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Councils must have collected 50 pc of levies by January 15

By Guardian Reporter, Njombe

ALL 185 local councils executive directors need to ensure they attain 50 per cent of collected revenues by January 15, 2021.

The Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Governments), Seleman Jafo issued these instructions when addressing Njombe Town Council employees while on his way to Ruvuma Region. He said those who will fail to reach 50 per cent of the targeted revenue should start conducting self-examination.

"On January 15 I will issue a six-month statement on revenue collection by local

councils. All the 185 executive directors should assess themselves as they proceed on Christmas holidays. I do not want to see any council collecting under 50 per cent," the minister intoned.

"For councils that will collect under 50 per cent revenue, its director should consider whether he/she is still fit to go on working in the second period of the Fifth Phase government of President John Magufuli. If he cannot, he/she should give room to another official who can collect revenues."

He said the ministry will not deal with executive directors alone, but also their treasurers and planning officers, "and this is my directive to all local councils

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Zanzibar President Dr Hussein Ali Mwinyi exchanges greetings with the Minister of State in the Vice President's Office (Union and Environment) Umyy Mwalimu at the State House in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: State House

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Minister: Cut out talk on girls' pregnancies

By Guardian Reporter, Dodoma

EDUCATION officers all over the country should no longer release figures regarding the number of school girl pregnancies occasioning dropping out from the education system.

This directive was given yesterday by the Minister for Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training, Prof Joyce Ndalichako at the opening of the 7th Regional and District Education Officers Association (REDEOA) annual meeting here.

The minister said statistics show that the number of boys who drop out of school is higher than girls, as boy children drop out of school and resort to doing petty trade but education officers

Education officers were focusing on school girls' pregnancies as if there are no other issues to talk about in the education sector

constantly release statistics of girls' pregnancies.

Education officers must strongly oversee the quality of education provided in their areas, to ensure that academic, sports, culture and special education officers perform their duties as required, she stated.

"It is high time we respect and value girl children as some of the words used against them are so demeaning," the minister cautioned, insisting that girls deserve better treatment.

Education officers were focusing on school girls' pregnancies as if there are no other issues to talk about in the education sector, she observed, insisting that boys drop out of school

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AfDB plans 30pc more borrowing, fiscal 2021

ABIDJAN

THE fight against COVID-19 and the pursuit of renewable energy initiatives will be among key beneficiaries of the African Development Bank's 2021 capital markets programme.

AfDB officials expect that the bank will raise USD 10.4 billion in borrowing from capital markets in 2021, to fund its programmes across Africa.

On December 11, the AfDB board of directors approved the 2021 borrowing programme, directed at a range of currencies, including the US dollar, the euro, Australian dollar and UK pound sterling.

The bank borrowed a total of \$7.24 billion in 2019, thus its borrowing plans are nearly a third higher than last year. AfDB said it would continue to issue debt in local currencies to promote the development of Africa's capital markets.

AfDB president Akinwumi Adesina (pictured) was reconfirmed in August, where he issued fresh appeals for spending priorities in 2021 to focus on the fight against the Covid-19 pandemic.

The bank has committed funds regularly during 2020 with \$10 billion issued via country-by-country support. In

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Police nabbed well over 15,000 illegal immigrants

It is for the year 2020, mostly from Ethiopia

By Guardian Reporter

A TOTAL of 15,266 illegal immigrants were arrested in the country from January to December this year.

In addition, 47 suspects who were trafficking in illegal immigrants were arrested during the period.

Immigration Department spokesman Paul Masele made these observations yesterday in a radio interview on illegal immigrants and how far the Immigration Department has been able to control the problem.



Regional Police Commander Fortunatus Muslim

He said more than 1,000 illegal immigrants from Ethiopia entered the country without following procedures and whenever they were arrested, they said they were fleeing their country for greener pastures in other countries in Southern Africa.

Masele said Tanzania has more than 60 entry points for receiving foreigners coming to the country but many illegal immigrants use unauthorized entry points.

"Many of those we arrested were

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Police nabbed well over 15,000 illegal immigrants

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found dumped in forests, private housing, while some were transported in boats, motorcycles and vehicles and their facilitators were unfaithful Tanzanians," he asserted.

In operations against illegal immigrants, the department also seized 13 cars, 16 motorcycles and two boats used to transport the migrants, he said.

"The law is clear. Any person found to be transporting illegal immigrants faces 20 years in jail or 20m/- fine and any assets involved are forfeited by the government," he declared.

He said challenges faced by the Immigration Department in performing its duties are especially acute when some business people hide immigrants in their homes, to bring them into the country to work, as many of these facilitators are people with money.

Masele thanked law abiding people who have been extending cooperation to the department by disclosing the whereabouts of illegal immigrants, urging people to continue doing so in the coming year.

Meanwhile, police in Morogoro Region have arrested 55 Ethiopian illegal immigrants after being abandoned in a bush in Mikese area, a few kilometers from Morogoro town.

Regional Police Commander Fortunatus Muslim said that the aliens were arrested on Monday at around 8:30 am after they were being abandoned in a bush.

"And when we interviewed them they said that they travelled by foot for almost one month from Ethiopia to Kenya, reached Nairobi on December 19 where they were loaded in a container to Tanzania. They were en-route to South Africa for greener pastures," the commander told reporters yesterday.

SACP Muslim said that the aliens were running away from their motherland due to economic hardships.

So far, no one has been arrested in connection with the transport of illegal immigrants. "We're still hunting for people who are behind transporting these people," he said, warning all those behind the human trafficking practice to desist from conducting the vice.



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa talks with members of the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: PMO

AfDB plans 30pc more borrowing, fiscal 2021

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September; AfDB proclaimed the bank's own 'High 5s' programme, focusing on building infrastructure to improve the quality of life, including general electrification of all parts of the continent.

The board approved \$25 million in loans for independent medium-scale power producers, with the credit sourced from the Sustainable

Energy Fund for Africa (\$15 million) and the Clean Technology Fund (\$10 million).

The funding will support hydropower, solar and wind power, along with battery storage in isolated areas of Sub-Saharan Africa.

Kevin Kariuki, AfDB vice president for power, energy, climate and green growth, said the support came at a time when, due to competing financing needs, on account of the cost

impacts of the pandemic and for post Covid-19 recovery efforts, there is real risk of under-investment in the African power sector, including in renewable energy sources.

The bank has also provided euro 400 million for business development initiatives in Portuguese-speaking countries. Known as the Lusophone Compact Guarantee Programme, it will support non-sovereign businesses in Angola, Cape Verde,

Equatorial Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique as well as São Tomé and Príncipe.

Samuel Mugoya, AfDB director of syndication, co-financing and client solutions, commented that given adverse impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic on the African continent and the need to build resilience as fiscal pressures rise, the private sector plays a critical role in the process of economic recovery.



Indonesia ambassador to Tanzania Rattlan Pardede (R) stresses a point during a meeting with officials in Tanga held yesterday. Left is Tanga Regional Commissioner Martine Shigella. The talks centred on investments in agriculture particularly in fruits, spices, vegetables, tourism and mining. Photo: Correspondent Oscar Kasimiri

Councils must have collected 50 pct of levies by January 15

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countrywide."

He praised Njombe District Council and its executive director Ally Juma for leading in the region, as the council's report ending December 21 shows the council is among better performing councils nationally.

"I congratulate this council which up to December 21 had collected 1.707bn/-, equivalent to 72 per cent of targeted revenue collection," he affirmed.

Makete District Council was the one doing poorly as up to now it

has collected only 599m/- or 25 per cent of the 2.441bn/- target, the minister noted.

"Njombe Town Council has collected 48 per cent of its targeted revenue up to December 21 or 3.299bn/- and by the end of this month. All local councils should attain 50 per cent of their collection targets," he emphasized.

Njombe Urban MP Deodatus Mwanyika expressed appreciation to the minister for his visit to inspect some of the projects being implemented in Njombe town.

Minister: Cut out talk on girls' pregnancies

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more than girls "and the statistics are from your offices," but the data is ignored.

"If you go to the fishing and pastoralist areas boy children are hawking food at bus stops during school hours," she said in illustration.

While education officers make an effort to manage school dropouts they should consider both sides of the problem, while also looking at the cause of dropping out of school, that this aspect should be critically examined.

"We are tired of this song of pregnancy among school girls, come up with a different angle," she emphasized, arguing that the education sector is doing a good job. Still, she challenged regional and district education officers to put more effort in managing those below them to realise expected results.

She said the government is fully prepared to improve on subjects that lead to self-employment like agriculture, among others.

The minister informed the gathered officials that the government has purchased 184 vehicles for district education officers, with the vehicles expected in port by January 15, as

part of government efforts to act on its promises in regard to the sector.

Those responsible for procurement must ensure that education officers get the vehicles to enable them reach different parts of their areas of work, the minister underlined, urging on the need to oversee special education programmes.

She acknowledged that there are still plenty of challenges in that area as children with special education needs need special care and attention. "It is the government's responsibility to help those with special needs and provide them with loans at 100 percent rates," she said; pointing out that plans are underway to establish a school for the deaf at Lukuledi in Mtwara region.

She observed further that the government has secured 1.2 trillion/- credit from the World Bank to build more secondary schools in the country, with 26 of them being advanced science secondary schools for girls.

For her part, REDEOA chairperson Germana Mung'aho affirmed that challenges education officers face include the lack of transport, extra-curriculum books and agriculture subject teachers.

KAMPALA

UGANDA Airlines has become the first African operator of the Airbus A330-800neo, the smaller of the revamped A330 model, after taking delivery of the aircraft in Toulouse on Monday.

Certificates of title for the first of two -800neos on order were exchanged between Airbus and Uganda in Toulouse.

The aircraft operating as flight UR404 then departed Toulouse Blagnac Airport at 3am East African time on Tuesday, landing in Entebbe at 11am to a reception led by President Yoweri Museveni.

Uganda Airlines, which expects a second delivery in January 2021, plans to use the aircraft to open routes to London, Dubai and Guangzhou. London has been tentatively earmarked for the first intercontinental flight but negotiations continue over landing rights at Heathrow.

Uganda Airlines gets new Airbus

The year-old Ugandan flag carrier is the second operator of the airplane make globally, after Kuwait Airways which took delivery of two of the eight -800s it has on order on October 29.

Other African operators of the -800s larger sibling, the A330-900neo, are Air Senegal which took the first delivery in March 2019, followed by Air Mauritius a month later.

Although it is a very capable aircraft with a range of 15,000km, the -800 has a thin order book of just 14 because the big network

operators have traded range in favour of the higher capacity of the -900neo.

Airbus is looking at the replacement market for the

significant fleet of nearly 800 baseline A330-200s and Boeing 767s, which the 800 is designed to succeed, to boost sales in the coming years.

Certificates of title for the first of two -800neos on order were exchanged between Airbus and Uganda in Toulouse



Deputy Governor of Bank of Tanzania Dr Benard Bibese (L) and Letshego bank managing director Andrew Tarimo pull a curtain to launch Visa card at a ceremony held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Photographer

Ngalula re-elected TPSF board chair

By Guardian Reporter

THE electoral annual general meeting of the Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) yesterday unanimously re-elected in Dar es Salaam, Angelina Ngalula the chairperson of the TPSF. The election was by show of hands. Paul Makanza was elected vice-chairman of the foundation.

After being re-elected Ngalula told the meeting that she will remain faithful and defend scrupulously the values of the TPSF and that will work very closely with the government to ensure the private sector plays a positive role in economic growth and national development.

She said unethical members of the TPSF will lose membership. "Those among us who will go against universal ethics in doing business must know very well that we shall reject them and allow the government to take appropriate action against them. The aim is to protect the image of the TPSF."

She also said the TPSF will help young people in the informal sector of the economy to grow and prosper, giving the struggling petty traders, vendors and motorcycle drivers (bodaboda).

Minister of Industry and Trade, Geoffrey Mwambe said Tanzania's financial sector has no justifiable reason for imposing prohibitive interests on loans they give to the private sector because the banks themselves are enjoying reduced interest rate on money they are getting from the Bank of Tanzania.

Mwambe said the government failed to grasp the logic for high interests on loans given to private sector borrowers. High interests on loans, he said, are crippling project initiatives by members of

the private sector.

"The government has reduced interest rate to seven percent. We expect you, too, to reduce interest rates to enable the private sector to build projects with ease and successfully. High interests are slowing down the pace for starting projects by the private sector," he told the attentive meeting.

He equated loans to lubricants in an engine, saying the financial sector should to give private sector borrowers reasonable interests on loans to make the private sector a truly the engine of the Tanzanian economy. He also called on the banks to develop credit reference system to be able to give borrowers with good repayment record loans on friendly interest rates.

Mwambe told the meeting that if the private sector will exploit seriously opportunities in the agriculture sector, Tanzania will easily and quickly have its own indigenous billionaires and move steadily towards a strong self-reliant middle-income economy.

He called on private sector to look for foreign markets for crops designated as strategic crops for national economic development, giving an example of 200,000 tonnes of cashew nuts that missed a foreign market simply because the private sector was not aggressive in looking for foreign markets for strategic crops.

He called on members of the private sector to cooperate and support each other in looking for and sharing information on securing and preserving markets.

Mwambe called on members of the private sector to respect universal ethics in doing business and discard putrid ways of conducting business, like evading paying taxes and levies.

Minister suspends construction of rooms for arrivals at Z'bar airport

By Guardian Reporter

HOME Affairs deputy minister, Khamis Chilo yesterday suspended construction of rooms for arrivals at Abeid Amani Karume International Airport in Zanzibar.

The move came after realising that the allocated 64m/-, for the project was bigger compared to the area.

Speaking soon after touring

the construction site Chilo said the money used for the project belonged to the taxpayers and not donors.

The deputy minister was accompanied by top immigration officers in the Indian Ocean Archipelago.

"I advise you to sit down and think again on the costs for the project instead of using all this money just for this project," he said.

The minister further directed that he be given the contracts to verify then and there after he will give a go ahead on whether they should continue or not.

AAKIA construction of terminal III has been completed and has officially been inaugurated two months ago.

The airport's terminal II includes 27 airline counters and immigration counter, passengers boarding bridges (PBB), baggage

handling system, and security checkpoint with modern systems such as x-ray machine, EDS STD.3, and IT systems.

The facility has other passenger support facilities including a waiting lounge, parking area for cars, a prayer area, duty-free shops, a smoking area and a VIP lounge among others.

The development project cost the Zanzibar government approximately US\$ 129m.

NBC reaffirms continued commitment to provide soft loans for all educators

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Dodoma

THE National Bank of Commerce (NBC) has reaffirmed its commitment to continue coming up with useful schemes that will help educators in the country to acquire soft loans so that they can improve their livelihoods.

Speaking at a meeting of the Tanzania heads of secondary schools association (TAHOSSA) the bank's regional manager Happiness Kizigira, said for more teachers to tap the opportunities, it was high time they opened bank accounts at their NBC's nearest branches.

Speaking at the occasion, TAHOSSA president, Frank Mahenge, said among the challenges facing teachers in the country was high-interest loans that discourage them as well as reducing the efficiency at their duty stations.

He said other challenges included incidents of schools being set on fire, unpaid teachers' arrears, lack of capacity building trainings for school principals and lack of transport especially at boarding schools.

"Another challenge is the lack of transport facilities to schools, but recently several schools were set ablaze and many schools not having a strong fences thus endangering the safety of staff and students as well," he said.

These challenges are likely to be an opportunity for NBC Bank which already had a wide range of educational services including education insurance, school accounts as well as student accounts as well as low interest loans.

"We have been providing different capacity building trainings as well as informing teachers that we have different categories of insurances which can help them in any disaster, and the response has been very good and we will not stop as we are trying to reach out to many teachers," he said

In addition, Mahenge said in order to help teachers achieve their goals the bank had set up a special goals account that enables them to save money and earn interest every month for one year.

"We also have school accounts and these are specifically for the schools because their incomes are low thus simplifying their revenue collections from their students. We also have accounts for children and students who have no monthly deductions," he said.

"Another challenge is the lack of transport facilities to schools, but recently several schools were set ablaze and many schools not having a strong fences thus endangering the safety of staff and students as well"

By Correspondent James Kandoya

CUSTOMS and clearing agents at Namanga border in Arusha city have been reminded to follow procedures as per Industrial and Consumer Chemicals (Management and Control) Act to increase efficiency in their duties.

Christopher Anyango, the northern zonal manager, from the government chemistry laboratory authority (GCLA) said that in Arusha during ongoing awareness campaign to customs and clearing agents.

"We recognise you as one of main stakeholders to implement the

Customs, clearing agents at Namanga urged to follow working procedures

Industrial and Consumer Chemicals (Management and Control) Act no 3 of 2003 because you work closely with our registered clients," he said.

He said since your duty was to clear imported goods, therefore it was very important for you to know the Act especially on procedures to import, transport and even when exporting goods.

"GCLA as controller has decided to

conduct awareness programme for you customs and clearing agents. It is our hope that the knowledge you have acquired will add value to your daily duties," he said

For his part, the Arusha customs and clearing agents chairman Ismail Kilasi thanked GLCA for conducting the training calling on them to make it sustainable programme.

"GCLA has been very important

stakeholders in our day to day activities. Online platform has improved and fast track procedures of clearing good since no more long queues or delays," he applauded.

GCLA has embarked to increase awareness programme to its main stakeholders to observe rules as per governing Act to avoid any arising problems that might be caused by lack of knowledge or regulations.

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'Road accidents declined in 2019'

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has said decrease in road accidents in the year 2020 was due to strong relationship between law enforcers and users.

Addressing journalists in Dodoma yesterday, Home Affairs minister George Simbachawene said there has been a decrease in accidents of about 921 which is 37 per cent, deaths 194 equivalent to 14 per cent as well as 636 injuries which is the same as 24 per cent compared to 2019.

"Road accidents have declined from January 2019 to November 2020 and we hope this good relationship will continue so that the trend remains the same," he said.

The minister called upon citizens and road users to continue observing road signs as well reporting those violating rules and regulations.

"The reduction in road accidents was a result of strategies put in place by the police to minimise the ghastly accidents.

Minister Simbachawene used the opportunity to warn various bus companies conducting their services in various regions across the country to stop violating road safety laws which put lives of passengers at risk.

The minister was issuing the status of road safety during the coming festive season.

Simbachawene said the main cause of accidents in the country was reckless driving, poor maintenance of vehicles and human errors.

Earlier when he tabled his ministry's budget proposals for the 2020/2021 financial year in April, Simbachawene said road accidents decreased by 26 per cent in nine months from July

2019 to March 2020.

He said 1,920 road accidents were recorded from July 2019 to March 2020 compared to 2,593 accidents reported from July 2018 to March 2019.

Simbachawene said 1,084 people were killed in the accidents from July 2019 to March 2020 compared to 1,216 deaths recorded from July 2018 to March 2019 which was a decrease of 11 per cent.

He added that 2,639 people were injured in accidents from July 2018 to March 2019 compared to 2,129 injuries recorded from July 2019 to March 2020, a decrease of 19.3 per cent.

In July 2018, police embarked on a campaign to instigate strict measures on road users after a series of road accidents that claimed lives of hundreds of innocent Tanzanians.

Stakeholders believe the new measures will help reduce road crashes.

This came barely some weeks after at least 20 people were killed and 45 injured following road accident in Mbeya Region last month.

This was the fifth fatal road accident recorded in the country during this month alone, coming barely three days since five people died and three others were injured after their car veered off the road, overturned and caught fire in Nanyumbu District, Mtwara Region.

"The reduction in road accidents was a result of strategies put in place by the police to minimise the ghastly accidents."



Home Affairs deputy minister Khamis Hamza Chilo (L) listens to Fatma Khatib who is information officer at the Immigration department in Zanzibar. Photo: Home Affairs

Tabora RC orders arrest of all MCU board members over stolen fertiliser

By Guardian Correspondent, Tabora

TABORA regional Commissioner Dr Philemon Sengati has ordered the arrest of all board members of Milambo Cooperative Union Ltd (MCU) in the region as well as some of the Union's officials over loss of 462 bags of tobacco fertiliser valued at 55m/-.

Dr Sengati issued the arrest order here early this week after visiting the Union's warehouse for fertiliser storage where he found the storage facility to be intact while the fertiliser was missing in mysterious

circumstances.

He said basically he supported the step taken by Dr Benson Ndiege, the Cooperative Registrar in dissolving the MCU board, adding that what follows was to ensure all those involved are arrested, return the fertiliser and face court action.

The RC said the MCU General Manager Leaky Madale and the Warehouse Keeper Sarah Williams should also be arrested for investigations.

He said the officials cannot escape culpability as they agreed to work even without being given all the keys to the warehouse

including accepting goods in the warehouse assets without written documents.

He said tobacco farmers and other crops ought to benefit from their labour and enjoy President John Magufuli's leadership in defending the rights of the poor.

The RC also ordered the Tabora Regional Police Commander to hunt for the members of the dissolved MCU board and its general manager for investigations.

He also called on the police to ensure they interrogate all those found with some of the fertiliser to explain its origin.

Earlier, Urambo District Commissioner Angelina Kwingwa said apart from the loss of the 462 bags of fertiliser, there was also 19,000 bags of the same which Petrobena Company claimed to have distributed to farmers on MCU's behalf and paid only part of the money while this was never reflected in the books of accounts.

