergamo, we do not sing at 6 p.m. [as people have taken to doing from their balconies in other parts of Italy]. Here, at the moment, there are only two things: silence and ambulances. Before long it will all be back as it was before, or close to that, because this situation has taught us to give value to the things that previously we took for granted."

Quite how long that will remain the great unknown. In the meantime, the lives of professional athletes look the same as those of many other young people: stuck at home, fretting about more vulnerable loved ones and looking for ways to fill the time.

Atalanta's players have a WhatsApp group and catch up regularly via video chat on Zoom. Some play video games. Wing-back Hans Hateboer represented the club in the Ultimate QuaranTeam Fifa tournament, losing to professional gamer Renzo Oemrawsingh.

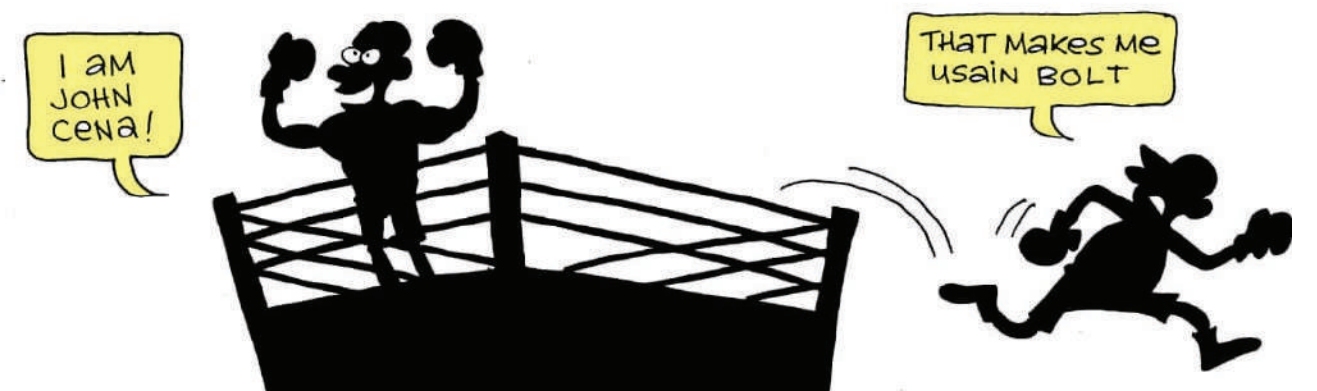
Nobody at Atalanta is kidding themselves as to their own importance. Asked by Gazzetta dello Sport what role soccer players could fill right now, De Roon replied bluntly: "A marginal one. The real protagonists are the doctors."

Still, soccer has its place, as the former Milan manager Arrigo Sacchi once described it: "the most important of the least important things." De Roon was candid in acknowledging his personal sadness at the postponement of Euro 2020 at a time when he had established himself at last as a fixed part of the Netherlands' national team, even as he acknowledged that it was the only possible decision.

"Happiness is not something we can take for granted, everything can change in an instant," he reflected. "We need to enjoy every second of life."

It was, at its core, the same sentiment that he and his Atalanta teammates had shared at the end of their win in Valencia. "Móla mía." Keep going. Don't give up.