She said no records of the fertiliser valued at more than 2bn/- appear in any MCU books of account.

So far the police have seized 200 bags out of the 462 stolen from the warehouse.



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Fund verifies details of 5,000 retirees, dependants in Mwanza

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

THE Public Service Social Security Fund (PSSSF) in Mwanza Region continues to verify details of the region's more than 5,000 retirees and dependants who received benefits from the Fund to root out fraud.

Speaking here early this week with this paper in an interview in his office, Happiness Manyenye, acting Mwanza Region PSSF manager said the verification exercise is conducted once a year.

She said the exercise was being conducted in all districts of Mwanza Region whereby every retiree was required to come with one copy of his/her photograph, copy of NIDA card and a bank ATM card.

She further said for the retirees

who for any reason cannot go to PSSSF office in Mwanza, Fund's employees can go to their homes for verification.

"In order to go to the homes of

In order to go to the homes of these people, his/her relatives should inform the Fund

these people, his/her relatives should inform the Fund," she added.

Manyenye said Mwanza Region was home to more than 5,000 retirees who are to be verified and that every week they verify between 400 to 500 of them.

She added that the aim for the verification exercise was to update the retirees' register to ensure the Fund keeps proper retirees records and their dependants, to ensure the pension was being given to those targeted and to get any changes on bank information of the retirees whenever there are changes.

Manyenye said when they discover a retiree has died, he/she is removed from the monthly payment since the payee is the fund's member and his/her family member or any other person.



Livestock and Fisheries deputy minister Pauline Gekul (R) receives a fish from director Magese Bulayi moments after he visited a fishing pond belonging to a Chinese company in Manyara Region yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Mbaraka Kambona



The Guardian Ltd sales team in a group photo during their annual appreciation gala held yesterday in Dar es Salaam. Third left (standing) second row is finance manager Samuel Orgeness and business director Ajay Goyal (in blue shirt). Photo: Guardian Correspondent

OUT should work with other authorities to improve education sector - Mizengo Pinda

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

FORMER Prime Minister Mizengo Pinda has called on the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) to see on how to work together with various education authorities to remove existing complaints in order to improve the education sector.

Pinda also called on the University to ensure it distributes a project programme for elementary schools in the country's various areas as the issue was important for the society.

The former PM remarks were contained in his speech at the 1st graduation ceremony for first Diploma teachers of primary and secondary schools who graduated from the University under sponsorship from Tanzania Teachers Union (TTU) in collaboration with the World Teachers Congress.

Pinda said the elementary education was crucial because teachers in those schools are the

imitators of the good foundations for pupils in that stage.

He said there was every reason for OUT to continue offering the programme in other regions where it is also needed.

Pinda said as for now the education was crucial because the teachers will go with time depending on the current education environment.

Speaking earlier, TTU secretary General Deus Seif said the union was not occupied by only one task, to collect its debts, salary increases, but it is also strategising to develop teachers.

He said TTU has done a great job in ensuring it improves the education for its teachers so that students being taught get the best expertise from the teachers.

The project's chairman, Aboubakary Allawi said the project started in 2017 and the teachers were procured from Chemba and Mpwapwa districts using criteria set by OUT.

He said they enrolled 500 students but 64 failed to continue with studies due to various reasons.

By Guardian Correspondent, Singida

ITIGI District Council in Singida Region has dished out 39.5m/- loans to 14 vulnerable groups, including nine women groups, three youth groups and three of people with disabilities.

Presenting his implementation report on activities undertaken between June to December this year, the Council's Executive Director John Mgalula mentioned

Itigi District Council offers over 39m/- loans to vulnerable groups

the groups as including Songambebe Vijana Garage that was given 1.5m/-.

Other groups and the amount of loans given in brackets are Mlowa Umoja Group (3m/-), Mkwajuni

Tambukareli (3m/-) Amani Women (2m/-), Shilo Zinginali Group (1.5/-), Hairbar Dressing Group (2m/-) and Ushirikiano (3.5/-).

Others are Upendo Zinginali

(3m/-), Maendeleo Idodyandole (4m/-), Kintanula Women (4m/-), Uyanjo Vikoba Group (3,000/-) and Kikoba MT Gasper Majengo (3m/-).

Mgalula said the repayment

situation was satisfactory as some of the groups have started paying back the soft loans.

He said 17 vulnerable groups were registered during the period, including the Tikisa

Group of motorcycle drivers in Majengo area and Karasha Group of Aghondi that deals in poultry keeping.

He mentioned other groups that were registered as including Tumaini Group for people with disabilities of Kitaraka that deals in farming and livestock keeping and Natural Thickerts Beekeepers also of Kitaraka which deals in beekeeping.



TAARIFA KWA WAPANGAJI WA NYUMBA ZA NHC WANAODAIWA KODI NA MALIMBIKIZO

1. Shirika la Nyumba la Taifa linawashukuru wapangaji wake walioweza kulipa kodi na malimbikizo yao baada ya kupewa notisi ya siku kumi na nne (14) ya kulipa kodi na malimbikizo wanayodaiwa. Aidha, wapo wapangaji wachache ambao bado wanadaiwa kodi na malimbikizo hadi sasa.
2. Kwa mara nyingine, Shirika linatoa siku thelathini(30) kwa wapangaji wanaodaiwa kodi na malimbikizo kufika katika ofisi za Shirika zilizo karibu nao ili kulipa kodi na malimbikizo wanayodaiwa.
3. Shirika linawashauri wapangaji wote kutumia fursa hii kulipa madeni yao na baada ya muda huu uliowekwa kukamilika, Shirika litatumia taratibu za kisheria kukusanya kodi na malimbikizo yanayodaiwa wapangaji ikiwemo kukamata na kupiga mnada mali za wapangaji ili kufidia kodi na malimbikizo yanayodaiwa. Aidha, baada ya muda huu kupita, Shirika halitasita kutangaza kwenye vyombo vya habari majina ya wadaiwa wote sugu ili umma ufahamu watu wanaokwamisha maendeleo ya Shirika na Taifa kwa kutokulipa kodi.
4. Tunashukuru wapangaji wote wanaotimiza wajibu wao wa kulipa kodi kwa wakati na kuliwezesha Shirika na Taifa kuwaletia maendeleo wanzania kwenye sekta ya nyumba.

IMETOLEWA NA: OFISI YA MAWASILIANO NA HUDUMA KWA JAMII
NHC-MAKAO MAKUU

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RAS directs defence committees on GBV to act against menace

By Guardian Reporter, Musoma

MARA Regional Administrative Officer Karolina Mthapula has called on Defence Committees for Women and Children in the region to ensure they work together with the society to eradicate gender based violence (GBV) and child abuse especially in rural areas.

Karolina issued the remarks when opening a training seminar for Defence Committees for Women and Children in Musoma District coordinated by Community Development Department of the Ministry of Health in collaboration with UNFPA.

She said in order to eradicate GBV and child abuse various organs have to join forces against the vice.

She added that customs and traditions in our communities should adhere in developing the good customs and traditions that are beneficial to the community.

Grace Mwangwa, Assistant Director in the Community Development Department of the Ministry of Health said the government recognises that the National Plan in the eradication of GBV and Child Abuse (MTAKUWVA) was being implemented especially at village level hence it was essential for the district Defence Committees to go down to the people to give them education on the eradication of the menace.

She said local council officials to where the defence committees are attached to should assist in empowering them with working tools to implement their duties whenever a GBV or child abuse

incident occur in various areas.

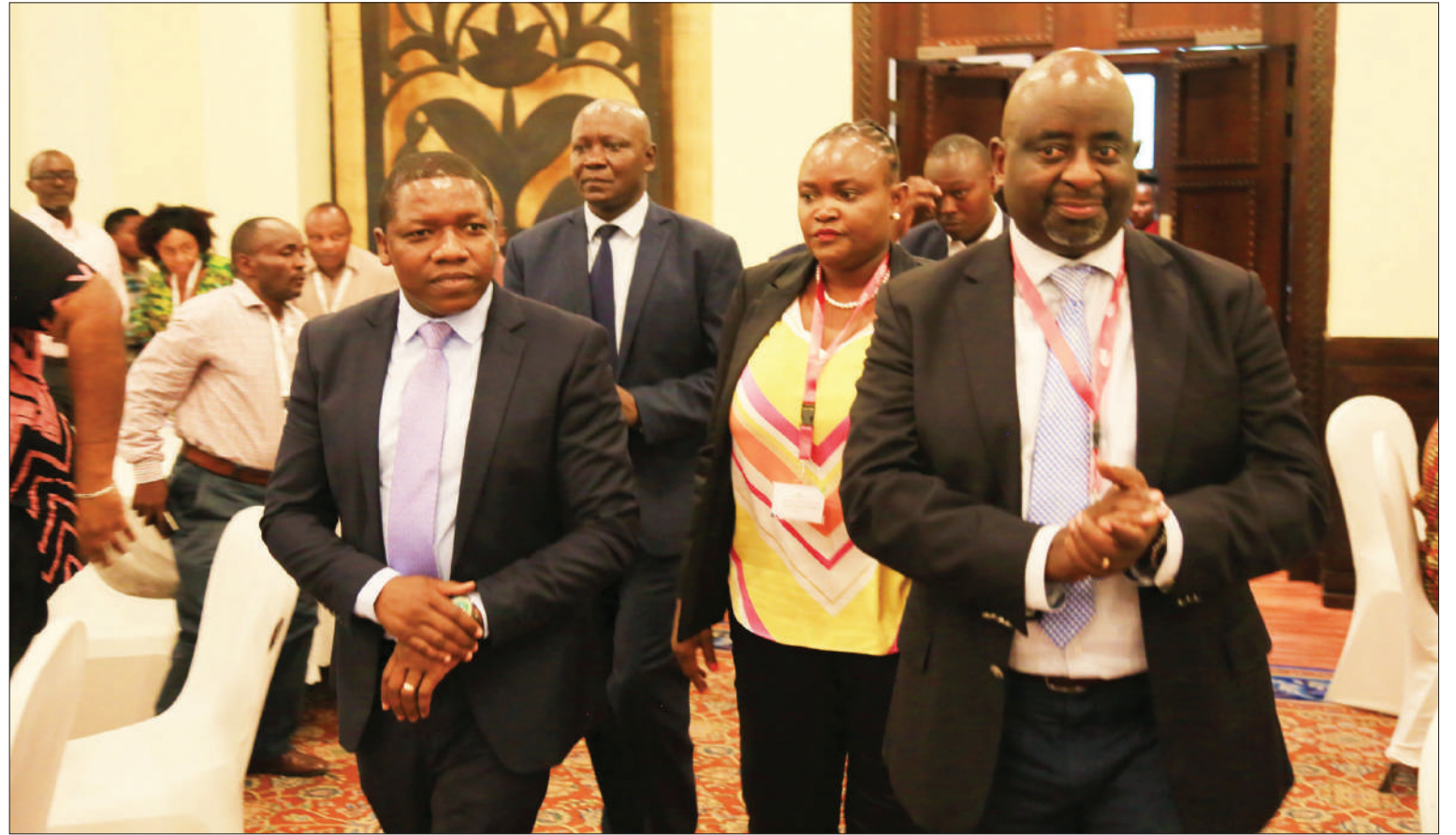
William Gumbo, Musoma Municipal Mayor said the community is supposed to be open in discussing these issues especially political leaders who should be at the forefront in ensuring the vice is eliminated.

Obadia Bulenga, a prominent elder, said he will ensure the knowledge gained from the training against GBV and child abuse reaches to the community around him.

Nicobili Mfanyi, a Musoma EAGT assistant priest said he would use the pulpit to educate the people in the eradication of GBV and child abuse.



... that customs and traditions in our communities should adhere in developing the good customs and traditions that are beneficial to the community



Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) executive director Francis Nanai (R) welcomes Industry and Trade minister Geoffrey Mwambe (L) in Dar es Salaam yesterday during the inauguration of TPSF new board members. Second right is re-elected chairperson Angelina Ngulula. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Correspondent Michael Sikapundwa, Morogoro

MOROGORO Municipal Council is set to spend over 500m/- for building new and completing 36 classrooms in secondary schools across the municipality in this fiscal year.

Municipal executive director, Sheila Lukuba revealed this here over the weekend when speaking at the full council meeting.

She admitted that the municipality is in need of more classrooms, "that's why in the 2020/2021 financial year, we've allocated 578m/- for the construction of three secondary

500m/- to uplift secondary education in Morogoro

schools and completion of 36 classrooms in a move aimed at reducing students' congestion in classrooms."

"As authorities, we're working hard to address the challenge within the shortest period of time so that all students are accommodated and continue with their studies as scheduled," the official said.

She added that new plots are needed for the municipal council to build new secondary schools in

the municipality to meet students' demands.

Some of the secondary schools, which are to benefit from the new arrangement include Kola Hill, Kingalu, Bondwa, Tushikamane, Uluguru, Kingolwira, and Bungodimwe.

For her part, Municipal Secondary Education Officer, Dr Janeth Barongo described the new municipal plans as key in scaling up the education sector in the area, noting: "All

that we're doing are in line with government's directives that the number of students in a secondary school shouldn't be more than 1600."

Citing Kihonda Secondary School, located along Morogoro-Dodoma highway, the education officer said that the number of Form One students is expected to be more than 500 next month, the number which is high and contrary to the government's directives.



Representative of singh youth community in Dar es Salaam, Harvir Chana (C) hands over a donation of various items to Kurasi Orphanage Centre senior officer Beatrice Mgunoro in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

RC quizzes VETA over stalled college construction in Ludewa

By Guardian Correspondent, Njombe

NJOMBE Regional Commissioner Eng Marwa Rubirya has instructed the Director of VETA for the Southern Highlands Zone to prepare a report to show when will the construction of VETA Shaurimoyo College in Ludewa District resume after its suspension for a long time.

The instruction was given at the weekend after visiting the construction site at Shaurimoyo Village in Lugalawa Ward, Ludewa District.

He said the college's construction was strategic and not from chance as it was much needed by the residents of the entire Njombe Region, and not those of Ludewa District alone.

"As I had been saying you cannot speak about Njombe without mentioning Liganga and Mchuchuma (iron ore fields) hence it was purposely decided to build the VETA college here," he added.

He assured Shaurimoyo villagers that the needs for the college were still intact hence it had to be built at the area, and nowhere else to enable Form IV leavers in the village to receive

training.

Earlier, presenting report on the construction of the college, Eng Benitho Kigava, a VETA representative said the project begun in January 2017 and was supposed to be completed within eight months only.

He said the project involved the construction of workshops, classrooms, administrative offices, staff quarters, toilets and other external infrastructures including roads. He said the project was envisaged to cost more than 9bn/- and added that the project was presented to the contractor in December 2016.

For his part, the Ludewa Member of Parliament Joseph Kamonga said when he was the District's Lands Officer he was involved in the preparation of the plot's title deed which was offered by villagers for the construction of the college.

He said the villagers realised the importance in having a VETA college in their area but what has surprised many is the long time it has taken to get the college operating.

He said some villagers had told the Njombe RC that if the college cannot be built, the government should return their land.

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE tendency where public officials are forced to work for a very long time in acting capacities in various positions without getting the remunerations of the positions they act in is caused by employers not adhering to the public service procedures when they appoint officials in various acting capacities, as required by Public Service Circular No. 2 of 2018.

This was expressed here early this week by the Minister of State in the President's Office (Public Service Management and Good

Mkuchika blames public employers over snags in confirming officials working in acting capacities

Governance) Capt. (Retd) George Mkuchika during his visit to the offices of the Morogoro Regional Commissioner.

Mkuchika said there has been a pattern by many employers in the public service, especially local council authorities to appoint unqualified officials to acting capacities without approval from the Permanent Secretary, Public

Service Management.

The minister explained that in order for a public official to be appointed to any acting capacity, he is supposed to have the rank of a Senior Officer or above and must also have an approval in writing from the Permanent Secretary, Public Service Management and that he would work in such acting capacity for the period

not exceeding six months before being formally confirmed in case he meets the required criteria for the post.

He said the non-adherence to these procedures has been the cause of complaints from many public officials, hence he called on employers to abide by the procedures.

Meanwhile, the minister called

on employers to ensure they assist retirees to get their benefits in time after retiring from public service.

He said in order for the retirees to get their terminal benefits in time, administrative officers have to prepare all needed records six months before such retirement.

Earlier, presenting implementation report for the

Morogoro Region, the Region's Administrative Officer Eng Emmanuel Kalobelo told the minister that apart from good achievements attained for the Region, his office faced many challenges, including officials working very long periods in acting capacity, and for retirees not getting their retiring benefits in time.

Largest known confiscation of smuggled monkeys sheds light on African trafficking network

By Rachel Fobar

DURING a routine border check in early September, Zimbabwean officials confiscated 25 juvenile monkeys found in cages in the back of a truck entering the country from Zambia and bound for South Africa.

The officials, with the Chirundu Anti-Poaching Project, a joint operation between Zimbabwe Parks and Wildlife Management Authority (ZimParks) and Hemmersbach Rhino Force, immediately knew something was wrong because the animals weren't native to their country. They arrested the four men in the truck. "They were smuggling the monkeys," says ZimParks spokesperson Tinashe Farawo. "They tried to bribe some of the officers at the border."

To date, this is one of the largest known confiscations of illegally traded primates in Africa, according to the US-based Pan African Sanctuary Alliance (PASA), a coalition of 23 wildlife centers and sanctuaries across the continent. The case highlights a well-known overland smuggling route for live primates from the DRC through Zambia and Zimbabwe to South Africa, says Jean Fleming, PASA's communications manager.

Thousands of animals, including hundreds of primates, likely are traded illegally along this route every year, says Adams Cassinga, a National Geographic emerging explorer and founder of the wildlife crime investigative organization Conserv Congo. He describes the DRC as ground zero for wildlife trafficking and says primates are especially vulnerable because both great apes and smaller primates are in high demand for bushmeat, the zoo trade, and the pet trade.

The confiscated monkeys are all native to the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC): 12 golden-bellied mangabeys, two L'Hoest's monkeys, two lesulas, two grey-cheeked mangabeys, five putty-nosed monkeys, and two Allen's swamp monkeys. The International Union for Conservation of Nature, the global authority on the conservation status of wild animals and plants, lists most of these species as endangered or vulnerable.

The men, citizens of the DRC, Zambia, and Malawi, were convicted of wildlife trafficking and are now serving six-month-long sentences in Karoi Prison, in northern Zimbabwe. The traffickers told ZimParks officials that they were taking the animals to South Africa. Meanwhile, the monkeys are being cared for by the Chirundu Anti-Poaching Project in a secret location in Chirundu, a village near the Zimbabwe-Zambia border, until the animals can be transferred to a sanctuary.

The 25 monkeys were most likely on their way to zoos in China, says Gregg Tully, PASA's executive director. As China's middle class has grown, so has the number of private zoos in the country, eager for African primates to display.

Nearly a hundred zoos are estimated to have opened during the past five years, according to Dave Neale, animal welfare director for Animals Asia, a Hong Kong-based animal welfare organization.

China's Ministry of Housing and Urban-Rural Development has welfare codes for the country's zoos, but many facilities are "operating in contravention of these national regulations," according to a 2018 report by the Ape Alliance, a group seeking to combat the trade in great apes.



Constitutional and Legal Affairs minister Mwigulu Nchemba talks with Law School lecturers in Dar es Salaam during his visit yesterday. Left is senior lecturer Dr. Sist Mramba. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Guardian Reporter

AfDB board approves \$10.4bn borrowing plan for year 2021

THE Board of Directors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) has announced a plan to borrow \$10.4 billion from the capital markets under its 2021 borrowing scheme.

This was disclosed by the AfDB in a statement, citing the board's approval in the December 11th meeting in Abidjan.

The multilateral bank said that the borrowing programme would enable it "to mobilise next year funds on the international capital markets in order to contribute to the financing of its projects and its programme on the African continent."

The bank stated that the loan would be in dollars, as it was an active player in international markets, using foreign currencies

like the US dollars, Australian dollars, euros and pounds sterling.

It added that, "The bank will continue to promote the development of African capital markets with the issuance of debt denominated in local currency to facilitate the financing of its operations in these same currencies, in parallel with other initiatives."

AfDB noted that it played an active role in socially responsible investments and would increase its role in the issuing of green and social bonds.

"This year, the African Development Bank issued a three-

year social bond called 'Combat Covid-19'. This earned it being named best issuer of Covid-19 bonds at the Global Capital Bond Awards 2020.

"The African Development Bank also continued to use its operational priorities, the "High 5" for the issuance of 19 thematic obligations, including those related to the priorities of "improving the quality of life of people in Africa" and "enlightening Africa," it said.

The bank said that its triple-A rating from global rating agencies and its rating from "ESG" rating agencies benefited its operations.

Nairametrics reported last week that the AfDB had said that it was committed to mobilising the sum of \$25 billion in climate finance in Africa by 2025, as well as a number of other initiatives by the bank that would address climate adaptation.

AfDB President, Dr Adesina recently said that "Africa must grow by mobilizing domestic resources, especially by unlocking its over \$1 trillion in pension funds, sovereign wealth funds, and insurance funds to help close the annual infrastructure financing gap estimated at \$64-108 billion."

Merry Christmas
AND HAPPY NEW YEAR

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the best cooperation in 2021.

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Let's drive to arrive alive this Xmas

CHRISTMAS comes but once a year. We have three days to go moving into the climax of this festive season. We also begin tallying road accidents, fatalities and injuries as more traffic will be on our roads, more drivers will be drinking and speeding, and more of them will die or kill their families or kill others using the roads. Police roadblocks help a little. They ensure drivers are licensed and are not obviously drunk and that vehicles are licensed and therefore that they are also insured. But this is about as far it goes: a quick check that reminds most drivers to be careful and then back to as it was.

Of far more value are those police speed-traps and the highway patrol vehicles that go round looking for bad driving as well as mounting quick surprise speed-traps at unexpected places.

We hope that the police will be able to use every one of the limited number of speed radars they have working this festive season, for that will at least reduce one big killer.

A second major killer is alcohol. Unfortunately, Tanzania does not test much to see if drivers are over the limit or even drunk. We have to rely on the common sense of drivers, and it is clear that many Tanzanians feel they are quite capable of controlling a car when they have downed a few beers.

Statistics show they are wrong, and part of the holiday death toll comes from the higher likelihood that many drivers, being off work, are drinking during the day.

We have suggested before that equipping roadblocks with the basic breathalysers common in some countries would do a great deal to

keeping our roads a lot safer, and we suspect that at least in the early stages of zero tolerance to drinking and driving, the fines would more than pay for the equipment.

The third killer is bad driving, and Tanzania has a lot of bad drivers plus a lot of fairly reasonable drivers who try and drive when tired, drive long distances as quickly as possible, and drive too fast on dark roads.

Bad driving and wrong driving kill. We have seen that over the years. Sometimes, in some places and some conditions, the speed limit is far too fast at lower speeds it is easier for two vehicles to pass, especially on curves or where the road is raised to cross a stream.

Night driving kills more than it should, largely because so few people take the trouble to work out what is their minimum braking distance and then checking to see if their headlights will light up an obstruction in time. If not they will have a problem.

We might need to borrow the law in several countries that compels drivers to carry a spare headlight bulb. These are cheap and easy to replace and having both bulbs does give a driver a better chance of seeing obstructions.

Even roadblocks would be a useful place to be told a bulb was out and would offer protection while this was changed. The offence can be not having a spare, not having a dead light. A final major killer is the impatience so many show on the roads. Taking a trip a little easier, going with the flow and enjoying the ride a bit more does not add much to the travel time few trips would be more than 15 per cent longer and would be a lot safer and more enjoyable.

More research is needed to ascertain efficacy, safety of traditional medicine

TRADITIONAL medicine also known as indigenous or folk medicine comprises medical aspects of traditional knowledge that developed over generations within various societies before the era of modern medicine. The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines traditional medicine as "the sum total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs, and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness".

Traditional medicine is contrasted with scientific medicine. In some Asian and African countries, up to 80 per cent of the population relies on traditional medicine for their primary health care needs. When adopted outside its traditional culture, traditional medicine is often considered a form of alternative medicine. Practices known as traditional medicines include traditional European medicine and traditional Chinese medicine.

The WHO notes, however, that inappropriate use of traditional medicines or practices can have negative or dangerous effects and that further research is needed to ascertain the efficacy and safety of such practices and medicinal plants used by traditional medicine systems. As a result, the WHO has implemented a nine-year strategy to support member states in developing proactive policies and implementing action plans that will strengthen the role traditional medicine plays in keeping populations healthy.

Against this backdrop, the government has introduced new guidelines to facilitate the provision

of alternative and traditional medicines and to ensure its sustainability.

The director of curative services in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Dr Grace Magembe said recently in media remarks relating to a conference on how to strengthen the provision of traditional medicines in the country.

The conference brought together experts from universities, research institutes, factory operators, the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR), and other stakeholders.

She said that the ministry is working on arrangements for improved administration of traditional medicines, highlighting the need for training traditional medicine providers on the basis of a special curriculum to be used in such training.

"Most of those offering traditional medicines have not been exposed to formal education or training. We need to start teaching our college and university students so as to develop a new generation of traditional healers," the director asserted.

She said most traditional healers claim to have inherited their expertise from parents or grandparents but it is important that they are trained on the proper administration of the medicines in accordance with the issued guidelines. We also want them to be trained by TBS on the proper packaging of the medicines. Using proper packaging materials would enable them to export the medicines," she stated.

Through the Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), the healers would strengthen the growing of medicinal plants and trees in various areas, she further noted.

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Why Nigeria is not a democratic country

By Wale Oluwade

WALE Oluwade argues that the parameters that define democracy are largely missing in Nigeria. When we speak of a democratic dispensation, some of the critical indices to look out for include these 10 fundamental elements. They are multi-party participation, free, fair and credible elections, separation of powers, checks and balances, virile public institutions, independent and impartial judiciary, supremacy of the rule of law, free and independent mass media, active citizen engagement and the role of CSOs.

Upon a critical analysis and evaluation of the foregoing, it becomes apparent our social/political and governance practices are nowhere near being deemed even a caricature of a democratic political system. Tagging our current governance practices democratic is an egregious travesty.

Let's examine the case of the judiciary. Here, an extremely odious, criminal and highly lucrative election litigation industry has been established since the advent of the 4th Republic where members of the bar and bench scramble for market-share dominance. Not a few lawyers have attained dubious rockstar distinction purely on electoral litigation adroitness which

By Pablo Vieira Samper

FOR those of us in the international climate action community, 2020 isn't ending the way we expected when we rang in the new year. Even before 2020 dawned, countries were hard at work planning for their first updated Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), in line with the Paris Agreement's five-year NDC revision cycle. NDCs are official statements, prepared by countries themselves, outlining the commitments they are making to reduce national emissions and adapt to climate change's impacts. They are at the heart of putting the Paris Agreement into practice and pursuing action on a global scale.

We were thrown a curveball, however, as an unexpected and devastating global pandemic shifted national priorities toward public health and economic recovery. And even though we faced one of the hottest years on record—in which the impacts of climate change were seen and experienced in wildfires, floods, hurricanes, droughts, and other adverse events—countries' domestic agendas were forced to deal with pandemic-related topics.

Still, the imperative to act has not disappeared. In fact, it is more

is a euphemism for rank corruption. The examples are legion but the recent Imo state gubernatorial "judicial wonder" suffices.

Conversely, the 2020 U.S. Presidential elections' contrived crisis by the defeated incumbent Donald Trump who, in cahoots with his party, approached the states, federal and ultimately the Supreme Courts, yet, all demonstrably balked at getting involved in elections matters. Indeed, and as succinctly captured by Judge Stephanos Bibas who wrote for the 3rd US circuit court of appeals in the decision over Pennsylvania votes certification; "Free, fair elections are the lifeblood of our democracy. Charges of unfairness are serious. But calling an election unfair does not make it so. Charges require specific allegations and then proof. We have neither here."

The judge further denounced as "breathtaking" a Republican Party request to reverse certification of the votes, adding: "Voters, not lawyers, choose the president. Ballots, not briefs, decide elections. [The] campaign's claims have no merit."

The ruling - as of then, Trump team's 38th court defeat in election lawsuits nationwide - reaffirmed US district judge Matthew Brann's earlier view of Ruddy Giuliani's complaint, delivered after he listened to five hours of oral arguments. The lawsuit, Judge

Brann said, was: "like Frankenstein's Monster ... haphazardly stitched together."

The appeal court's ruling was also laced with the subtle irony of the courts' unwillingness to corruptly interfere in the electoral disaster that has befallen Trump in that, he (Trump), appointed judge Bibas in 2017. The two other panel judges were also appointed by Republican presidents, and Maryanne Trump Barry, the president's sister, sat on the appeals court for two decades until her retirement last year.

Needless to add, as of the time of typing these, the president has lost 57 cases in the courts, including two at the SCOTUS, which is significant bearing in mind Trump appointed a third of the entire SCOTUS panel and his party maintains a clear 6-3 nomination majority on same. Critically, each of these 57 cases didn't take more than 24-48 hours to dispense with. There were no plethora of invidious injunctions, deposing and cross-examination of witnesses, dragging on for months.

So, while U.S. courts stoutly refrained from allowing lawyers usurp the roles of voters and briefs replacing ballots in deciding the winners of electoral contests, that, sadly, is what obtains in Nigeria. Almost every election ends up at the courts for adjudication and the courts are unusually eager to oblige the perfidy to the extent it's become a critical part of our electoral

culture.

Finally, why is the SCOTUS so powerful in America? Many reasons but at the top of the list is the lifetime tenure of its members. The justices dispense justice as they deem fit assured in their immunity from backlash from an overbearing executive or legislature. This guarantees the selection process is rigorous ab initio. Once appointed and confirmed as Supreme Court justice, except such voluntarily retires, is of unsound mind or proven to be corrupt, its "till death do us part!"

For each of the 10 fundamental elements I highlighted, a similar depressing comparison can be made to decisively validate my assertion. Hopefully, at some point in the distant future, Nigeria may yet emerge a truly democratic nation, but for now, it's just a civilian dictatorship.

Let's examine the case of the judiciary. Here, an extremely odious, criminal and highly lucrative election litigation industry has been established since the advent of the 4th Republic where members of the bar and bench scramble for market-share dominance. Not a few lawyers have attained dubious rockstar distinction purely on electoral litigation adroitness which is a euphemism for rank corruption. The examples are legion but the recent Imo state gubernatorial "judicial wonder" suffices

Keeping climate ambition alive: Challenges remain but signs of progress abound

critical than ever. Fortunately, while work to support and enable countries to increase ambition in their enhanced NDCs was delayed in some cases, it was not derailed. The work has had to forge ahead through significant and unforeseen obstacles, but it has continued. And the NDC Partnership has played a significant role in keeping action on the agenda and keeping results within reach.

The NDC Partnership is a global coalition of countries and institutions collaborating to drive transformational climate action through sustainable development. While nations signal their Paris Agreement commitments with NDCs, the NDC Partnership brings together countries, institutions, and resources in new ways to accelerate implementation and enhance ambition over time.

We have seen significant progress in the implementation of national climate commitments during the four years since we were founded to support developing countries in achieving their commitments under the Paris Agreement. We grew to

more than 180 members, including developed and developing countries as well as major international institutions and non-state actors. We mobilized and disbursed more than a billion dollars through multiple member-managed NDC financing facilities.

And through an innovative Climate Action Enhancement Package launched just a year ago, a total of 65 countries now receive support to enhance NDC quality and raise climate ambition. A great deal of this work was accomplished despite the challenges of a global pandemic.

Our success was made possible by the impressive commitment of our members and their shared conviction that by working together, we can be more than the sum of our parts. And as we finalize our second work program to guide us from 2021-2025, we aim to build on our early successes to drive still more ambitious action on climate change and sustainable development. While countries are finalizing their five-year NDC revisions, our second Work Program will support the transition

from planning to implementation, and once again into planning for higher ambition. And it comes as we face a stark reality, that global action on climate change still lags well behind what is needed.

More effectively engaging youth in climate action is one way the Partnership has driven ahead with bringing a whole-of-society approach when developing and implementing climate solutions. In our first years, 17 countries requested support related to youth engagement. As a result, our Steering Committee called for a Youth Task Force (YTF).

Despite the pandemic, the YTF led a consultative process this year with youth from around the world to identify priorities and obstacles for youth engagement in climate action and make recommendations for the Partnership to meaningfully engage youth. Moving forward, as we implement the Youth Engagement Plan (YEP), youth will have a seat at the table with processes, projects, capacity, and engagement mechanisms all built specifically with this audience in mind.

By Correspondent James Kandoya

Under The Same Sun: Free lotions to stem skin cancer needs political will

People living with Albinism (PwA) are found in nearly every country in the world. In Tanzania for instance, the figure is believed to be one in 2,652 persons while one in 5,000 to 15,000 in other sub-regions of Africa and in the U.S. one in 20,000 persons have albinism.

Lacking pigmentation, albinos are vulnerable to what advocacy groups call a “silent killer” - skin cancer, the most common type of cancer associated with albinism and thought to be a major cause of death in African albinos.

Its challenges associated with care are numerous and need to be addressed by all stakeholders to rescue dozens of people who die every year across the country for preventable causes.

The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in the United States describes cancer as a disease in which cells in the body grow out of control, thus when it starts in the skin, it is called skin cancer.

It is mostly caused by exposure to ultraviolet (UV) light, where UV light from sunlight or tanning beds can damage the skin's deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) structure.

When DNA is altered, it cannot properly control skin cell growth, leading to cancer. Apart from it, there are a number of factors that can raise the chance of getting it, with the most preventable cause of skin cancer being overexposure to ultraviolet (UV) light either from the sun or from artificial sources like tanning beds.

Irene Kische, the public relations and advocacy officer at Under the Same Sun (UTSS), a charitable organization that promotes the wellbeing of persons with albinism via education and advocacy, says PwA are at high risk of losing their lives due to an unfriendly environment such as exposure to ultraviolet rays.

It is estimated that less than 10 percent of people with albinism in Tanzania survive skin cancer and reach the age of 40, in which case much effort is needed to address the matter to save their lives, she explains.

“We passionately appeal to the government to ensure that there



Irene Kische, the public relations and advocacy officer at Under the Same Sun (UTSS) highlights the need for the government to provide sufferers with free sunlight lotion to significantly lower the risk of contracting skin cancer from ultraviolet rays of the sun. Right is Kondo Seif, advocacy officer at the charity organisation. Photo by Correspondent James Kandoya

are enough stocks of sun skin lotion,” she proceeds, specifying that Sun Protection Factor (SPF) as having the ability to prevent direct rays from the sun to harm the skin..

“Unfortunately, some health experts in our public and private health facilities are not active about effects associated with albinism. As a result do not give priority to procure essential materials for us,” she elaborates.

The officer noted that essentials materials for people with albinism such as sun skin lotion must clearly be stated in health policy and be furnished in all health facilities procurement lists, so that sufferers have access too the lotions, to protect them against direct sunlight.

As the government provides large amounts of funds as capitation grants to primary and secondary schools each month, similar provisions ought to be made to procure and supply free sun skin lotion to PwA, as it is a much smaller group of people, she emphasized.

Lack of appropriate statistics of children born with albinism is still a major challenge hindering efforts of

stakeholders to reach achievable projections on handling the skin cancer problem countrywide, she explains, noting that estimates show that dozens of people with albinism have been killed by criminals seeking body parts for superstitious activities tied to rituals to gain money, etc.

It is advised for those PwA carrying their activities outdoors should lower the risk of cancer by using sun protection, staying in the shade, wearing protective clothing and applying and reapplying broad spectrum sunscreen lotions with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher, the official underlines.

Increased public awareness is vital and the government should be on the forefront to ensure stakeholders play their role to address the matter in a broad manner through various forms of communication.

“Collective efforts will help to change people’s minds and attitudes and therefore eliminate bad habits leading to deaths of innocent PwA in the country,” she affirms.

PwA must be reconsidered in employment opportunities as per the

Employment and Labour Relations Act of 2004 and the Persons With Disability Act of 2010, section 31(2), which states that three percent of public employment in particular must be reserved for PwA applicants.

The Standing Voice’s Skin Cancer Prevention Programme is an expanding network of regular skincare clinics reaching thousands of people with albinism in their own communities across Tanzania and Malawi, a blueprint to be replicated and expanded across sub-Saharan Africa.

Over 6,000 people with albinism have been reached by the programme, which operates at 65 clinic sites across Tanzania and Malawi. Prior to their services, the majority of those with albinism lacked access to adequate skincare, while the fortunate few receiving treatment faced an average waiting time of 14-17 months. “Our patients now wait a maximum of six months,” an official declared.

Dr Crispin Kahesa, the director of cancer prevention services at Ocean Road Cancer Institute (ORCI) notes that skin cancer can be associated with a number of factors such as ul-

traviolet rays, physical factors, racial, geographical location and infections.

Men are reported to be at higher risk of getting the disease compared to women due to the fact that they are more exposed to ultraviolet rays, he stated.

Globally, skin cancer is ranked as ninth out of the series of cancers reported most in developed countries, and ranks 13 among cancer infections in the country, with PwA the most affected group.

“We are now attending 113 new cases annually while follow up cases reach up to 400 yearly, with two thirds of the reported cases being men. Most patients come at a late state due to low awareness about the disease,” he elaborates.

The director hints that the disease can be prevented if the society follows doctors’ recommendations, including lifestyle modification and sunburn protection as they are major factors to take up in preventing people from getting the diseases.

There are also secondary prevention measures such as treatment of pre-cancer symptoms by cryotherapy, sometimes known as cold therapy, via local or general use of low temperatures, tertiary prevention (surgery), thermotherapy (control of temperature) and radiotherapy (radiation in hospital).

Like other types of cancers, nearly all skin cancers can be treated effectively if they are found early, with ORCI taking significant measures to ensure all patients get recommended services. It provides free sunlight lotion to PwA to protect them from the ultraviolet rays, a key risk factor.

“Our institute in collaboration with other health stakeholders distributes freely sunlight lotion to this particular group to enable them to be on the safe side against the sunlight,” he affirms.

In its future plans, ORCI plans to extend quality healthcare services be it for patients needing to check up or obtain treatment.

The institute in collaboration with partners has established hospital-based cancer registry receiving documentation from around the country, awareness and education programmes to the public, plus organising research within ORCI and at a broader level, he stated.

Although only 10 percent of cancer cases reach the ORCI for treatment, 80 percent of cases reported to the institute come at late stages of the disease, he reaffirmed.

Public knowledge on cancer prevention, cure and care is still low in households, in which case the fact that one third of cancers can be prevented and early detection and treatment are possible, which aggravates the situation.

Reality check: Getting Covid-19 is more dangerous than going to war

By Jon Foster-Pedley

Who’s more likely to die, a soldier deployed to Afghanistan between 2001 and 2014 or someone living in the US or the UK if they contract Covid-19?

Most people would opt for the soldier because he or she would have been going into one of the world’s worst conflict zones at the time, against people with the stated intention of stopping them by any means possible, whether by shooting them in the head or planting improvised explosive devices at the roadside.

According to the Guardian newspaper, the British mortality rate in Afghanistan during that period was 2.8 per 100,000 deployed. The US rate was slightly better at 2.5 per 100,000 soldiers. But here’s the thing: In August 2020, according to German firm Statista, the Covid mortality rate per 100,000 people was 70.16 in the UK, 49.65 in the US and 17.67 in South Africa.

Covid-19 is a killer. Getting it is more dangerous than going to war. The numbers don’t lie, even though our opinions might.

We have done well in South Africa by comparison. We had an incredibly tough lockdown and didn’t quibble about wearing masks or sanitising our hands - until we became complacent and started sending children to Rage and going to parties ourselves. We observed physical distancing. In the US and the UK people still can’t even agree on the need to wear masks, never mind impose lockdowns.

Why is this? More to the point, why - if we know what the science says - are we starting to ignore the perils of the pandemic?

You see it every day, and now we



are officially in the second wave of Covid-19 in South Africa.

Perhaps it’s because we can’t see the consequences of our actions, much like the person who smokes and drinks without any side-effects until they’re 90, or the person who swims off an unprotected beach every day in summer but never gets attacked by a shark. Yet, when miners go underground they never forget their hard hats or safety lamps. Soldiers don’t go on patrol without weapons and ballistic armour.

As human beings, we rationalise everything, especially risky or antisocial behaviour, like the person who starts

stealing stationery and the odd toilet roll mid-month from the office and graduates to State Capture. We can always find and rationalise convenient exceptions to the rule; letting us bend it to our own ends all the time. We resort to magical thinking, choosing superstition, alternative science, crackpot theories and fake news.

We do this because it allows us to stay secure in the warmth of our own prejudice and ignorance. We do it because it is so much easier than the pain of facing up to different narratives, ones that spell out the real threats, which might not pose an immediate danger but

are statistically the most dangerous we could be facing at the moment.

It’s also an incredible act of narcissism and selfishness because even though we might not be at risk, we could be putting others at risk, especially if we are asymptomatic carriers, who make up to 50% of those infected. We see this in the US where people declare that their right to self-determination means they cannot be forced to wear a mask, even if it means protecting the lives of others.

Another part of our problem as human beings is that we want to live lives defined by binary certainties - yes or no, right or wrong - but science

is nuanced and continually emerging. When science doesn’t give us certainty and absolute truths we tend to see it as flawed. We don’t see scientists challenging one another as part of the process of developing knowledge but rather as an either-or scenario in which we can take sides, even if it means losing faith in the sanctity of science and losing sight of the great truth articulated by the great Austrian and British philosopher Karl Popper: A theory can never be definitively proved but only disproved, as the next observations may contradict all the previous.

It’s the pathology of perfectionism. It doesn’t mean that we shouldn’t apply critical thought, what it means is that we need to develop a healthy scepticism, reading as widely as possible, listening and testing theories against our own knowledge and lived reality, knowing that the answer is neither fixed nor final, but iterative. Have strong opinions, but lightly held; do not fall victim to dogma.