Gwiji by David Chikoko

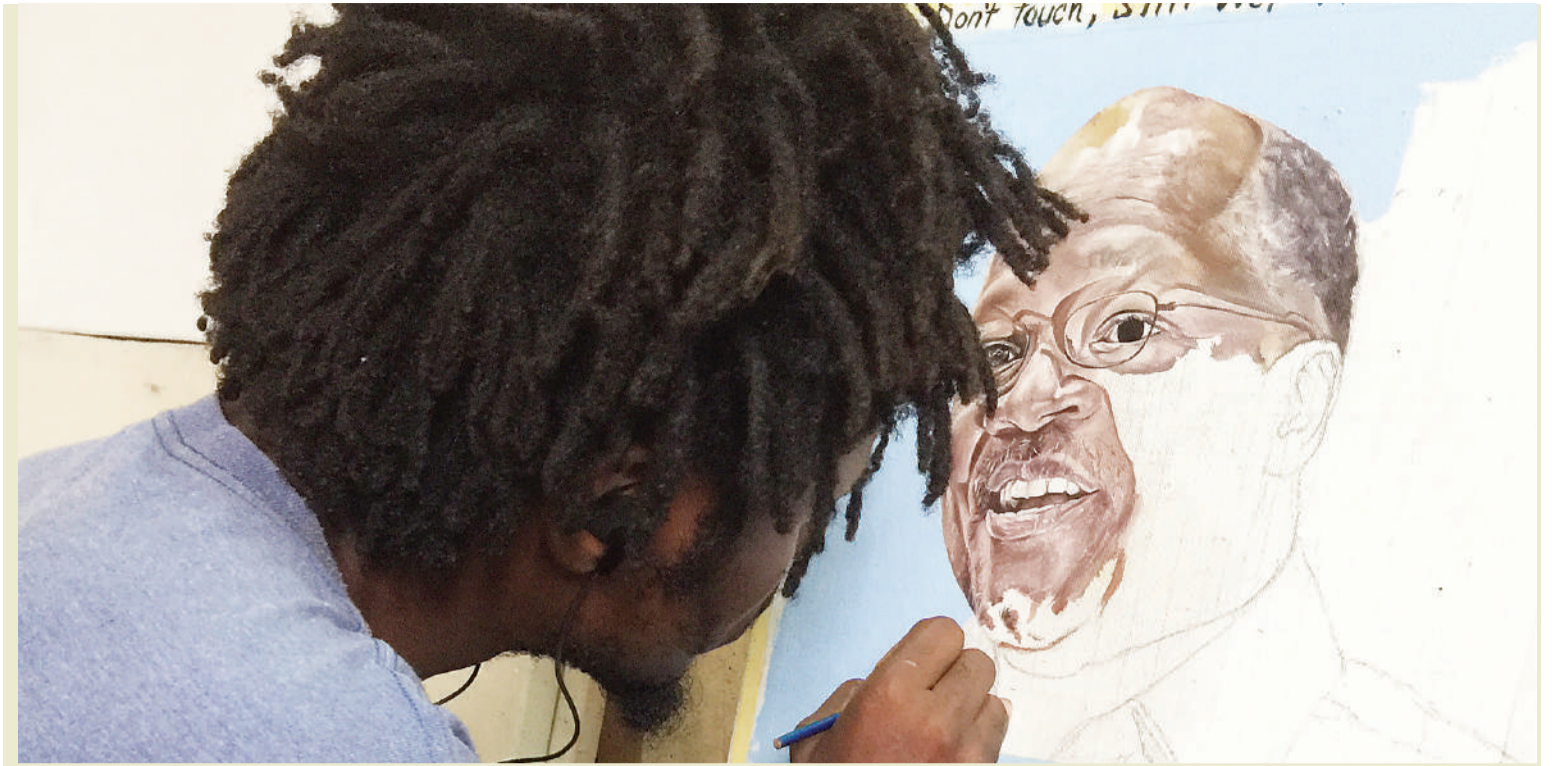


SPORT

How Atalanta's feel-good story became a 'biological bomb' for coronavirus in Italy,

Spain

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Visual artist, Athuman Hamisi, works on a portrait of President John Pombe Magufuli at the artist's residence in Dar es Salaam last weekend. PHOTO: COURTESY OF ATHUMAN HAMISI

Mawenzi Market FC in pursuit of investors

By Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa, Morogoro

MOROGORO-based Mawenzi Market FC which features in this season's First Division League (FDL) has now been put on sale because of failure by the outfit's management to successfully oversee it.

The club, as disclosed the management, currently needs over 20m/- to meet demands which include payment of players' signing fees and costs for the club's trips to other regions to participate in away matches.