What we know about this pandemic is continually evolving. That’s difficult for some people to rationalise, so they opt for anecdotal evidence from other people who share their difficulties. Those beliefs reinforce one another, especially in algorithm-driven echo chambers on social media, which in turn foments cynicism, which is unhealthy because it forces us to stop engaging and instead believe the world is flat, that the moon landings were a hoax and that Covid-19 is just

a bad flu and we don’t need masks. And burn anyone at the stake who disagrees with us, for heresy.

The truth is we don’t know with any certainty how Covid-19 will evolve, whether the vaccines being licensed will work well and if so, for how long. That doesn’t mean we should dismiss them out of hand. Instead, as pilots who become lost and are finding themselves back on track mid-air will tell you, it’s better to be vaguely right than precisely wrong.

What we do know at the moment is that wearing masks and sanitising are key, physical distancing is vitally important and so too is the ventilation of enclosed spaces. In the beginning the World Health Organisation didn’t think wearing masks was important, now it deems them critical. The first treatments in Italy involved intubating patients and placing them on ventilators, now they use plastic tents and infuse patients with oxygen.

Healthy scepticism allows us to deal with all these competing and evolving theories, unlike cynicism which just breeds blind anger and dissent. And makes us dumb. And when we do look at the science we will realise just how much at risk we and our loved ones are statistically from this virus and maybe we won’t be as foolhardy or selfish, just because we haven’t buried anyone from it yet.

ILO webinar examines impact of Covid-19 on African migrant workers in SADC, IGAD regions

The ILO organised a webinar on the Impact Assessment of COVID-19 on African Migrant Workers aimed at disseminating the results of the report "Impact assessment of COVID-19 on Migrant Workers in and from the IGAD Region", and presenting the preliminary results of another report: "Rapid Impact Assessment of COVID-19 on Migrant Workers in the Southern Africa Development Cooperation (SADC)".

The December 7 webinar examined findings from the ILO's Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) Project and the Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region: Improving Opportunities for Regular Labour Mobility (FMPT) Project.

"As one of its responses to COVID-19 pandemic, the ILO is evaluating the impact of COVID-19 on labour migration governance, recruitment practices, and migrant workers to assist both countries of origin and destination in developing mechanisms to deal with the crisis and implement policy responses that support the protection of migrant workers' rights," Cynthia Samuel-Olonjuwon, ILO Assistant Director-General and Regional Director for Africa, said during her opening remarks.

Samuel-Olonjuwon (pictured), cautioned that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the global economy and the world of work, and that it has already transformed into an economic and labour market shock, impacting not only supply, but also the demand side. She explained that the services sector, tourism,



travel and retail have been particularly hard hit.

In Africa, the total working-hour losses in the second quarter of 2020 are estimated at 15.6 per cent, or 60 million full time equivalent jobs, up from the previous estimate of 12.1 per cent, the Regional Director said.

She therefore strongly advised that measures to stimulate the economy must provide the fullest possible assistance to vulnerable groups and the most affected populations, including informal workers, the self-employed, women, young people and international migrants, as they constitute a large majority of those present in

the informal economy.

"Policymakers and ILO constituents should tailor policy responses, including continued income support and efforts to assist with workers' return to employment, to avoid large-scale and long-term marginalization from labour markets so as to ensure that no one is left behind," she said.

Presenting on the results from the IGAD and SADC regions, Gloria Moreno-Fontes, ILO Regional Labour Migration and Mobility Specialist for Africa, said the impact of the pandemic-related restrictions on their livelihoods and other challenges were experienced by migrant workers in both regions.

These included lack of safe and secure working conditions and access to health care; lack legal protection or access to legal remedies; difficulties with integration, coupled with a rise in xenophobia; inadequate access to the labour market and provision of socio-economic assistance; and not having access to information on their rights and opportunities, and provision of social security coverage, among others.

"COVID-19 has massively affected the working and living conditions as well as prospects of migrant workers," she said. They face job losses, pay cuts, economic hardship as well as discrimination due to COVID-19 related fears." Other impacts mentioned included:

Those in the informal economy especially are vulnerable to the economic consequences and health risks of the pandemic, as they often lack financial reserves;

Returnees reportedly are empty-handed, and requiring extensive support to reintegrate into weakened labour markets, and

Facing adverse psycho-social outcomes associated with loss of income and inability to meet some of the key financial and social requirements.

Citing some of the key responses to the impacts for the SADC region, Moreno-Fontes indicated that migrant workers in Seychelles are able to renew their permits without leaving the country. South Africa, meanwhile, has included asylum seekers and special permit holders from various countries as recipients of a COVID-19 social relief package, and Mauritius has introduced an easier process and

more beneficial immigration permit regime for foreigners seeking to work, live and invest in the country.

Regarding the IGAD region, Moreno-Fontes mentioned that Kenya and Uganda have introduced legal mechanisms to protect workers against COVID-19 related discrimination and unsafe working conditions. Countries including Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, Sudan and South Sudan are providing free of charge or partially funded COVID-19 testing and health care for migrant workers. Some countries have extended migrants' and migrant workers' visas to prevent them from falling into an irregular situation, she said.

In her presentation, the labour migration specialist outlined some of the ILO's COVID-19 responses for African migrant workers, including:

Supporting the affiliation of returnees to social protection schemes and inclusion in safety, health and economic policies;

Provision of labour inspection, occupational safety and health, working time and wages;

Supporting upskilling and reskilling, recognition of prior learning and skills certification, entrepreneurship training and financial education; and

Providing support to labour market reintegration and employability enhancement of returnees.

Contributing to the dialogue, Coumba Diop, Chief Technical Adviser for the Free Movement of Persons and Transhumance in the IGAD Region: Improving Opportunities for Regular Labour Mobility (FMPT) project, stated that the ILO is implementing the project in col-

laboration with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), in all eight member countries- Djibouti, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Kenya, Somalia, the Sudan, South Sudan and Uganda.

The overall objective of the project is to improve opportunities for regulated labour mobility and decent work within the IGAD countries through the development of models of intervention.

Diop noted that "IGAD countries have made commitments to achieving greater regional integration and improving migration governance through the development of legal and policy frameworks, including the establishment of a regional free movement regime, which will have an immediate effect on the decent working conditions of migrant workers."

The ILO's Southern Africa Migration Management (SAMM) Project is being implemented to improve migration management in the Southern Africa and Indian Ocean region. It targets the SADC Member States: Angola, Botswana, Comoros, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, the Seychelles, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The project is funded by the European Union and is implemented by the ILO in collaboration with the IOM, UNODC and UNHCR.

Regions and countries covered: Africa, South Sudan, Mauritius, Seychelles, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Djibouti, Sudan, Tanzania, United Republic of, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Mozambique, Namibia, Somalia.

AGENCIES

By Jan Bornman

Hope and Beauty, a survival story

Beauty Ndlovu has learned to shrug off the stares from inquisitive eyes that she and her youngest daughter Hope attract as they walk along the streets of their Johannesburg suburb, Yeoville.

But for eight-year-old Hope, it is not as easy.

"You know, kids are naughty, and they tease each other sometimes," said Beauty, 42, sitting on the steps leading to the house where the two of them live in a rented room in one of Johannesburg's oldest suburbs, on the eastern side of the city.

"When we go to the streets, the kids who don't know her, they will all say, 'This child does not have a hand,' and she will tell me, 'You see, these kids are talking about me.' She will be very angry with them."

Hope was born without a right hand. Beauty considers it a miracle that Hope survived at all, because her twin was born severely deformed and died shortly after birth.

Beauty's life was tough even before this loss. She came to Johannesburg in 1996 from Plumstead in Zimbabwe, aged 18, and already a mother, to look for work. She first worked at a pizza shop and then as a domestic worker until her employer died. This left her unemployed and struggling for several years. She also contracted HIV at some point, but does not know when. Battling to feed her two eldest children after falling ill with tuberculosis and being abandoned by her husband saw her doing sex work for a time.

These challenges have taught her resilience, a quality she hopes to instil in her daughter to enable her to live as normal a life as possible. It's a desire born from her fierce protectiveness of Hope. "What I don't want with her, is if people see her like this, they go, 'Eish, this child.' That is what I don't like. I get angry, because they have to take her as a normal child," Beauty said.

"I don't want anyone to feel sorry for her. If you come and ask me nicely what happened, I'll tell you. I don't have a problem. She was born like this, it is a normal disability. I am not shy with her, I go everywhere with her."

Drawing and playdough

Hope has a learning and intellectual disability as well. One of



Hope (8) and Beauty Ndlovu outside their home in Yeoville, Johannesburg. File photo

Beauty's proudest moments was when her daughter learned to write her name and count up to 10.

Hope doesn't speak more than a few words at a time, but has come to love going to her school, Forest Town School, in the leafy suburb with the same name. "I love learning with my friends and Teacher Brenda," she said. "I like playing and making something with playdough."

Hope's teacher, Brenda Ben-David, has a soft spot for her. Two of Hope's favourite school activities are drawing and colouring in between the lines, something other children in the class struggle with, according to Ben-David. Drawing herself on a sheet of paper, Hope is almost oblivious to what's so obvious for others, and draws herself with two hands and 10 fingers.

While Hope enjoys creative activities, she needs encouragement from Ben-David when it comes to counting exercises. Counting on one hand, Hope struggled and kept repeating the wrong numbers, but with her teacher's encouragement and the promise of a packet of chips later, she successfully completed the exercise.

All the activities in Ben-David's class are geared to teaching the children to become more independent. But besides that, Hope is conscious of the needs of others in the class and looks out for them, for example when a bag or dustbin is in the way of her favourite teacher, who has a visual impairment.

"What I have taught her that's quite sweet, is in the morning she makes me coffee. She's not allowed to pour hot water, but she's allowed to do everything else. It's nice to see because this is what I was talking about, becoming

independent," said Ben-David, who has been teaching at the school for 28 years. "If I need to send somebody to the office to collect something, she's the only one in the class who can go."

"She's my saviour sometimes. Her desk is right next to mine and sometimes I can't find something. I'd say, 'Hope, where did I put my register?' She knows the register is orange and she'll go and look for it. Sometimes I drop something and I can't see it, or I'm going to fall over something. She'll say 'Be careful!' or she'll move the dustbin," Ben-David said.

"She's just a nice child. She always says thank you, and if you've got something nice on, she says to you, 'You look pretty.' She has that social awareness to compliment someone. It's really rare," Ben-David explained.

"She's always aware if you're sad, or if another child is sad. She'll come and tell you, 'Teacher Brenda, so-and-so is crying.' You can ask many of the children, 'Why are you sad?' but they can't tell you. They can't express emotion, but she can."

Places of support

In the nearly two years that Hope has been going to Forest Town School, she has made more progress than her mother ever thought possible. In their room at home, with its peeling walls, Beauty has educational posters stuck on the walls showing shapes, colours and farm animals.

When Hope was born, Beauty feared that she wouldn't be able to walk or talk. But Hope exceeded all her mother's expectations. She's able to help with laundry and hanging washing on the line outside, and makes her bed every

morning. The only thing she needs help with when getting dressed is tying her shoelaces.

"When she was born, I was very worried that she won't be able to do anything. Because her growth was also slow, I worried if she was going to be like a normal person and if she was going to be able to do all the things she does now," Beauty said.

The one place where Beauty feels Hope is never stared at is the Jerusalem Apostolic Church in Yeoville, where they attend sermons in a small classroom every Sunday. "They don't treat her as a child with disability. They love her so much and we feel at home when we are at that church," she said.

Dressed in her white uniform on a recent Sunday, Hope sat still for hours during the service and sang along with the congregation. She also took part in a prayer, while Beauty was later blessed by congregants.

It was another religious institution, the Sister Mura Foundation in Yeoville, as well as a local ward councillor, that helped Beauty get Hope into the school that could provide her with the appropriate education. "I didn't know what to do with her. If it wasn't for the Sister Mura Foundation, maybe today she would still be at home," Beauty said.

The foundation has played a pivotal role in Beauty's life in other ways since she first went there for emotional and psychological support more than a decade ago. It is here that she first learned how to do beadwork, which provides her with her main source of income these days. Hope loves helping her mother with the beadwork, working very fast using her hand and mouth.

Ill and abandoned

It was in 2008, while living with her then husband in Diepsloot township, north of Johannesburg, that Beauty got sick, an event that would change the trajectory of her life. "I went to Helen Joseph Hospital and I had an operation. They said it was abdominal TB [tuberculosis]. I had to get treatment for nine months, but they didn't say anything about HIV. My husband said, 'I can't stay with someone who is sick.' That is when he ran away and left me."

Beauty was unemployed when her husband left her. Alone and sick, she went to live with her sister in her flat in Hillbrow, but within months her sister, who also had HIV and TB, died. They had to use the deposit for the flat to return her sister's body to Zimbabwe for

burial. Beauty had to find new accommodation, and money soon ran out.

"I started selling everything I had, because I had two kids. They needed to go to school, to eat, to do everything, and I needed to pay rent. After three months, I even sold my clothes," Beauty said.

"When the things were finished, I didn't have anything. There were girls staying [at the same house] who were working at a restaurant. They used to go at night and come back in the morning. I cooked for them or did their washing to make a living. One came to me and said, 'You know what, we go to Orange Grove, we do prostitution. You are a mother, you are struggling, we think you should go and try your luck,'" Beauty said. "That is how I started."

Beauty was apprehensive about starting sex work while still ill with TB. The women who had encouraged her to take up sex work told her about an organisation in Yeoville that assisted migrant women and sex workers where she could get help. "I went there, they did a test, they said the results will come in two weeks' time, and in two weeks' time they said I am HIV-positive," Beauty said.

Despite the diagnosis, Beauty continued working. Often clients would offer to pay more to not use a condom. That is how she became pregnant with the twins. "I needed that money. We didn't use a condom because he had money. And unfortunately, that time I got pregnant," she said.

'Four months and two weeks'

She didn't immediately realise it. Her HIV medication affected her body in ways she wasn't aware of. "Only my breasts were getting big. I kept going back to the organisation, telling them. They said, 'These tablets, they change your shape.'"

"When I was four months and two weeks, the doctor said to me, 'I think you are pregnant.' I said, 'I am not pregnant.' I went to do the sonar. The sonar showed I was four months and two weeks," she said.

"I was shocked. I wanted to do abortion because [of] the life I was living. Having another baby - I don't know the father, I am struggling - I saw that it would be difficult."

Social workers talked her out of having an abortion. "They said, 'Don't do this. You don't know why God gave you these children.' After that, they gave me nevirapine to protect the children."

It wasn't an easy pregnancy, and it was even more difficult for Beauty when she lost one of the twins.

"I decided, let me take this name, Hope. Because I hope that she will live and nothing bad will happen to her. I hope for a bright future for her. And maybe she is here to bring a bright future in our lives."

Embrace new tech to attain development, restoring, promoting culture, artists urged

By Guardian Reporter

VISUAL artists in Tanzania have been urged to use their skills in preserving, restoring and promoting arts and culture, hence contributing towards the country's quest for sustainable development.

Visual artists play a crucial role in contributing towards quality education given that visual learning is among the key ways to stimulate learning in young minds, enhance education materials and create comprehension ability.

"The advancement of technologies presents limitless possibilities for a creative to contribute towards this. More opportunities are needed for women and persons living with disabilities in the area of visual art," said Elizabeth Mwambulukutu when speaking during closure of a two-day workshop dubbed 'Kutoka Canvas kwenda Digitali'.

Mwambulukutu is a Tanzanian creative and co-facilitator of the workshop which was held in Dar es Salaam last weekend. The workshop is part of 'Hapo Zamani za Kale' project that aims to preserve, restore and promote the culture and art of traditional storytelling and African stories in Tanzania using mixed and multimedia through children's storybooks, visual art, podcasts and animation.

'Hapo Zamani za Kale' is implemented in partnership with Aqua Farms Organization (AFO).

The workshop aimed at empowering Tanzanian visual artists with digital skills to compete with the 21st century through a practical session; to provide a practical session for artists to new opportunities for creating, showcasing and marketing their work and inspire and motivate emerging Tanzanian visual artists through the journey and experience of an expert in the industry.

The workshop was attended by 16 participants including visual artists, Hapo Zamani za Kale and AFO team members and a sign language expert from Tanzania Association of Sign Language Interpreters (TASLI). Selected through a competitive call for artists, the cohort of artists selected from Arusha, Dar es Salaam, Iringa and Tanga regions included three male artists and three female artists.

A renowned Tanzanian cartoonist and media personality, Masoud Kipanya supported, mentored and inspired the six young Tanzanian visual artists through a practical session that exposed them to new art practices beyond the canvas.



A renowned cartoonist Masoud Kipanya, mentoring some of the visual artists during a two-day workshop held in Dar es Salaam over the weekend. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Annastazia Gura, co-founder of Hapo Zamani za Kale project said most African visual artists still rely on traditional techniques of practicing art. Such limitations may lead to a mismatch between emerging global trends, the changing creative economy landscape and existing art practices, which may lead to visual artists missing out on new opportunities.

She said visual artists depend on a single art form and traditional methods such as fine art, painting on canvas or a single consumer market like tourists, leading to their income generation streams being limited.

"Locally, visual artists have few platforms to learn practical skills from industry experts who have broken glass ceilings through their creativity," Gura noted.

The workshop allowed artists to learn and apply new knowledge by using digital creative tools - a canvas, paint brush, palette knife and colour palette, to name a few.

"We have seen the effects of technological advancements in other sectors of the economy, it is high

time we expand these to our creative industry," Gura stressed, adding the project team see the efforts as "a pathway for visual artists to gain new skills and seek new avenues for generating income."

Apart from presenting an unparalleled opportunity for visual artists to meet their role model Masoud Kipanya, the training workshop was a platform for participants to share experiences, expand their expertise through the use of technology, make new professional connections, and gain exposure to creative thought processes such as creating storyboards.

Kipanya emphasised on the importance of visual artists in being versatile and flexible to adapt to changing technological advancements around the world. He said: "It is important that Tanzanian artists learn how to be like chameleons through their art practice to adjust to emerging trends and diversify their techniques."

Masoud explained that the use of technology in art allows artists more flexibility compared to drawing on canvas using paints and brushes.

One of the workshop participating artists, Jennifer Msekwa noted: "As modern artists, we need to know a lot of skills that can help us to compete with today's world, especially one of science and technology."

Also, unlike drawing on canvas, the use of technology simplifies the creative workflow be it from resizing or repositioning objects/ subjects, thus maintaining the quality of artwork, enhancing the speed of the output and saving time as everything can be done through the use of technology.

The advancement of technology also allows artists to get the feel of the canvas through using the equivalent digital artistic tools be it a canvas, a paint brush, paint and palette knife.

Albano Sylvester, an artist living with disability commented how he was impressed to have found a sign language expert at the Kutoka Canvas Kwenda Digitali workshop which has allowed him to learn, participate fully and enjoy sessions like the rest of his fellow participants.

Africa must risk capital for youth, Adesina reveals

By Special Correspondent

AFRICA must leverage investment to unleash the potential and ingenuity of its youth, its most important asset, African Development Bank (AfDB) President Akinwumi Adesina said at a Conference of Montreal fireside chat event.

The three-day virtual event was organized by the international economic forum of the Americas, under the theme, a sustainable recovery for people and planet. During the fireside chat, Adesina engaged in discussion with Inger Andersen, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations; Executive Director of the UNEP Jean Label, President of the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) moderated the discussion, which covered three areas: the current state of affairs with respect to COVID-19 and climate change, stimulus policies and recovery, and the role of the private sector in terms of recovery.

"Climate change is an existential crisis," Andersen said, and one that the planet must face together. The four largest economies account for 55% of emissions, Andersen pointed out, adding that the brunt of the impact will fall on African countries as well as delta and low-lying small economies around the world. "Any recovery has to have a degree of solidarity with it," she said.

Adesina reiterated that climate change posed a grave threat to Africans. "We have to grow differently, he said. We have to have growth that is climate resilient. Adaptation must be at the top of the agenda. The risk of actually dying from hunger is higher than the risk of dying from Covid-19."

He noted the Bank's commitment to mobilize \$25 billion for climate finance by 2025 as well as a number of Bank initiatives that are addressing climate adaptation, such as TAAT, which has provided Sudanese farmers access to heat tolerant maize and farmers in Zimbabwe, Malawi and other southern African countries. "The other way that one can grow back in a way that is climate resilient is by actually providing the countries with facilities that will allow them to insure themselves against exogenous climate shocks," including the Bank's ADRIFI program.

Moving away from a linear economy and investing in nature's infrastructure offered part of the solution, Andersen said. "Companies that jump into circularity, SDG 12, sustainable consumption and production, companies that do that, will save money, resources will be more circular, they will leapfrog, they will have a market edge, and they would have a lesser need for resource inputs. We're seeing it in some sectors. Plastics, textiles, fashion, and food."

Adesina admitted that the pandemic had worsened inequality in many spheres, education, rural versus urban, and the differences between the genders in terms of access to education and to finance. "You cannot grow economies without focusing on women. Women run Africa. Most of them are in the informal sector. They lack access to finance. There's a \$49 billion financing gap between them and men. That's why the Bank launched a \$5 billion initiative called Affirmative Finance Action For Women in Africa (AFAWA), so we can close that particular inequality."

The Conference of Montreal, which runs from 14-17 December, is an event of the International Economic Forum of the Americas. The theme of the 2020 edition is Bridging a Disconnected World.

Launch of first parametric tropical cyclone risking insurance product in Africa

By Special Correspondent, Johannesburg

THE African Risk Capacity (ARC) Group is proposing a new insurance mechanism to African countries in the South West Indian Ocean (SWIO) region to cope with the devastating effects of the tropical cyclones. This parametric insurance product will provide countries with predictable and rapid financing for early response to cope with emergency situations caused by tropical cyclones. The mechanism is a significant milestone to building resilience to climate-related disasters on the African continent.

The Southwest Indian Ocean Region (SWIO) region is one of the most active areas globally in terms of tropical cyclone formation. On average, thirteen cyclone events with wind speeds above 63 km/h and possibly exceeding 200 km/h, occur each year in the SWIO region. High wind speeds are a key factor contributing to damages from tropical cyclones.

Developments in the SWIO region in 2019, including the devastating effects of cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique, led to a renewed country interest in parametric tropical cyclone insurance coverage. Consequently, ARC developed a model capable of accurately estimating the risk and economic losses due to tropical cyclone events adapted to the SWIO countries such as Mozambique, Madagascar, Comoros, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Tanzania.

"Our goal is to continue to diversify our product offering to meet the needs of our Member States effectively. This new offer will allow our Member States to better anticipate and manage extreme weather events while ensuring that their impact on the population is mitigated," stated UN-ASG and African Risk Capacity Group Director-General, Ibrahim Cheikh Diong.

Africa fights to save its endangered rhinos despite COVID-19 pandemic

By Special Correspondent

THE economic impact of the global COVID-19 health crisis has in turn aggravated an already dire environmental crisis as far as the efforts of wildlife conservationists to save highly-poached black and white rhinos from extinction in Africa.

Richard Vigne, Managing Director of Ol Pejeta Conservancy, outlines how the coronavirus pandemic has trickled down to negatively affect environmental protection initiatives as they pertain to African rhinos.

"In the time of COVID when tourism has completely stopped, where most of our revenue comes from tourism, the revenue that we need to earn to protect our rhinos comes from tourism, it's a complete disaster. And our ability, our operational capacity, as a result of that lost revenue, which we estimate this year will be something in the region of three to four million dollars, is severely compromised and in turn, therefore, our ability to look after rhinos is compromised."

Decades of killing rhinos for their horns - which have long been used as carving material and prized in traditional Chinese medicine for their supposed healing properties, have taken a heavy

toll on rhino species.

As such, researchers have made strides using in-vitro fertilisation and surrogacy techniques to successfully create rhino embryos in the hope of reproducing a herd of at least five animals to be returned to their natural habitat in Africa - hence, keeping the species alive.

Africa's White Rhinos

Just two Northern White rhinos remain - Najin and Fatu, who are both female and unable to support pregnancy.

The last male - a 45-year-year-old named Sudan, was euthanised in March 2018 due to after age-related complications.

In January researchers reported they had successfully created another Northern White rhino embryo in the hope of keeping the species alive.

The viable embryo was the third to be created in a lab with eggs taken from the females and inseminated with frozen sperm.

In September 2019 the international team working on the project in Italy said it had successfully created two embryos using oocytes (eggs) collected from the two remaining females and frozen sperm extracted from Sudan and one other male before they died.

The latest embryo was created in December 2019.

The embryos were put into liquid nitrogen ready to be transferred into a surrogate mother later in the year.

The procedure was proven to be safe and can be performed regularly before the animals become too old, according to a statement by the Kenya Wildlife Service and conservationists from Kenya, the Czech Republic, Germany and Italy.

In August, after a delay of several months forced by the coronavirus pandemic, experts harvested ten immature egg cells from Najin and Fatu at Ol Pejeta Conservancy in Kenya for the third time.

The eggs were immediately flown to the Avantea Laboratory in Italy to be artificially inseminated with frozen sperm from the deceased northern white rhino bulls.

The next step of the rescue mission was to head back to Ol Pejeta to prepare the surrogate mothers and find a suitable male to help the scientists know when the females are on heat. A further attempt at pregnancy is set to be made later in December or early in 2021

Africa's Black Rhinos

There as good news for the African Black rhino as the International Union for Conservation of Nature reported

In March, the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) reported

a slow increase in the number of African Black Rhinos with a population growth of around 2.5% each year between 2012 and 2018 - increasing the wild population from 4,845 to 5,630.

One subspecies, the South-Western Black rhino, which was previously assessed as "vulnerable" by the IUCN, is now classed as "near threatened" as it has seen "sufficient population growth" of the last three generations.

Two other subspecies, the South-Eastern and Eastern Black Rhino are still considered critically endangered.

The news was welcomed by conservationists around the world, but Paula Kahumbu, wildlife conservationist and CEO of charity Wildlife Direct, warned that there was still a lot of work to do to save the rhino.

Continued Efforts in Africa to Save the Rhinos

2020 saw several anti-poaching campaigns and conservationists across Africa continue to monitor the situation.

Many wildlife parks and nature reserves continent-wide mobilised armed patrol units in protection of Africa's precious animals. Efforts which of course included the magnificent but endangered rhino species.

Why TGNP drills newly elected councillors with leadership skills

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

In bringing about gender equality the Tanzanian government has put in place the National Development Vision 2025 that states among other things that Tanzania should ensure the attainment of gender equality and the empowerment of women in all socio-economic and political relations, and culture by the year 2025.

In order to boost government's supports on women and girls' development, TGNP in collaboration with the government, for a long time has been offering capacity building, mentorship programmes on leadership and all other matters related to gender issues touching their daily livelihoods.

TGNP's Executive Director Lilian Liundi said that the objective of the training offered by her organisation, among other things was to empower the newly elected women councillors with the needed and right leadership skills that will increase the number of women in decision making levels, from 2021 to 2025.

"It doesn't matter whether you are a male or female, the only thing that will promote you, it is your work. Let's play our part as women, our works will promote us," she noted.

TGNP's Senior Programme Officer, Capacity Building, and Mentorship Coordinator, Jane Tesha commended the government for being supportive to them.

"We are working collaboratively with the government on gender budgeting and other issues touching women and girls' developments," she noted.

This paper did an exclusive interview to some of these newly elected councillors, what they have gained from a four-day training on capacity building and mentorship programme on leadership, and gender issues and how they are going to use that knowledge gained to execute their duties in their respective wards and divisions.

Isabela Mbaya, a councillor for Shiwinga Ward, Songwe Region said that it was her first time to become a councillor and the first time to attend this kind of training programme. "It has been of great help and beneficial to me. Adding:

There were many things I did not know before, like how to uncover problems facing our people and



Councillors busy working during a four-day capacity building and leadership training organised by TGNP, ended on Sunday in Dar es Salaam last week. Photo: Daniel Semberya.

how to analyse gender issues in the development process."

She further noted "When I go back to wards I will utilize the knowledge gained to ensure women's needs are given first priorities in all decision making levels."

Leonela Mwinuka a councillor for Kihangimuhaka Ward in Mbinga DC said that the training on leadership and mentorship has helped her to understand different issues and how to become a good leader.

Jesca Mbondo, special seat councillor from Morogoro DC, said that she has served in that capacity for three tenures consecutively.

She said that although it was her first time to attend such training, it has enlightened her with profound leadership skills, ways how to unearth challenges facing people in their divisions, work plan and how to keep data.

Marsia Mamseri, who serves as a special seat councillor for Mengwe Division in Rombo District, confessed that

she has been a councillor for the last 15 years, but it was her first time to attend this leadership and mentorship training.

"The training has helped me to understand many things pertaining to leadership and gender issues. I will ensure women issues are given first priority in my division for betterment of their livelihoods."

Martina Gabusa a councillor for Holili Ward, Rombo District in Kilimanjaro Region said since it was her first time to serve in that post, the knowledge gained from the leadership training has given him courage and confidence.

"I can now establish a subject or formal motion and discuss it efficiently because we have data; something which we didn't have before. Thanks to TGNP," she said.

Aidda Haule, a special seat councillor for Utengule Usongwe, Mbeya DC, said that training has empowered her leadership skills that will enable her to execute her duties confidently as a

councillor.

Hawa Kihwele, a councillor for Igrurus Ward, Mbarali, Mbeya said that the training has empowered her with the skills to expose sectoral challenges and strategies to address them.

Farida Joel a councillor for Kenyamanyori Ward, Tarime Urban applauded TGNP for such training. "It has really enlightened me as a newly elected councillor on leadership issues. Adding:

We have analysed many things on different sectors; including how to collect proper data because there was nobody to guide us," she noted.

For her part, former Member of Parliament of Tanzania Susan Lyimo said that mentoring was helpful to the newly elected councillors because it is a personal development approach to assist those wishing to improve their own attitude and abilities for better performance.

She said that they have offered a mentorship programme in order to form a

mutual learning relationship that works towards reaching the mentees goals and aspirations.

"We are building self-confidence, courage and awareness to these councillors so that they know their roles and responsibilities when executing their duties in their respective areas. Adding:

We want many women in decision and policy making institutions; and become role models to young girls still in schools."

Meanwhile, Lyimo has called on TGNP to write more proposals to get funds that will enable them to make these trainings for women leaders sustainable.

A four-day training organised by TGNP that started on Thursday and ended on Sunday last week in Dar es Salaam brought together around 70 newly elected councillors, from nine regions from Tanzania Mainland.

Other literature indicates that at the current growth rate, Tanzania's population is projected to reach 70 million by 2025. Despite these numbers, women and youth are among the most marginalised and underutilised Tanzanian citizens.

Within this context, TGNP works to enable gender equality and empower women and young girls, as the two groups play a key role in the progress and growth of Tanzania.

Tanzanian females and young girls must have greater access to and control over resources, opportunities, and decision-making power in order to sustainably reduce extreme poverty, build healthy communities, and promote inclusive growth.

The government of Tanzania has adopted policies that advance gender equality and youth inclusion in a supportive enabling environment.

The legal and regulatory framework and the sector-specific policies of government ministries and independent departments, however, have yet to be aligned with these policies.

TGNP was formed in 1993 as an activist non-profit organization, and in 2012 was registered as TGNP Mtandao Limited.

It emerged through a collective process of critical reflection by leaders of key women's and gender organizations about the situation of women who are the most exploited and oppressed people within the exploited laboring classes.

TGNP's ideology and philosophy is built on transformative feminism, which is a struggle that aims to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and other marginalized groups, whether due to class, sex, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, geographical and nationality locations.

Its goal is to facilitate the transformative feminist movement that influence and contribute to gender responsiveness of policy formulation and implementation in the areas of agriculture, water, health, education and extractive industries, for equitable resource allocation and sustainable livelihoods.

By Estelle Ellis

Globally, the rise of "me culture" and "me culture shaming" have been blamed for people refusing to wear masks, despite regulations by governments.

As a second wave of coronavirus infections hits South Africa, psychologist Garret Barnwell argues that the country needs to find different and creative ways to talk to people about wearing masks.

In the Covid-19 democracy survey, conducted by the University of Johannesburg and the Human Sciences Research Council between April and September, people were asked whether, and how regularly, they wore a face mask when leaving their homes.

Full compliance was low (37%) early in April during the initial weeks of Level 5 lockdown. By the end of April, compliance increased to 50% of adults. The practice peaked and stabilised at just over 70% in July, August and September. Among the other 30% of adults, 20% said they wore a mask "most of the time", and about 7% said they wore a mask "some of the time". Only 2% said they never (or not often) wore a mask and 1% chose not to say.

As Covid-19 infection rates shoot up in four provinces, so have complaints and discussions about mask-wearing, Barnwell says blaming "me culture" for the lack of compliance might not be entirely right.

"Broadly speaking, there are two general ways in which people relate to one another. In humanities, we

World needs to rethink how it motivates mask-wearing



Shoppers at Port Elizabeth's Walmer Park. It is compulsory to wear a mask inside shopping malls. File photo

call these two styles 'me cultures' and 'we cultures'."

"Me culture" is focused on the individual as an independent entity, focused more on one's own needs and desires, while "we culture" sees community members as interdependent on one another. A "me culture" may focus on independent liberties and human rights, while a "we culture" may consider the broader needs

and rights of others.

But he said non-compliance with measures implemented to prevent the spread of the coronavirus was not necessarily driven entirely by "me culture".

"This is what makes addressing the issue of mask-wearing so difficult. First, I think that there is varying information going around on when to wear a mask and practices to limit exposure,"

Barnwell said.

Shoppers at Port Elizabeth's Walmer Park. It is compulsory to wear a mask inside shopping malls. Pictures: Deon Ferreira

"For instance, it is still important to keep a safe distance of 1.5 metres outdoors. Also, people's needs and desires differ, as do their level of risk so, for some, meeting up with someone may be important for mental health

- especially for those who are living alone. Additionally, alcohol may reduce a person's sense of risk and this may lead to them breaking mask-wearing protocols.

"I also think social media has played a role in spreading fake news about the severity of the virus. For instance, Donald Trump calling the virus 'a mild flu' is not helpful and influences some people's perception of risk.

"That being said, I do think that 'me culture' plays a role in this process," Barnwell said. "If you come from a culture that is more individualistic, you're probably less likely to be mindful of the needs, desires, but also the risks of others. This thinking puts people's rights up against one another... Another term that we could use for the 'me culture' is perhaps privilege.

"The 'we culture' is one that places emphasis on being mindful of other people, their needs, desires and having an understanding that the rights of one group do not cancel out the rights of others.

"The actions that we take have an impact on one another. We need to find a way that we keep those at higher

risk from being exposed to the virus. That may mean reducing certain privileges. Here, I would like to emphasise that it is a privilege to be able to go to bars in the middle of an epidemic, for instance. Some people may experience restrictions and mask-wearing as unjust. The liberatory psychiatrist Franz Fanon said that what is just may be experienced as an injustice to those who hold privilege.

"In a 'we culture', we would be more concerned with safeguarding those most vulnerable and consider adopting the practice to reduce the potential harm to others. In South Africa, I think that many do consider the needs and risks to others, but I think that there is also some fatigue after a year. It is important to re-emphasise the importance of safeguarding others," Barnwell said.

He said similarly to the US during spring break, where youth continued to party through the pandemic and exposed their communities, South Africa was now also seeing what happens when "me culture" and a culture of drinking meet.

Barnwell said it was important to improve regulations and awareness about the importance of mask-wearing.

"I think people have Covid fatigue. As we get closer to the festive season, people desire a sense of connection and psychological relief." It was important to consider this when getting buy-in for mask wearing.

As it could be "a year or two until South Africa had access to a Covid-19 vaccine", careful consideration needed to be given to motivate people to wear masks.

"Unfortunately, 'me culture' shaming may not help people to wear masks; instead, we may need to review how well businesses are regulating mask use and social distancing in their facilities.

AGENCIES

BUSINESS

ATTRACTION

Government proposes incentives to 'angel investors' for startups

KIGALI

Government is looking to attract alternative financing for early stage ventures if the new draft law relating to investment promotion and facilitation is passed by the cabinet. Under the bill which was tabled to the Parliament last week, the Government is looking to offer angel investment incentives for local individual investors investing in startups.

Angel investors typically offer capital to startups and small entrepreneurs in exchange of ownership equity. They are mostly family members, friends and other net-worth individuals. "There is a clear gap currently in terms of the right financing options for early stage firms," Louise Kanyonga, the Chief Strategy and Compliance Officer at Rwanda Development Board (RDB), told The New Times.

The push to provide incentives to angel investors is based on the fact that conventional sources of financing for startups such as commercial banks are not working currently. This is because commercial banks have very uncompetitive interest rates, and demand complicated requirements for collateral when startups try to acquire financing from them.

Kanyonga highlighted that there was previously no mechanism to know the role of angel investors in Rwanda, and that the Government did not give them any special treatment. "Yet, we have seen in other countries where innovation has taken off, usually this type of early stage startups are supported by family, friends, and networks," she noted.

Under the draft, angel investors investing a maximum of \$500,000 in a start-up will be eligible for exemption from capital gains tax upon the sale of shares, provided the shares were initially purchased as a primary equity in-

vestment by the start-up.

The new draft law also proposes that angel investors will also be eligible for exemption from withholding tax applicable to dividends paid for five dividend issuances by the start-up. According to Alex Ntale, a technology entrepreneur, angel investors are still very few in Rwanda primarily because it's a new approach to fundraising both investment seekers and investors.

"Investors still need to be trained or equipped with the tools and skills to understand risk and opportunities in early stage investment," Ntale, who's also the head of Rwanda ICT Chamber, weighed in. The Government's push to provide angel investment incentives is part of the bigger plan to support innovation and diversification of local firms.

Emery Rubagenga, a local businessman said it might take a little while before the angel investment ecosystem takes-off again, but he thinks Rwanda's decision to set up a financial centre would attract more financing options. The Government is currently spearheading the efforts to turn the country into an international financial centre. Rwanda Finance Ltd was set up to take on that role.

"I strongly believe the newly established Rwanda Finance will play a significant role in bringing on board new innovative (financing) solutions," he noted on Monday. The bill also seeks to offer medium-sized investors with a 150 per cent tax deduction for qualifying expenses on market expansion and internationalization activities.

To support innovation, the Government is also proposing a tax deduction for research and development. A new research and development funding window, the Rwanda Seed Innovation Program, which will provide grants through a competitive process to small businesses is also expected to be established.



Louise Kanyonga, Chief Strategy and Compliance Officer at Rwanda Development Board

INNOVATION

I&M Bank debuts 'Rafiki' ChatBanking digital service in the crowded market



I&M Bank CEO, Baseer Mohammed speaking during the launch of a service dubbed 'Rafiki ChatBanking' in Dar es Salaam yesterday. He is accompanied by the bank's head of retail banking, Lilian Mtali (L) and head of corporate banking, Krishnan Ramachandran. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

By Guardian Reporter

WITH immediate effect, I&M Bank customers can conduct real time banking transactions through their smartphones on WhatsApp platform.

I&M Bank's CEO, Baseer Mohammed said in Dar es Salaam yesterday during the launch of the service that 'Rafiki ChatBanking' that allows customers to easily perform most of financial activities online.

"Our bank has been in the fore-

front to ensure that we provide customers with innovative services and products that simplify banking processes by leveraging on new and existing digital technologies," Mohamed said.

He said the new service is one of its kind in the banking sector and demonstrates I&M Bank's promise of delivering innovative services and products that give customers more freedom and control over their money.

"Today we are excited to introduce Rafiki ChatBanking to our

customers, this service gives them more freedom to access banking services anywhere and anytime through WhatsApp thus living our promise of 'We are on your side,'" he added while noting that the uniqueness of I&M Bank's chat banking service is the ability to transfer funds from one bank to another through WhatsApp.

The bank's Head of Retail Banking, Lilian Mtali seconded her boss saying the new service is safer and simple to use hence allowing already registered customers to

perform an array of transactions including internal and external bank transfers, checking account balance, mobile banking services and access to mini statements.

"We understand that not every time customer can get time to visit the bank or our ATMs when in need of banking services. Together with our existing digital banking services like i-Click we have added Rafiki ChatBanking to allow customers to easily access services as they connect to others on WhatsApp," Mtali said.

SLOWDOWN

Tax collections fall Sh100bn as economy reels from Covid

NAIROBI

Tax collections for five months through November fell Sh100.72 billion compared with a similar period a year ago, reflecting the impact of Covid-19 economic hardships that triggered a fall in company earnings, layoffs and cuts on levies.

Data published by Treasury secretary Ukur Yatani Friday showed the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) collected Sh527.73 billion in the July-November 2020 period, a 16.03 percent drop compared with Sh628.46 billion a year ago.

Monthly tax receipts have been falling since the beginning of this financial year in July compared with a corresponding period in 2019 amidst Covid-induced slowdown in economic activity. Companies grappling with reduced revenues have also contin-



Kenya's Treasury secretary, Ukur Yatani.

ued to shed jobs, cut salaries and sent workers on unpaid leave, further hitting KRA collections from sales and payroll tax.

The Treasury says the tax cuts introduced in April to cushion busi-

nesses and families from pandemic blows were no longer sustainable, citing persistent revenue collection shortfalls which have slowed implementation of government programmes.

The Treasury estimated

on December 4 the government will have foregone about Sh65 billion by end of this month as a result of reduction of maximum income tax to 25 from 30 percent and a cut on value added tax to

14 from 16 percent.

Lawmakers will, as a result, on Tuesday cut short their Christmas holiday to debate and approve or reject a bill to withdraw the tax cuts on earnings and purchase of goods and services from next month.

"It is not lost that the tone following the mission visit to hammer a new IMF programme was loaded with 'fiscal consolidation centered on raising tax revenues,'" analysts at Genghis Capital wrote in a note. "This, in our view, has added the layer of urgency in reversing the tax relief measures."

Business lobbies such as Kenya Association of Manufacturers, Kenya Private Sector Alliance and Kenya Bankers Association have, nonetheless, urged MPs to shoot down the bill, arguing the return of pre-Covid taxes will hurt firms struggling to recover from the pandemic shocks.