Mawenzi Market FC Chairman, Ramadhan Mohamed, said as domestic soccer leagues and the remaining sporting events in the country have been put on hold following the Coronavirus disease spread, the club's officials feel it is time to seek sports stakeholders that can buy it.

"We have no means to get that amount of cash, we ought to sell the club. Any soccer follower who is interested in purchasing the club can do so otherwise the club will be kicked out of the FDL," he noted.

"The squad has showcased poor showing in away matches due to financial constraints it experiences."

The official pointed out the squad has managed to put impressive showing in home matches given the squad does not spend much for the matches.

Mawenzi Market FC has won over five duels which took place at their backyard.

The team has succumbed to loss in three away matches which took place in Lake Zone.

The squad lost 2-1 to Pamba in a match, which took place at Nyamagana Stadium in Mwanza and thereafter lost to Gwambina FC and Geita Gold FC.

Mawenzi Market FC has yet to confront Gipco FC in the Morogoro team's last assignment in Lake Zone.

"These records are associated with financial difficulties, hence the outfit's management decided to sell it given we have no investor," he disclosed.

"The outfit mainly depends on contributions from its members and fans, namely businessmen and women, that operate at Mawenzi Market."

The official said the management has as well been compelled to sell the outfit due to the Coronavirus disease, which has seen business at the Mawenzi Market stall.

He revealed with members and fans finding it difficult to contribute cash, the club's management feels it can no longer run the outfit.

Morogoro Municipal Mayor, Paschal Kianga, said soccer enthusiasts in the region are required to not only focus on supporting Mawenzi Market FC but also put their weight behind other outfits, which feature in Mainland Premier League, FDL and Second Division League (SDL).

"I've been supporting the club for a long time, recently before the coronavirus outbreak, the team was stranded in Lake Zone when it was participating in FDL matches," he disclosed.

Soccer outfits forced to retain players, coaches due to Coronavirus outbreak

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

FOOTBALL outfits in Tanzania will be forced to remain with players and coaches whose current contracts are set to expire in June as a means to cushion the impact of football suspension due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

World soccer governing body, FIFA, is expected to come up with recommendations to ask football clubs to remain with the players whose contracts end this June.

The recommendations are to be made at the coming FIFA coronavirus working group.

FIFA set up the working group on March 18 this year and the body said in a statement that it will 'assess the need for amendments or temporary dispensations to the FIFA Regulations on the Status and Transfer of Players' to protect contracts for both players and clubs and adjusting player registration periods.

According to a leaked confidential internal FIFA document, seen by Sportsmail of the United Kingdom(UK), it also opens the door for clubs to work with players to agree on deferred or reduced salaries 'by reasonable amounts for any period of work stoppage.'

The recommendations are split into a number of categories and represent a 'series of guiding principles' for Member Associations.

Some of the recommendations are, expiring agreement and new contracts, FIFA say that while dates are written in contracts (usually July 1 to June 30) it is recognized that those dates are there to reflect a season.

They state that this is 'the true intention of all parties' when the contracts are drawn up.

FIFA's proposal is that expiring contracts should be extended until the new date of the end of the season. New contracts should be pushed back to the new start date of the new season.

In the case of overlapping seasons 'priority must be given to the former club to complete their season with their original squad'. Loan arrangements would also be extended.

The other one is existing contracts and FIFA says that there is an acknowledgement that the outbreak has made obligations (training, playing matches etc) impossible.

FIFA say national employment laws will be leaned on.

The body's proposal is that clubs and employees will be encouraged



African Lyon players participate in training session in Dar es Salaam recently to prepare for the First Division League (FDL). PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

to work together to agree on deferral and reduction of salary by a reasonable amount for any period of work stoppage.

Alternatively, all agreements should be suspended during any work stoppage provided an adequate alternative income can be found during the period in question.

Plus, FIFA to extend the scope of funds allocated into their fund for professional players.