CRIME

Illegal gold mining funding Sahel militants, Interpol says

PARIS

Interpol and the UN have arrested several suspected terrorists, retrieved more than 40,000 sticks of dynamite and detonator cords for illegal gold mining, the latest source of illicit funding for armed groups in Africa's Sahel region.

The seven-day Operation KAFO II,

jointly coordinated by Interpol and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), targeted trafficking networks at airports, seaports and land borders in Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast, Mali and Niger. More than 260 officers from police, customs and other national services in the four countries, participated in the operation, which was conducted

from November 30 to December 6. Officials seized scores of guns and thousands of rounds of ammunition, after checking more than 12,000 individuals, vehicles, containers and goods against international criminal databases, and carrying out physical searches. They also found nearly 1,500 kilograms of cannabis and the plant-based stimulant drug khat;

some 60,000 litres of contraband fuel, and more than 2,000 boxes of contraband medical drugs. "Trafficking in firearms is a lucrative business which, in turn, fuels and funds other types of serious crimes," Interpol Secretary-General Jurgen Stock said.

"Operation KAFO II shows the need to connect the dots between crime cases involving firearms and

terrorists across different countries." UNODC and Interpol said the dynamite and detonator cords were destined for use in illegal gold mining; a new source of financing but also a potential recruiting ground for armed groups operating in the Sahel.

The two agencies said that the seizure of large quantities of contraband gasoline in Niger and Mali rep-

resented a new trend, as it is believed the fuel came from Nigeria and was being trafficked to both finance and supply the terrorist group Al-Qaeda and its affiliates. The officials seized hand sanitiser, gel containers, gloves and drugs during the operation, indicating the black market for these items is flourishing amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

PROMOTION

HaloPesa, Finca mobilise deposits through 'Akiba ado ado' campaign

By Guardian Reporter

IN a new campaign to mobilise deposits from customers dubbed 'Akiba ado ado,' Halotel Tanzania has teamed up with Finca Microfinance Bank and named popular actor, Gabo Zigamba as brand ambassador.

Deputy Halotel Managing Director, Magesa Wandwi said in Dar es Salaam yesterday when introducing the 'Halo Yako' deposit mobilization product which the telco jointly owns with Finca, that the campaign is aimed at enabling HaloPesa subscribers save cash to fulfil their goals in life.

He said 'Halo Yako' has been improved to enable customers who want to withdraw or deposit cash do so at their convenience through their handsets anywhere and at any time. "This service gives our customers freedom to save through their mobile phones with a purpose of fulfilling their future goals," Wandwi said.

Introducing Zigamba, Wandwi said he has been appointed as ambassador because of his ability to mobilise the public as a popular actor of Bongo Movie. "We are happy to introduce Gabo Zigamba as 'Halo Yako' ambassador because he is a serious, committed and professional



Bongo Movie actor, Salim Ahmedy Issa alias, 'Gabo Zigamba' (2nd L) in a souvenir photo with Halotel Tanzania and Finca Microfinance Bank senior officials when he was introduced as 'Halo Yako' brand ambassador in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo courtesy of Halotel.

actor who will help mobilise the public save for the future," he noted.

The Halotel deputy chief executive further noted that through use of technology, the campaign is poised to involve more Tanzanians countrywide during the end of year festive season. "We hope that his presence will add value to our product and that it will involve many

Tanzanians," he added.

Speaking at the same event, Finca Managing Director, Edward Talawa said saving is a basic and important aspect in life because it enables customers to mobilise resources to meet their future goals.

"We are happy to work in partnership with Halotel to bring Tanzanians this important service that will help them save

their money and withdraw it at their convenience to fulfil their goals," Talawa said while urging the public to use the services to realise their goals. "As a bank, Finca has always mobilised the public to adopt a culture of saving money," he added.

In remarks after his inauguration, Gabo Zigamba whose real name is Salim Ahmedy Issa thanked Halotel

and Finca for the confidence shown in his personality to mobilise Tanzanians save some of their money.

"Personally, I know and understand the importance of saving hence will work hard to ensure that the public adopts a saving culture," Issa said while promising to make sure that the countrywide campaign succeeds.

TARGET

Mozambique to double people with access to electricity by 2024

MAPUTO

Mozambique's President Filipe Nyusi said on Friday that a further ten million consumers will have access to electricity in the country in the next four years, another step towards universal access to this resource.

"We will ensure that another ten million Mozambicans have access to electricity in the next four years," President Nyusi said in Lichinga district, Niassa province, in northern Mozambique.

Nyusi explained that only 34% of the approximately 30 million Mozambicans have access to electricity, and that that figure is expected to rise to 64% by 2024. "At that rate, we will be in a position to maintain the necessary progress within the national Energy for All programme," the Mozambican president declared.

Filipe Nyusi advocated the use of alternative sources of energy in order to consolidate more widespread access to electricity, pointing out that the country must invest in reducing dependence on energy generated by the Cahora Bassa Hydroelectric Plant (HCB).

In order to achieve this goal, it is important for the country to capitalize on its renewable energy potential, he added. The head of state stressed the importance of ensuring the supply of electricity to families, but also to the economic and industrial sector, as a way of boosting social development.

Speaking during the inauguration of the electrification project for the administrative post in Meponda, 70 kilometres from Lichinga, the capital of Niassa province, and more than 2,000 kilometres from Maputo, Filipe Nyusi stressed that electricity is essential for the social and economic development of the country.

President of Mozambique Electricity (EDM) Marcelino Gildo said that the country needs US\$6 billion (€5 billion) to achieve access to electricity for all Mozambicans by 2030, saying the goal was "a major challenge."

Universal access to electricity is one of the United Nations' 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. "It is a big challenge, but we believe we will meet it," Gildo told journalists on the sidelines of the inauguration of the Meponda electrification project.

As part of efforts to promote universal access to electricity, EDM has already mobilized \$250 million (€204 million) for electrification programmes in 2021 and 2022, and is now committed to sourcing one billion dollars (€817 million) for the subsequent phase. Gildo pointed out that all 154 district headquarters and 135 of the 416 administrative posts in the country already have access to electricity.



Mozambique's President Filipe Nyusi.

ATTRACTIVE

NBC manager pledges to offer education sector friendly products, services

By Guardian Reporter

NATIONAL Bank of Commerce will continue to offer tailor made products and services targeting the education sector in the country, Dodoma Branch Manager, Happiness Kizigira has said.

Addressing a Tanzania Heads of

Secondary Schools annual general meeting in Dodoma yesterday, Kizigira said that NBC has been working on different challenges facing the sector including reducing interest rates charged on loans but also provide reliable insurance cover.

She said the bank has different

products and services to meet needs of the market and they include health insurance, motor insurance, property insurance that are designed to ensure protect clients from disasters.

"We at NBC would like to invite all Tahosa members to come and get our products and services which are tailor

made to meet needs of the education sector," she said while explaining that a good number of the association are already NBC beneficiaries.

"We have sensitized school owners on the need to purchase insurances cover for property to ensure that they get compensation when disaster strikes," she said noting that in supporting teachers reach their goals, NBC's Manager has also introduced a special account known as 'Malengo' Savings Account that earns monthly interests. "We have school accounts, and these accounts are special for collection of fees from students but we also have accounts for students and children with no monthly charges imposed," Kizigira added.

In a key note address to members, Tahosa President, Frank Mahenge said there are a number of challenges facing the sector and they include high interest rates on loans hence reducing working capital.

"Another challenge is lack of transport especially for teachers in boarding schools where there is also a challenge of fire outbreaks due to poor security fencing," Mahenge said adding that such threats endanger students' lives and school property.

The Tahosa President further argued that all the challenges facing school administrators might be turned into opportunities by the bank which has already invested heavily in the sector through products such as education insurance, students accounts and staff loans to teachers.



Graduates in different disciplines at National Institute of Transport in Dar es Salaam attend the 36th graduation ceremony held last week in the commercial capital. Photo courtesy of NIT.

Woolworths sells David Jones property in Australia for R5.6 billion

JOHANNESBURG

Food and clothing retailer Woolworths has announced the sale of yet another property in Australia in hopes of further strengthening its balance sheet. The sale of the David Jones Elizabeth Street property in Sydney, Australia for A\$510 million (around R5.6 billion) was announced on Monday.

"The board of directors... believes that the proposed transaction, will further strengthen the David Jones' balance sheet and support the repositioning of the business to deliver shareholder value," Woolworths said in a statement.

This follows the sale of its Bourke Street Menswear building which brought in A\$121 million which the retailer had used to reduce debt. In August, then recently appointed CEO Roy Bagattini said Woolworths had been weighed down ever since acquiring David Jones six years ago. The group said it had a plan to turn around its fortunes.

Group head of strategy and investor relations Jeanine Womersley said at the time that initiated a review of their capital structure, which includes a full assessment of options relating to the Australian property portfolio, with the view that any proceeds

generated will be applied to reducing debt.

Woolworths said in a November trading update that in Australia, the return to the stage 4 lockdown in the State of Victoria between 6 August to 28 October resulted in unplanned store closures. This reduced David Jones' sales by 11.7% compared to the first 20 weeks of the 2020 financial year. Country Road Group's sales declined by 10.9%. Excluding Victorian stores, Woolworths said David Jones' and Country Road Group's sales respectively grew by 6.7% and 6.5%.

The group said on Monday that the sale of the David Jones

Elizabeth Street property in Sydney was also intended to facilitate the separation of the existing combined and secured Australian debt and financing facilities of David Jones and Country Road.

This will be done through the conclusion of new secured debt and financing facilities by David Jones and Country Road independently of each other. Additionally, the transaction will also facilitate the termination of the existing cross guarantees between the David Jones and Country Road.

To achieve these objectives Country Road and David Jones will be financed separately from

each other and each respective group will not cross guarantee or cross collateralise the other, save for certain immaterial support from David Jones to Country Road resulting from the total proceeds of the property sale being received in the David Jones group, said the group.

The Cape Town headquartered retailer said none of the South African entities within the group will guarantee Country Road or David Jones in respect of the new funding arrangements or the lease agreement.

"The funding made available by Woolworths to the Australian

businesses as announced on 27 May 2020 remains in place and undrawn," said the group. Woolworths set out a clearly stipulated lease agreement for the property. It includes an initial term of 20 years, together with five options to renew the lease, each for a further term of 10 years.

On conclusion of the agreement, the group said, ownership of the property will transfer to the purchaser, but subject to the terms of the lease agreement, and all of David Jones vendor entity's right, title and interest will vest in the purchaser.

MILESTONE

Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine gets EU regulator's approval

BRUSSELS

Inoculations against Covid-19 are due to start across the European Union within days after the European Medicines Agency gave approval to the Pfizer-BioNTech coronavirus vaccine.

After a closed-doors meeting on Monday, the EU drug regulator said it was recommending the drug be licensed for use in people over 16 years of age, with some exceptions. The pharmaceutical companies will need to submit follow-up data on their vaccine for the next year.

The head of the EU's medicines regulator said it appeared the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine would protect against a new strain of the coronavirus found mainly in Britain. "At this moment there is no evidence to suggest this vaccine will not work against the new variant," European Medicines Agency chief Emer Cooke said as she announced approval of the drug.

The decision comes weeks after the vaccine was first granted

permission under emergency provisions in Britain and the US. "This is really a historic scientific achievement," Ms Cooke said. "It is a significant step forward in our fight against the pandemic." The approval needed to be rubber-stamped by the EU's executive branch on Monday evening.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen described it as "Europe's moment". She tweeted that the EMA's approval was "a decisive moment in our efforts to deliver safe and effective vaccines to Europeans." "Now we will act fast. I expect a @EU-Commission decision by this evening," she said. The EU's executive arm was expected to require two or three days to approve the EMA's decision.

Authorities in Germany and several other European countries said they hope to begin vaccinating people on December 27. "Today is a particularly personal and emotional day for us at BioNTech," said Ugur Sahin, the company's chief executive and co-founder. "Being in the heart of the EU,

we are thrilled to be one step closer to potentially delivering the first vaccine in Europe to help to combat this devastating pandemic. "We are standing by ready to start the delivery of initial vaccine doses across the EU as soon as we get the green light."

The European regulator came under heavy pressure last week from countries calling for the vaccine to be granted approval for use as quickly as possible. The EMA originally set December 29 as the date for its evaluation of the vaccine, but advanced the meeting to Monday after calls from the German government and other countries for the agency to move more quickly. The vaccine has already been given some form of regulatory authorisation in at least 15 countries.

Britain, Canada and the US authorised it to be used under to emergency provisions, meaning the drug is an unlicensed product but its temporary use is justified by the pandemic that has killed almost 1.7 million people worldwide, according to Johns

Hopkins University.

Switzerland became the first country on Saturday to authorise the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine according to normal licensing procedure. EMA approval also follows the regular process, only on an accelerated schedule and under the condition that the pharmaceutical companies submit follow-up data on their vaccine for the next year.

In a statement last week that appeared to address concerns by some in Europe about the speed of the process, the agency said: "A vaccine's benefits in protecting people against Covid-19 must be far greater than any side effect or potential risks."

Scientists are still waiting for more long-term follow-up data to see how long immunity from the vaccine lasts and if there are any rare or serious side effects. Final testing is ongoing because more information on whether the drug works in children is needed, in addition to its effects on pregnant women.

The vaccine is not made with

the coronavirus itself, meaning there is no chance that anyone could catch it from inoculation. Instead, the vaccine contains a piece of genetic code that trains the immune system to recognise the spiked protein on the surface of the virus.

On the day Britain began its vaccination campaign, authorities told people with severe allergies not to get the inoculation after two people suffered serious allergic reactions, although it is unclear whether the reactions were caused by the immunisation.

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention said that as of Friday it had seen six cases of severe allergic reaction out of more than 250,000 administered doses of the BioNTech-Pfizer vaccine, including in one person with a history of vaccination reactions.

BioNTech and Pfizer offered the EU 400 million doses of the vaccine, but the bloc's executive commission chose to buy 200 million, with an option for 100 million more.



European Medicines Agency chief Emer Cooke.

BREXIT

UK border crisis puts fruit supply at risk

LONDON

Too much lamb and salmon, but not nearly enough fruit and vegetables: with key transport links to mainland Europe freezing up and a no-deal Brexit still a real possibility, the UK's ability to produce its own food is back in the spotlight.

Industry groups have warned of looming shortages and shoppers queued up at supermarkets in London, after France on Sunday suspended travel from the UK for 48 hours. While traffic into the UK remains open, truckers often run supplies in both directions and may be deterred by the restrictions on leaving, which are aimed at curbing the spread of a fast-spreading new strain of the coronavirus.

The UK produces about half of its own food and supplies from the European Union made up a quarter of the total last year. Imports are particularly crucial for fresh produce during the winter, when farmers are limited to hardy crops like cabbage or carrots. At the same time, the port disruptions are leaving UK exporters of products from lamb to salmon stuck with a surplus.

As the clock ticks down to Christmas and New Year holidays, here's how the UK's food-supply chain stacks up:

Fruit and Vegetables

The UK grows less than a fifth of its fruit and only half of its vegetables. There should be plenty of seasonal produce like brussels sprouts this time of year, according to the British Growers Association. But supply of salads, berries and citrus could be at threat.

The UK typically imports more than 400,000 tons of fresh tomatoes annually, and only produces about a fifth as much. It imported more than 2.5 billion pounds (\$3.3 billion) of vegetables last year, with onions, tomatoes and sweet peppers topping the list. Fruit imports were even higher, at 3.9 billion pounds.

Fish

Scotland is a big supplier of salmon and a lobby group has warned that the industry could lose 6.5 million pounds before Christmas unless borders reopen. This week is the busiest of the year for trade and 150 tons of the fresh Scottish salmon is shipped daily to the EU. The short shelf life means there's not much leeway to delay sales.

However, while the UK may face a surplus of salmon, it relies on imports for British favourites like the haddock and cod typically served battered with chips. Most of that comes from outside of the EU though, making it less likely to be affected by Brexit or border closures from bloc members.

Meat and Poultry

The UK buys more than half of its pork and some beef from abroad, nearly all of which comes from Europe, data from the Agriculture and Horticulture Development Board show. By contrast, there could be a lot of leftover lamb, particularly as the port closures frustrate processors' efforts at a final sales push to the EU before a no-deal Brexit risks adding hefty tariffs to the bloc.

"The entire sheep sector has responded to calls to prepare for Brexit and has been acutely aware of the probability of disruption to exports in the first weeks of 2021," said National Sheep Association Chief Executive Officer Phil Stocker. "For the cliff edge to have been brought forward by 10 days due to Covid-related closures is unexpected and frustrating."

Cheese and Dairy

British farmers are major dairy producers and the country should have enough milk to supply consumers. But it still buys more than a third of its cheese from abroad. A London School of Economics and Political Science study, commissioned by dairy maker Arla Foods, predicted costs of butter, cream cheese and mozzarella for pizza would rise if a Brexit deal isn't agreed.



ITV

SUNDAY 20 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:00 Al Jazeera
8:00 Watoto Wetu
9:00 S/Prog: Karate Championship Live
10:00 ITV Top 10
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Matukio ya wiki
19:30 Igizo: Mtego
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko
21:05 Mizungwe
21:30 Mjue Zaidi
22:14 Bongo Movie: Kizaizai
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin

MONDAY 21 Dec

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

TUESDAY 22 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:30 Kumekucha Michezo
8:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
10:00 Watoto wetu rpt
10:30 Jungu kuu rpt
11:00 The Base rpt
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Afa ya Jamii
13:00 Kipindi Maalum: Ripoti
13:45 Shika Bamba rpt
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi rpt
18:30 Jagina
19:00 Usafiri wako
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Malumbano ya hoja
23:00 The Base
00:30 DWTV

WEDNESDAY 23 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
10:00 Watoto Wetu rpt
10:30 Uchumi na biashara rpt
11:00 The Base rpt
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Jarida la wanawake rpt
13:00 Dakika 45 rpt
13:50 Kipindi Maalum: TADB
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang
19:00 Ijue Sheria
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi Maalum: Tanesco
21:30 Kipindi Maalum: Ripoti
22:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
23:00 The Base
00:00 Al Jazeera
2:00 DWTV

THURSDAY 24 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
10:00 Watoto
10:30 Shamba lulu rpt
11:00 The Base rpt
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Ijue sheria rpt
13:00 Ripoti Maalum rpt
13:30 Tanzania yetu
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi rpt
18:30 Jagina
19:00 Usafiri wako
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Malumbano ya hoja
23:00 The Base
00:30 DWTV

FRIDAY 25 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:30 HABARI
8:00 Kumekucha Michezo
9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo
9:30 Isidingo
10:00 Watoto
10:30 Shamba lulu rpt
11:00 The Base rpt
12:00 Al Jazeera
12:30 Ijue sheria rpt
13:00 Ripoti Maalum rpt
13:30 Tanzania yetu
14:15 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
15:00 Meza huru
16:30 Watoto Wetu
17:00 The Base
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi rpt
18:30 Jagina
19:00 Usafiri wako
19:30 Isidingo
20:00 Habari
21:00 Malumbano ya hoja
23:00 The Base
00:30 DWTV

SATURDAY 26 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
9:00 Watoto wetu
10:00 Shika Bamba 5
10:30 Mjue Zaidi rpt
11:15 Chetu ni chetu rpt
12:15 Korean drama rpt: Hwarang
13:45 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin
16:00 Igizo rpt: Mizungwe
16:20 Igizo: Mtego
17:00 Shamsham za Pwani
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Korean drama: Hwarang
19:00 Jungu Kuu
19:30 Shika Bamba
20:00 Habari
21:00 Art and lifestyle
21:30 ITV TOP 10
22:10 Isidingo rpt
00:30 DWTV

SUNDAY 27 Dec

5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi
6:00 HABARI
6:40 Kumekucha Habari
7:00 Habari
8:00 Al Jazeera
9:00 Watoto wetu
10:00 Isidingo
11:40 Igizo: Mizungwe rpt
12:00 Movie rpt: Kizaizai
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo
15:30 Mwangaza
16:30 ITV Top 10
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo
18:00 Jiji Letu
18:15 Mapishi
18:30 Matukio ya wiki
19:30 Igizo: Mtego
20:00 Habari
21:00 Kipindi maalum: Biko
21:05 Mizungwe
21:30 Mjue Zaidi
22:14 Bongo Movie: Hiari Yangu
00:05 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin

CAPITAL

Mon 21 Dec

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

Tues 22 Dec

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

Wed 23 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
16:30 Culinary delight rpt
17:00 Innovation rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:30 Sports Gazette
19:30 Chetu ni chetu
20:00 Series: Itohan
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Dakika 45:
23:15 Al Jazeera

Thurs 24 Dec

06:00 Al Jazeera
07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
16:30 Business edition rpt
17:00 In good shape
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Turning the spotlight
19:30 Tanzania yetu
20:00 Series: Itohan
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death
21:30 Capital Prime News

22:00 Capchat rpt

23:00 Al Jazeera

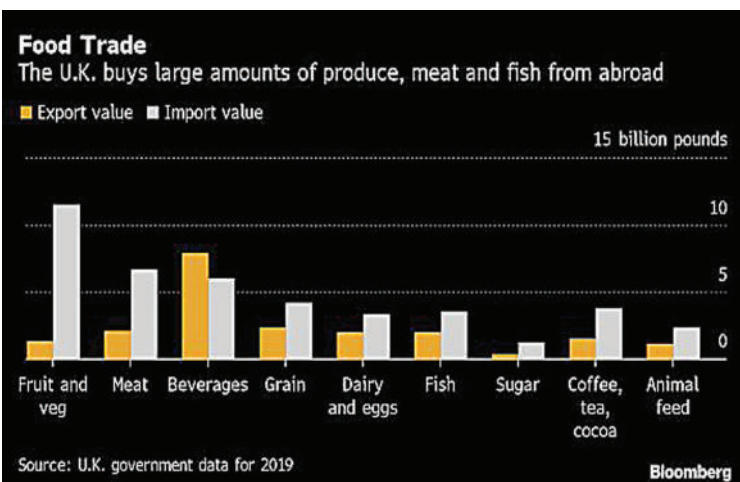
Frid 25 Dec
06:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Movie: I think I love My Wife
10:30 Movie: Forget About It
12:00 Shamba Lulu rpt
12:30 Eco@Africa rpt
13:00 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
14:00 Movie: Marines
15:30 Out&About rpt
16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt
17:30 Movie: Behind Enemy Life
19:00 Rev
19:30 Eco@Africa
20:00 Aibu Yako
21:30 Local Pgm: Business Edition
20:45 Telenovela: Lover her to death
21:30 Capital Prime News
22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt
00:00 Al Jazeera

Sat 26 Dec

08:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 Rev rpt
09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt
10:00 Culinary delight rpt
10:30 Innovation rpt
11:00 Out n' about rpt
11:30 Sports Gazette rpt
12:00 Usafiri wako rpt
12:30 Eco@Africa
13:00 Business edition rpt
13:30 Korean Drama rpt: The Slave hunter
14:30 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt
17:45 Bundesliga kick off
18:15 Capchat rpt
19:15 Mizungwe
19:30 The Décor
20:00 Korean Drama: The Slave hunter
21:00 Out n' About
21:30 Movie: Deadly Plea
23:00 Series rpt: Itohan
01:00 Al Jazeera

Sun 27 Dec

08:00 Al Jazeera
09:00 In good shape
10:00 Capchat rpt
11:00 Sports Gazette rpt
11:30 Korean Drama rpt: The Slave hunter
12:00 Jagina rpt
12:30 Bundesliga Kick Off rpt
13:00 In good shape rpt
13:30 Series rpt: Itohan
15:15 Aibu yako
15:30 Rev rpt
16:00 Dakika 45 rpt
16:45 Mizungwe rpt
17:00 The Décor rpt
17:30 Meza huru
19:00 Turning the Spotlight rpt
19:30 Cookery pgm: Culinary Delights
20:00 Korean Drama: The Slave hunter
21:00 Shift
21:15 Capchat live
22:15 Telenovela rpt: Lover her to death
00:00 Al Jazeera



UK consumer graph.

WORLD

UK PM makes last-ditch push for Brexit deal with 'offer on fish'

BY BLOOMBERG

THE European Union (EU) is considering a fresh proposal on fishing rights from the United Kingdom as British Prime Minister Boris Johnson aims to secure an 11th-hour trade deal.

Both parties had signaled over the weekend that they could make no further compromises, but on Monday the UK offered to give further ground if the EU backed down in other areas, according to people familiar with the negotiations.

The latest suggestion from Britain would see the EU reduce the value of the fish it catches in UK waters by about a third. Last week the UK was insisting the EU accept a 60 percent cut.

The EU told negotiators on Friday that a 25 percent reduction was its final offer and this was already difficult for countries including France and Denmark to accept - the bloc had initially suggested 18 percent.

The European Commission, which is handling negotiations on behalf of the

27 EU members, is liaising with national governments, particularly those that have big fishing industries, before responding, the people said.

Michel Barnier, the EU's chief negotiator, is scheduled to brief ambassadors from the 27 member states at about 4 pm in Brussels on Tuesday.

After another day of intense talks between negotiators in Brussels as well as consultations with senior figures in London, Paris and Berlin, the two sides are still not ready to reach a conclusion and a deal won't come on Monday, officials said.

Indeed, officials say talks could still collapse over a major disagreement about how far one side can retaliate if the other breaks the rules.

Even if the two sides can bridge their differences on how much European boats will get - they are now haggling over as little as 33 million euros (US\$40 million) of fish annually - talks may still founder on the EU's demand that they should be able to impose broader trade tariffs on the UK if London rows back on



A fisherman clears his nets after a fishing trip in Hastings, the United Kingdom, on Nov 4, 2020. (PHOTO: BLOOMBERG)

any fisheries agreement, a concept known as cross-retaliation. The UK has said it would accept penalty tariffs on fisheries but not in other areas.

The UK has demanded the EU accept a five-year transition to the new arrangement rather than seven, the people said.

The EU had initially called for 10 years to adjust and the UK had proposed three.

"There have been successive proposals from the UK, sometimes on fishing, that don't respond to European priorities and demands," French Europe Minister Clement Beaune told reporters in Paris. "Difficulties remain, in the fishing sector - but not only, so it would be an error of judgment and unacceptable stigmatization to say that a few countries or a few sectors are blocking."

The British see control of their fish-

ing waters, previously under the jurisdiction of the EU, as a key element of the sovereignty that it is regaining with Brexit. For its part, the European side doesn't want to give access to its single market without maintaining fishing rights in return.

Speaking at a press conference in London, Johnson said he spoke to French President Emmanuel Macron on Monday, but discussed the coronavirus crisis rather than Brexit.

"It's vital that everybody understands that the UK has got to be able to control its own laws completely and we've also got to be able to control our own fisheries," Johnson said. He reiterated that even if the UK failed to get a deal and traded with the EU with tariffs and quotas, the arrangement would be "more than satisfactory."

Agencies

Israel set for snap election as budget deadline nears

JERUSALEM

ISRAEL yesterday was on course for a fourth national election in two years after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main governing partner, Benny Gantz, failed to resolve a dispute over the budget.

Parliament voted late on Monday against an attempt by both men to delay a deadline of midnight on Tuesday for approval of the fiscal package.

Under law, failure to pass it by then would mean Israel going to the polls in March, and neither lawmakers nor the cabinet have passed it yet, a process near impossible to

complete in a single day.

Netanyahu, who heads the right-wing Likud party and defence minister Gantz, head of the centrist Blue and White faction, established a unity government in May after three inconclusive elections held since April 2019.

Their pact involved Gantz taking over from Netanyahu as prime minister in November 2021, and passing a bi-annual budget for 2020 and 2021.

But even as that power-sharing pact was being inked, many analysts argued that Netanyahu, on trial for alleged corruption which he denies, would not relinquish his powerful post, and Likud



has since demanded to pass the budgets separately while Blue and White insisted Netanyahu stick to their deal.

Israel has so far this year managed its finances on the basis of a pro-rated version of the 2019 budget. The current fiscal deadlock has plunged Israel into more economic uncertainty at the end of a year when a coronavirus-induced slump is expected to shrink gross domestic product by 4.5 percent with the jobless rate

standing at 12.1 percent.

The current fiscal deadlock has plunged Israel into economic uncertainty at the end of a year when a coronavirus-induced slump is expected to shrink GDP by 4.5 percent.

Israel, also preparing for a new US administration led by President-elect Joe Biden, kicked off its vaccination campaign this week.

Analysts had seen Netanyahu pushing for an election in May or June next year, after the coronavirus crisis was expected to ease and the economy to begin to recover.

A March vote would be riskier for Israel's longest serving leader, who has been facing a wave of street protests against

his alleged corruption, which he denies, and his handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Though polls show Netanyahu's party emerging as the largest faction in parliament, surveys also predict a strong showing for a bloc of factions from across the political spectrum seeking to unseat him.

Israel, also preparing for a new US administration led by President-elect Joe Biden, kicked off its vaccination campaign this week.

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Agencies

Biden receives first dose of coronavirus vaccine

WASHINGTON

U.S. President-elect Joe Biden on Monday received the first dose of the coronavirus vaccine during a televised event in his home state of Delaware.

The 78-year-old former vice president was administered the Pfizer BioNTech coronavirus vaccine, which requires a second dose weeks apart to reach 98 percent efficacy. Biden's vaccination followed that of his wife Jill Biden earlier on the same day.

"What I want to say is we owe these folks an awful lot," Biden, donning a black mask, said after getting the shot at ChristianaCare Hospital in Newark, Delaware.

"The scientists and the people who put this together, the

front line workers, the people who were the ones who actually did the clinical work, it's just amazing.

I wish we had time to take you through the whole hospital to see how busy and incredible you all are. And we owe you big. We really do."

Biden, who is considered in the high-risk age category for COVID-19, got inoculated after top U.S. infectious-disease expert Anthony Fauci strongly recommended that he do so. Fauci has been named Biden's chief medical adviser when the president-elect takes office in January.

It's not clear when the Bidens will receive the second doses. "I'm looking forward to the second shot. So is Jill," Biden said. Jen Psaki, spokeswoman for the Biden transition team, told



reporters on Friday that Vice President-elect Kamala Harris and her husband, Doug Emhoff, would receive

their vaccinations next week. Vice President Mike Pence and second lady Karen Pence, together with Surgeon General

Jerome Adams, were administered the vaccine Friday at an on-camera event.

The first dose of the Pfizer BioNTech vaccine, the result of U.S.-German collaboration, began to be injected to health care workers across the United States last week after getting emergency use authorization from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and have been delivered to 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

The FDA also gave green light to the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine on Friday. COVID-19 cases and deaths spiked during the ongoing holiday season in the United States, with total infections nearing 18 million and cumulative deaths around 318,600 as of Monday afternoon.

Agencies

White paper: China to promote BRI energy partnership

CHINA will promote global energy development cooperation with economies involved in the Belt and Road Initiative and participate deeply in the world's energy industry transition, a top energy official said on Monday.

"We will actively push forward partnership with countries and regions involved in the initiative and form a 'chorus' in energy development," said Zhang Jianhua, director of the National Energy Administration.

Cooperation will be carried out in fields including nuclear, wind and solar power and smart grid and power connectivity, he added.

Zhang made the remarks after a white paper titled "Energy in China's New Era" was released by the State Council Information Office.

The country has been advancing pragmatic and mutually beneficial energy cooperation, improving energy infrastructure connectivity and facilitating wider global energy access, according to the white paper.

China has produced substantial achievements under the framework of the Belt and Road, having implemented a group of major energy projects, Zhang said.

In 2019, China established Belt and Road energy partnerships with 30 countries, according to the white paper.

According to Luo Zuoxian, head of the intelligence research department of the Sinopec Economics and Development Research Institute, energy demand from countries and regions participating in the Belt and Road is still on the rise, and the development of the energy industry is the major economic growth point for the regions.

Energy cooperation with the regions and areas has broad prospects, Luo said.

As the world's largest renewable energy market and the largest clean energy equipment manufacturer, China is actively working toward green and low-carbon global energy transition by engaging in extensive cooperation in the renewable energy sector.

According to the document, the country's coal consumption accounted for 57.7 percent of its total energy consumption in 2019, 10.8 percentage points lower than that in 2012. Consumption of natural gas, hydropower, nuclear power and wind power in 2019 accounted for 23.4 percent of the country's total energy consumption, 8.9 percentage points higher than that in 2012.

Consumption of non-fossil fuels accounted for 15.3 percent of total energy consumption last year, 5.6 percentage points higher than 2012 and surpassing the 15 percent goal set for 2020, according to the white paper.

China will continuously improve its energy efficiency and diversify its energy mix to achieve the 2030 target, said Zhang.

China vows to boost its share of nonfossil fuels in primary energy consumption to around 25 percent and increase the installed capacity of wind and solar power to more than 1,200 gigawatts by 2030. It also aims to lower its carbon dioxide emissions per unit of gross domestic product by over 65 percent from the 2005 level.

Zhang said that future development of renewables including wind and solar power in China will not need State subsidies but will be primarily driven by the market, thanks to sharply falling costs from technological advances.

What needs to be tackled is how to best utilize the new energies, he said.

Agencies

Five countries ban flights from S. Africa over COVID-19 variant

JOHANNESBURG

AT least five countries have suspended flights from South Africa after a coronavirus variant was recently discovered in the country.

Germany, Turkey, Israel, Switzerland and Saudi Arabia are among the countries that have announced the banning of such flights to prevent the spread of a variant of the SARS-COV-2 virus currently termed 501V2 Variant.

The ban was coming into effect on Monday in most of these countries. Germany was one of the first nations to announce the ban.

"Because of the reported coronavirus mutation, the federal government intends to restrict travel options between Germany and Great Britain and South Africa," said Government Spokesperson Martina Fietz.

Israel also banned the flights on Sunday, saying that its citizens returning from South Africa would be required to undergo a 30-day mandatory quarantine on their return. The new variant was discovered in the Eastern Cape and also affects Kwazulu-Natal and the Western Cape.

Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said his department has been observing a huge number of young people with no illness testing positive lately.

"The evidence that has been collated, therefore, strongly suggests that the current second wave we are experiencing is being driven by this new variant," he said.

A number of countries have also added Britain in their list of banned flights following the discovery of a COVID-19 variant there.

Xinhua

Rise of small appliances in China reflects not only thriving stay-at-home economy, but also market restructuring

THIS might be how a day of many Chinese goes at home: sipping a cup of coffee made by a coffee maker while enjoying convenient breakfast cooked by a sandwich maker in the morning; frying chicken nuggets with an air fryer and juicing fruits for lunch; and telling a robot vacuum to clean the rooms before sleep at night.

Small appliances are entering millions of Chinese households and offering them great convenience in life.

According to a recent report released by China Center for Information Industry Development, the sales of small appliances experienced continuous growth in

the first three quarters of this year. The growth of air fryers and coffee makers remained above 30 percent.

Besides, export of small appliances also went high. Statistics released by China's General Administration of Customs indicated that the export of bread machines and juice extractors went up 34.7 percent and 12.1 percent, respectively, in the first half of this year.

Some attribute the rise of small appliances to stay-at-home economy. After the outbreak of COVID-19, people have been spending more time at home, which led to an increasing dependence on home appliances and a surging demand for

relevant products. However, to dig deeper, the hot sales of small appliances is a result of the efforts made on both the supply and demand sides, which demonstrates the restructuring of China's home appliance market.

On the supply side, small appliances have a number of niche markets, and these products are mostly cheap and flexible. Besides, many enterprises have promoted their products online to drive their sales.

On the demand side, small appliances can make life more convenient, so kitchen gadgets and electronics, as well as health care devices are very popular among

the customers. Behind the booming sales are the market opportunities brought by China's consumption upgrade.

The prospering small appliance market is an inspiration for China's high-quality economic development. China is currently going through a critical period of the supply side structural reform, during which oversupply is prevalent in many traditional manufacturing sectors.

Therefore, to lead and create new demands with innovation and high-quality supply is a major driving force for market growth.

As market demands are further subdivided and consumption up-

grading further accelerated, products that are differentiated and can strike the demands of consumers and improve people's experiences will be more and more chased.

The changes made to adapt to the consumer end will open up new space for traditional manufacturing and lead a way for industrial transformation.

It's important to see that technological innovation is of vital importance for long-time occupancy of the market.

When products are becoming increasingly homogeneous and businesses follow suit, to make products that address the demands of the customers is a key move for

enterprises to win the competition. The emergence of smart water boilers that can monitor water quality, as well as multifunctional intelligent tea machines is a reminder for enterprises to precisely grasp the demands of the market.

Entering a new phase of development, enterprises must make efforts to expand domestic demands, eye on the optimization of supply on the demand side, work on core technologies and continue technological innovation, so as to give more competitiveness to their products and take the initiative in competition.

People's Daily

Witnessing overwhelming execution of the Chinese people

By Shang Kaiyuan

I'VE been visiting China on business almost every year since 2007. Last year, joining the management of IKEA Purchasing and Logistics Area East Asia, I moved from Sweden to China's Shanghai for work and living, since which I started understanding this country in a more intensive and comprehensive manner.

I'm always impressed by the diligence, credibility and hard work of the Chinese people when I work with my Chinese colleagues and business partners. These qualities aroused enormous energies in China's combat against the COVID-19 pandemic this year.

Every individual is united, obeying strict test and quarantine rules, not only for personal safety, but also for the sake of the others. Besides, rigorous disease control measures were established everywhere in the country and meticulously followed by enterprises.

Under these efforts, China's economy and society have recovered. Now I can travel freely between the offices in Qingdao in east China, Shenzhen in south China and other places and inspect our suppliers.

Today, China's economy has turned stable, and the growth of the first three quarters became positive with constantly expanding export. The country is playing a more and more important role in the global industrial and supply chains.

Let's take protective equipment, which is in high demand today, as an example. In just a few months, China has largely expanded its production capacity of such products, which not only ensured sufficient supply for its own citizens, but also satisfied the demand of other countries.

To achieve this, enterprises must acquire enough raw materials and parts, as well as establish efficient production lines. It demonstrated China's complete industrial line and high automation.

It's fortunate for me to live and work in a metropolis like Shanghai. The city, home to over 24 million people, offers a sense of security with its orderliness and convenience.

Last year, Shanghai decided to implement mandatory garbage sorting, and soon a complete system was established by local residents. It showed me the overwhelming execution of the Chinese people. For plain citizens, it is not easy to fully understand how garbage shall be sorted.

Therefore, the government launched garbage sorting campaigns through all possible channels, and garbage sorting also became a hot online topic. Environmental issues are a huge challenge faced by all mankind, but I believe that China, with such execution power, is able to achieve carbon neutrality before 2060.

Inland areas of China are also developing fast. One of the driving forces is people's aspiration for a better life, in particular, better medical services, education, entertainment and environment.

To seek more business opportunities for enterprises is a part of my job, and I have found nonnegligible opportunities in China's inland region. In the future, we will join the efforts of the Chinese people to build a better life in a more extensive manner.

People's Daily



An infrared thermometer stands at an entrance of Zhaojiabang subway station of Shanghai, Nov. 26. (File Photo)

AU chairperson says Horn of Africa in 'very particular situation,' faces 'tough challenges'

ADDIS ABABA

CHAIRPERSON of the African Union (AU) Commission, Moussa Faki Mahamat, said the Horn of Africa finds itself in "a very particular situation," as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an East African bloc, is experiencing "tough challenges."

The chairperson of the 55-member pan-African bloc made the remarks during the 38th IGAD Extraordinary Meeting, which brought together east African leaders in the Red Sea nation Djibouti late Sunday.

"In South Sudan, peace and reconciliation continue to call for greater efforts from national stakeholders and the region, to defend the gains made so far so as to ensure much needed peace, security and stability in the country," Faki (pictured) told the IGAD Extraordinary Meeting.

In Ethiopia, Faki said, the federal government took bold steps "to preserve the unity, stability and respect for the constitutional order of the country, which is legitimate for all states."

"It cannot be denied, however, that the crisis in Tigray regional state has provoked large-scale displacement," he said, as he affirmed that the AU "encourages IGAD to support Ethiopia in addressing the humanitarian dimensions."

"Particular attention should be paid to refugees and displaced people," Faki said. "It is necessary to recall the important role that Ethiopia plays in peacekeeping operations in the region, and I hope that these efforts will continue," he noted.

Weeks of fighting in the Tigray region between the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) and the Ethiopian Defense Forces have reportedly left hundreds of people dead, thousands displaced and millions in urgent need of humanitarian assistance.

Recent figures from the United Nations revealed that more than 50,000 people, almost half of them children, have arrived in Sudan since early November. **Xinhua**

US reinstates Sudan's sovereign immunity

CAIRO / WASHINGTON

THE United States on Monday reinstated Sudan's sovereign immunity, as the US Congress passed legislation formalizing the move, following the ending of Sudan's designation as a state sponsor of terror.

However, the legislation includes an exemption allowing lawsuits by the families of victims of the Sept 11, 2001, attacks on the United States already underway in US courts to move forward, although experts say Sudan is unlikely to lose those cases.

The state sponsor of terror designation, which was in place for almost three decades, had weighed on Sudan's economy and restricted its ability to receive aid. For investors, the reinstating of sovereign immunity removes another layer of financial risk.

Sudan had been engaged in talks with the United States for months, and paid a negotiated US\$335 million settlement to victims of al-Qaeda attacks on US embassies in East Africa in 1998 who had been awarded much higher damages by US courts.

The process to release the settlement money and restore Sudan's sovereign immunity - protection against being sued in American courts - had been stalled in the US Congress as it had been tied to the US\$892 billion coronavirus aid package.

Late on Monday, the wider package was passed in the US Congress after a deal has been worked out in a rare weekend session, and sent to President Donald Trump to sign into law.

According to the bill, Washington will be authorizing US\$111 million to pay off part of Sudan's bilateral debt, and US\$120 million to help pay off its debt to the International Monetary Fund (IMF) while making another \$700 million available until September 2022 for assistance to the country.

Last week, Sudan's finance minister announced a US "bridge loan" that would allow Sudan to clear US\$1 billion in arrears to the World Bank.