While the last recommendation by FIFA is on transfer window, in which the body says its rules dictate that associations may modify dates under 'exceptional circumstances'. Coronavirus disease, they state, is clearly that.

FIFA's proposal on the issue is that all requests for an extension of the current season finishing date be approved.

All requests to extend or amend registration periods that have already commenced be approved as long as they are not for longer than 16 weeks.

All requests to postpone windows that have not commenced be approved. Member associations should be permitted to amend registration dates.

Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) secretary general, Wilfred Kidao, and the federation's information officer, Clifford Ndimbo,

yesterday could not be reached on their mobile phones for comments on the issues.

However, Tanzania Soccer Players Union (Sputanza) Chairman, Mussa Kisoki, in an interview yesterday, refused to comment on the matter.

He disclosed he is waiting for official communication from the domestic football governing body.

He said Sputanza is an affiliate of TFF, and he will wait for official communication from the federation on the development.

"For now, I cannot comment on that, we are waiting for our mother body (TFF) to give us communication on the matter, you give me two to three days, I will have information," he said.

Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Almasi Kasongo, yesterday could not pick up his phone when we wanted to have his side of the story.

To domestic players and coaches, whose contracts are expected to expire in June, the FIFA recommendation are welcome given they have looked at their welfare in the face of the global pandemic.

But to many local clubs it will be difficult for them to adhere to the proposals as the outfits mostly depend on gate collections.

Dar artist set to create President Magufuli portrait

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

AS the world continues to grapple with effects of Coronavirus outbreak, Tanzanian realistic painter Athuman Hamisi has decided to spend his time at home drawing the portrait of President John Pombe Magufuli.

In an interview, the artist who sells his works at Mwenge Vinyago business area in Dar es Salaam said he is now in the third week of drawing the 40x50cm portrait of President Magufuli and he expects to complete it at the end of this week.

Hamisi, who is popularly known as 'Ochu', said the idea for drawing the President's portrait comes as a way of appreciating the good things the head of state is doing to the nation.

He believes the President will one day see his work, appreciate and support it.

"After the government had announced measures to control spread of Coronavirus in the country, I decided to spend much of my time at home and, as a young artist who is impressed with the good things our President is doing to the nation, I thought it wise to draw his portrait. I'm sure he will see it and appreciate my artistic work," he said.

This is not the first time for Hamisi to draw portraits of the country's leaders as he also did so in 2018.

"In 2018 I drew a portrait which had the country's five presidents starting with Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, Benjamin Mkapa, Jakaya Kikwete and John Pombe Magufuli," he noted.

"It was a black and white 80x100cm portrait, my aim was to give it to President Magufuli but I did not have either connections or means of meeting him. I sold it to a certain lady," he said.

Hamisi also recently came up with a cartoon named 'Bongo Bhana', which is aimed at sensitizing people on the dangers of Coronavirus pandemic which has affected the world.

The cartoon is orienting people on health and safety precautionary measures to avoid contracting the disease.

The award winning, self-taught 24-year old realistic painter said the Coronavirus pandemic has negatively affected visual art business in the country especially those that depend on foreign tourists.

He said due to the outbreak many people are not coming to buy the artists' products.

"Due to this Coronavirus pandemic many tourists are not coming, it must be known that majority of tourists who come at our Mwenge Vinyago area are from Italy, in short the business is not going on well but we are hoping for a better tomorrow," he said.

Hamisi admires the works of United States of America (USA) acrylic painter Nick Sider, and the Tanzanian visual artist's dream is to become a prominent realistic painter in the continent.

5 EATV Sports
MONDAY
11:00 DADAZ LIVE
14:00 Wanawake Live (r)
14:30 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Copa Coca-Cola (r)
16:00 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 SSPORTS LIVE
22:30 Bongo Hits

TONIGHT @ 9:30

5Sports
The week's local and international sporting events as well as indepth analysis of the biggest sporting highlights of the week are covered on 5sports.

eastafrika RADIO
06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Flexibles by David Chikoko



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