A US source familiar with the matter said the debt assistance would help kick off Sudan's debt relief on a global level, helping make it eligible for the IMF's



US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo (left) greets Sudanese Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok (right) in Khartoum. The United States on December 14, 2020 formally removed Sudan's state sponsor of terrorism designation, 27 years after putting the country on its blacklist, the US embassy in Khartoum said.

Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) program.

With the reinstatement of sovereign immunity and the financial aid, Khartoum will now be "on the hook," to normalize ties with Israel, a US source familiar with the matter said, a move it has agreed to under US pressure.

In a joint statement in October, Israel and Sudan said they had agreed to normalize relations and end the state of belligerence between the two countries, but Sudan's civilian leaders have said the final decision would be in the hands of a yet-to-be-formed transitional legislature.

The normalization would make Sudan one of the four Arab countries along with the United

Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco, over the past several months, to establish relations with Israel in deals brokered with US help.

The bill also appropriates an additional US\$150 million for Sudan's settlement payment, in order to redistribute the funds in a way the bill's sponsors say is more equitable.

The United States designated Sudan a state sponsor of terrorism in 1993 on the grounds that former President Omar al-

Bashir's regime was supporting militant groups including al-Qaeda, Hamas and Hezbollah.

In the 1990s, the regime became a pariah, hosting Osama bin Laden and positioning itself as a fulcrum for Islamist movements, although experts still say Sudan's liability for the Sept 11 attacks is questionable.

Agencies

Xi Jinping's Economic Thought steers China through challenges for sound journey ahead

BEIJING

Xi Jinping Thought on Socialist Economy with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era has been advancing with the times, steering the Chinese economy ahead amid a changing world full of uncertainties.

Xi's economic thought, unveiled at the Central Economic Work Conference held in December 2017, is mainly based on the new development philosophy put forward by Xi in 2015 and features innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development.

Regarded as the "latest fruit" of socialist political economy with Chinese characteristics, the thought reflects the leadership's growing understanding of the laws of economic and social development and makes clear the key principles to be upheld in promoting economic development for a new era.

KEEP PACE WITH TIME

When the new development philosophy was put forward in 2015, China's economy registered a 6.9-percent growth year on year, the slowest annual expansion in a quarter of a century. Two years later at the 19th Communist Party of China (CPC) National Congress, Xi made an important judgment that the country's economy has been transitioning from a phase of rapid growth to a stage of high-quality development.

Since then, high-quality development has been taken as the fundamental requirement for authorities to make economic policies and exercise macroeconomic control.

Remarkable achievements have been made over the years, testifying to the viability and effectiveness of the thought in guiding China's economic work. Despite the challenges



Xi Jinping, general secretary of the Communist Party of China Central Committee, Chinese president and chairman of the Central Military Commission

from deglobalization, protectionism, COVID-19 and others, the Chinese economy has grown close to 100 trillion yuan (about 15.27 trillion U.S. dollars) with a per capita GDP exceeding 10,000 U.S. dollars, contributing about 30 percent to world economic growth.

China has become the only major economy in the world to achieve positive growth in 2020, boasts the world's largest middle-income population and contributes more than 70 percent of the global reduction in poverty by lifting hundreds of millions of people out of absolute poverty.

The new development philosophy featuring five development concepts has guided the drafting of the CPC Central Committee's proposals for formulating the 14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035.

China should focus on promoting high-quality development during its 14th Five-Year Plan period, Xi said. This is based on the scientific assessment of the country's development situations.

Highlighting innovation as the "primary driving force," Xi said China needs scientific and technological solutions, more than

ever, to boost economic and social development.

The country will uphold the central role of innovation in its modernization drive and take self-reliance in science and technology as a strategic underpinning for national development, according to the full text of the CPC Central Committee's development proposals.

The role of opening up is never insignificant. This year, Xi stressed on several occasions the need to foster a new development paradigm in which domestic and foreign markets can boost each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay.

Making the domestic market the mainstay does not mean China is developing its economy with the door closed, Xi told a symposium of entrepreneurs in July. By giving full play to the potential of the domestic market, both domestic and foreign markets can be better connected and utilized to realize robust and sustainable development, he said.

China has signed 201 cooperation deals on the Belt and Road Initiative with 138 countries and 31 international organizations. The country has also established 21 pilot free trade zones. Its global business environment ranking moved up to the 31st in 2020.

The country hopes to pursue high-level opening up and leverage the advantages of its huge market to promote international cooperation for win-win results in the span of the upcoming 14th Five-Year Plan. The aim is to turn the country's market into a market for the world, a market shared by all, and a market accessible to all.

Xi Jinping Thought on Socialist Economy with Chinese Characteristics for a New Era also comprises a series of principles that must be upheld in promoting economic and social development.

Xinhua

Kremlin blasts outgoing US administration for trying to 'kick around' ties with Russia

MOSCOW

THE Kremlin regards the recent decision by the outgoing US administration to impose a de facto ban on the purchase of certain types of American goods and technologies for Russian companies as another hostile step, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters yesterday.

"This is another hostile step against Russia. We can only regret that another outgoing US administration prefers to kick around the bilateral Russian-American relationship, which is already in very bad shape," the Kremlin spokesman said.

"Every single kick pushes [both countries] away from the moment of normalization [of bilateral relations] and makes it extremely difficult to get out of this tailspin, which is harmful to our bilateral relations," Peskov explained. The Kremlin official vowed that Moscow will protect its interests "properly."

Washington's sanctions

The United States Department of Commerce has published a list of 103 Russian and Chinese companies and enterprises, which Washington suspects of cooperating with both superpowers' militaries. The entities on this list will not be able to purchase a number of US goods and technologies.

A total of 58 Chinese and 45 Russian entities (actually 41 as some structures are repeated) have been put on this blacklist. The US government determined that these companies are 'military end users.'

Agencies

Old village in Zhejiang province revitalized through green, eco-friendly development

SHATAN village, an old village with a history of several hundred years in east China's Zhejiang province, has become a prosperous village through green and eco-friendly development approaches.

As the village was rebuilt and villagers moved to a different location, the old Shatan village was once at a low ebb in its development as its old streets and houses had gradually decayed.

However, the village, which is located at the upstream stretch of the Changtan reservoir in Huangyan district, Zhejiang province, has been revitalized in recent years.

Typical elements in the old village, such as roads paved with flagstones, ancient camphor trees, and old stage for performances of traditional Chinese opera, have attracted wide attention on the Internet, turning Shatan village into a popular village featuring a tranquil atmosphere and quaint charm.

The popular hotel transformed from an old granary at Shatan village is one of the reasons behind the growing fame of the village. How popular is the special hotel named "Liang Su" (the name can be translated as "graintel")?

"You can't possibly get a room for weekends and holidays if you fail to make a reservation about one month in advance," said local villagers.

The transformation from granary to a hotel considered not only on making it special and comfortable, but also focus on using green technological solutions, said some tourists. A staff member of the hotel noted that the transformation project features typical low-energy, multi-function and environmentally-friendly buildings.

The green and waterproof coating material on the walls has helped effectively solved the problem of damp in old buildings, the staff member explained, adding

that since the interior walls are made from high-performance thermal insulation materials, people staying in the hotel don't need air conditioners in summer.

The yard of the hotel has been landscaped and equipped with permeable lawns, and the rainwater collection and utilization system installed on the roofs can purify and then recycle rainwater.

In 2013, at the invitation of Huangyan district, a team led by Yang Guiqing, a professor at the College of Architecture and Urban Planning, Tongji University, established a village planning teaching and practice base to help map out a reconstruction plan for Shatan village.

Making the most of existing buildings in the village, Yang's team turned abandoned veterinary station, granary, office building of village committee and other buildings into tourist center, special hotel, tea kiosk and wine workshop.

The renovated buildings have maintained a traditional style, giving local residents a sense of belonging while bringing memories of the past to many tourists.

The diners, bars, libraries, and squares for theatrical performances in old times arrayed on both sides of the old street in Shatan village are in harmony.

The outdoor conference center in the village is equipped with facilities that could realize the simultaneous interpretation of multiple languages, reflecting the endeavor of Shatan village to open its door wide and actively explore its development paths.

By inviting Yang's team to reconstruct Shatan village and other old villages, Huangyan district aims to improve the value and competitiveness of rural products through combination of research of universities with rural development while making full use of the projects and funds of the government.

People's Daily



Dar es Salaam's Sikh Youths Group's representative, Harvir Singh Chana (L), hands over sports equipment to Kurasi Orphanage Center's official, Beatrice Mguniro, for the center's children in the city yesterday. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Serengeti Lite sponsorship for Mainland Women Premier League starts to pay off

By Guardian Correspondent

WOMEN soccer is gaining popularity in many parts of the world and so is to Mainland Tanzania, which lately has a women tournament, known as Serengeti Lite Women Premier League.

Domestic soccer enthusiasts are now seeing more women attracted to this sport as ever before.

For those who may not be aware, women's football has a longer history than most people would expect.

There were a number of women's soccer clubs in the 1890s and one in north London was reported to have attracted a 10,000 crowd to a game at Crouch End.

Preston was the stronghold of women's football in its early days, the famous Dick Kerr's Ladies being formed there in 1894 and earning a lot of money for charity.

We are told that their match with St Helen's Ladies on Boxing Day 1920 had 53,000 onlookers inside Goodison Park and thousands of others locked outside.

The Football Association (FA) banned women's football from its clubs' grounds but its view that football was 'quite unsuitable for females' changed towards the end of the 1960s.

The Women's Football Association (WFA) was formed in 1969 and within three years the first 'Women's FA Cup Final' and England Women's international match had been played.

However, in many parts of the world including Tanzania, women soccer still does not get the attention it deserves.

In an interview, Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) Marketing Manager Aaron Nyanda said lack of sponsorship for the Women Premier League has been one of the serious problems facing the development of women soccer in the country.

"In Tanzania, the plight of women soccer is even much worse. Since its inception, the Mainland Women League has been lacking financial support to enable it to operate smoothly like the men's league, that is, until Serengeti Premium Lite came on board that we are seeing a new lease of life to women soccer," Nyanda said.

On January 2018, the Super brands-winning beer brand, Serengeti Premium Lite, entered into three-year sponsorship deal with TFF to support the Mainland Women Premier League.

Through the sponsorship, Serengeti Premium Lite became the first ever sponsor to support women soccer in the country.

Nyanda said the sponsorship has enabled the federation to run the league in less stressful environment due to the financial support offered.

"Before this sponsorship, it was difficult for teams to go and play away matches because of financial problems. The league is now gradually gaining popularity and we are even starting to hire professional players from outside the country," he said.

The marketing manager noted that TFF recognizes Serengeti Lite as a worthy partner in football development in the country and not just as a sponsor due to its solid and continued support to the players.

Notably, Tanzania is one of a number of Eastern Africa nations on the rise in regard to women's football.

It is one of the first East African nations to qualify for the Women Africa Cup of Nations and, more significantly, Tanzania won the 2016 CECAFA Women Championship.

Since then, the nation has grown from strength to strength, launching its first ever top tier Mainland Women Premier League with an official sponsor on board.

Serengeti Breweries Limited (SBL)'s Serengeti Premium Lite brand's Head, Anitha Msangi, stated they are proud to engage with the Women Premier League.

She disclosed that the sponsorship has played a significant role in empowering women to increase their participation and performance in the sports sector in general, and in soccer in particular.

She further noted that Serengeti Lite believes that by giving more visibility to the numerous talented women in the sport, it can help to raise their profile and the attractiveness of women's soccer.

"Soccer is no longer just a form of entertainment to the fans, nor is it just a preserve for men only. It is also meant to unite and inspire people across the globe. It is also a source of steady income to the players," she said.

The beer's sponsorship towards Serengeti Lite Mainland Women Premier League follows a long history of the SBL's sponsorship for the senior men's national soccer team, Taifa Stars.



Last season's Serengeti Lite Mainland Women Premier League champions Simba Queens take part in training session in Dar es Salaam to prepare for their recent clash in the 2020/21 women top flight.

Academy Girls thrash Twiga Girls in TCA Women Regional League

By Guardian Reporter

ACADEMY Girls posted a comprehensive 56-run victory over Tanga's Twiga Girls in a 2020 Tanzania Cricket Association (TCA) Women Regional League's Group A tie, played at Annadil Burhani venue in Tanga on Saturday.

Opener Monica Paschal put scintillating batting displays and played pivotal role in Dar es Salaam-based Academy Girls' ability to amass 121 runs for the loss of four wickets in 20 overs after they were presented with a chance to start batting.

She put her experience to use, notching 55 runs and cleared the boundary on eight occasions in what turned out to be the best innings.

Nasra Hamza, slotted in at number four, as well put solid performance, ending with 27 runs which consisted of two fours.

Neema Justine that had opened Academy Girls' innings with Monica chipped in with 14 runs which included a boundary.

Nuru Omary and Tatu Bakari wrapped up their



Academy Girls cricket team.

side's innings with bat in hand, ending with three runs not out and five runs not out respectively.

Twiga Girls' Swaumu Godfrey was the team's only bowler with an impressive spell given she took three wickets and gave away 25 runs in four overs.

Chasing 122 runs to register victory happened to be a tall order for Twiga Girls, they were bowled out for 65 runs in 20 overs.

Sabrina Ibrahim was the team's batter with most runs in the fruitless chase, ending with 16 runs.

Swaumu Godfrey and

Sharifa Iddi worked hard to see to it their squad at least ends with a respectable score, notching 14 runs apiece.

Twiga Girls' efforts to get down to successful chase faced setback early on given they experienced three quick dismissals in the first seven overs.

Much as Sabrina, Swaumu and Sharifa did all they could to see to it the team keep Academy Girls' bowlers at bay, the former's remaining batters' failure to live up to expectations weakened their resolve.

Academy Girls' Neema mercilessly tormented Twiga Girls, taking a

five-wicket haul and giving away eight runs in four overs.

She was ably assisted by Lightness Eliud that posted four wickets and gave away nine runs in four overs.

Tanga's other team, Simba Queens, clobbered SUA Queens of Morogoro by eight wickets in the league's Group B duel, which took place the same day.

The SUA Queens went in to bat first and could so far notch 46 runs, dropping eight wickets in 20 overs.

The Morogoro team's batters Mwajabu Hussein and Asha Daud somehow made their pres-

ence felt, notching 10 runs and 14 runs respectively, with the rest of the side's batters putting woeful batting showing.

Needing mere 47 runs to come out victorious, Simba Queens hardly wasted time, mounting a successful chase for two wickets in 12 overs.

Opener Hudaa Mrisho led the clash's eventual winners' chase, notching 18 runs which included a four, Sophia Frank and Rahma Yahya thereafter made certain of their team's victory, recording 10 runs not out and four runs not out respectively.

The TCA-organized league, which began last weekend, gears towards raising cricket's standard at the domestic level.

The national cricket governing body's information officer, Atif Salim, noted that nine sides are battling it out in the showpiece, with the teams being put into Group A and Group B.

Salim stated the league further gears towards seeing to it the participating girls polish their skills in readiness for the coming international tournaments, slated for next year.



Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC.

KMC FC in pursuit of victory over JKT Tanzania in VPL

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

KINONDONI Municipal Council (KMC) FC management has said that the team are now concentrating on chalking up three points in their Vodacom Premier League (VPL) match against JKT Tanzania, slated for today at the Jamhuri Stadium in Dodoma.

The KMC FC is reeling from 1-0 loss to Ihefu FC in a league tie, played at Highlands Estate Stadium in Mbarali, Mbeya last Saturday.

It was a second loss in a row for the Dar es Salaam side, given they lost by a similar margin to Simba SC at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

Forward Joseph Kinyozi netted the

winner for Ihefu FC on the ninth minute of the Saturday tie, leaving the hosts posting the much needed three points.

The last weekend's victory has helped Ihefu FC register 13 points after playing 16 matches.

The Mbeya team are currently placed 16th in the domestic top flight's standing.

After dropping three points KMC FC is placed eighth in the VPL standing with 21 points after taking part in 15 matches.

The KMC FC's preparations for the duel with JKT Tanzania have, the former's officials said, temporarily suspended the side's mini transfer window's plans in an effort to see to it they concentrate on the game.

Christina Mwangi, KMC FC information officer, said that they have now shelved plans to bring in new players until they complete their three-point mission in the clash with JKT Tanzania.

She stated: "We know it is time for the mini transfer window but let's put those issues aside until we finish our game against JKT Tanzania."

"After that we will make our plans for signings clear and everything will be fine, our fans should continue supporting us," she said.

The mini transfer window was opened on December 16 and is expected to close on January 16 next year.

Yanga celebrate VPL victory with orphans in Arusha

By Correspondent Ismail Tano

YANGA's management has decided to celebrate the side's 3-1 win over Dodoma Jiji FC in a Vodacom Premier League (VPL) encounter, which took place in Arusha last weekend, with the orphans living at the Faraja Orphanage in the city by providing them with food.

Yanga, the VPL leaders, have amassed 40 points after beating Dodoma Jiji FC in the duel which took place at the Sheikh Amri Abeid Stadium.

After the victory, Yanga's members and fans in the region handed over 1m/- to the side's players in a bid to motivate them.

The players though decided

that they will use the cash to buy foodstuff for orphans at Faraja Orphanage so the children can celebrate Christmas and New Year.

Yanga's spokesman, Antonio Nugaz, said that they bought three goats, a variety of foodstuff and fruits along with hygiene kits and gifts for the children.

Nugaz stated his outfit's players further handed over some of the cash to the children for other needs.

"On behalf of the entire Yanga leadership and the side's Arusha branch, we are very happy to have chalked up the victory and we decided to share this joy with the orphans," he noted.

"We have set out to see to it the children are in joyful mood towards Christmas and New Year, let us celebrate together, so, please accept this offering," Nugaz stated when handing over the gifts to the children.

The Faraja Orphanage's patron, Faraja Maliaki, who is also the center's owner, thanked Yanga for the support and said that it would be great joy for the children get foodstuff heading to the festive season.

He noted: "This center is harbouring 200 children, they consist children who have been abandoned in hospitals, community development centers and those who are thrown into the streets."

"We also have children that

have come out of juvenile correction centers and those who were born by adults that have been imprisoned, 30 of the children have been infected with HIV and they are on medication," he said.

Maliaki stated food insecurity is the biggest challenge, when it comes to raising the orphans at the center at the moment, a situation that drives them to have one meal at a time.

He called on the community to come forward and help them get food while they are continuing to seek a sponsor.

Yanga's Arusha branch's chairman, Felician Mombo, said that they have opted to donate the cash to offset some of the needs at their club.

Proposed Super League 'perfect project to go bankrupt', says La Liga chief

MADRID

LA Liga president Javier Tebas has warned a breakaway European Super League would not be in the long term interests of clubs, a day after Real Madrid chief Florentino Perez spoke of an urgent need to reform current competitions.

"The Super League is a perfect project to go bankrupt, take on the fans and confront the football authorities," Tebas told website Goal.com on Monday.

"The Super League is unfeasible. Whoever says that this is viable, does not know the football business well."

Perez said on Sunday the COVID-19 pandemic meant football had to "innovate and look for formulas to ensure football remains attractive," adding that the current match calendar should be changed to reduce the burden on players.

Former Barcelona president Josep Maria Bartomeu said in October upon resigning that he had signed Barca up to the proposed Super League in order to keep the club viable after taking a huge financial hit due to the pandemic.

Perez also said the top clubs needed to find ways to come out of the financial crisis caused by the pandemic. However, Tebas said the idea of a Super League, which would not be organised by UEFA, was not popular around the continent, particularly among Premier League club bosses.

"I have contacts with the biggest English clubs and they are against the Super League," he said.

"They have the best competition and if this Premier League model works, if this Champions League model is working, why do we have to change?"

"This would be a risk. We cannot get into a war over this concept. The English are the leading economic soccer powerhouse and they don't want the Super League."

Meanwhile, Barcelona coach Ronald Koeman said he is still confused by the handball rule in Spain after rivals Real Madrid were spared a penalty when Sergio Ramos struck the ball with his arm in Sunday's 3-1 win at Eibar.

Eibar coach Jose Luis Mendilibar raged against the decision, which was not reviewed by the referee, and even Real Madrid defender Dani Carvajal said players do still not understand why certain handball offences are punished and others are not.

"I don't understand the handball rules, if you ask 10 people if yesterday's incident was a penalty, nine would say yes," Koeman told a news conference ahead of Tuesday's visit to Real Valladolid in La Liga.

REUTERS

Bayern's Leon Goretzka making political splash in Germany

BERLIN

GERMANY midfielder Leon Goretzka evidently doesn't believe the increasingly outdated adage that sports and politics don't mix.

The 25-year-old Bayern Munich player has gained a reputation as an ethical campaigner for taking stands against racism and anti-Semitism.

Now, he's taking aim at the far-right Alternative fur Deutschland (Alternative for Germany) political party for its continued opposition to coronavirus restrictions. Infection rates across Germany are higher where the AfD enjoys its biggest support, particularly in the eastern state of Saxony.

"The corona-crisis in particular made it more obvious what kind of party this is. For me it's no alternative, but a shame for Germany," Goretzka told the Welt am Sonntag newspaper on Sunday.

"SchandefuerDeutschland" (shame for Germany) was trending on Twitter in Germany late Sunday, likely due to reactions from AfD members such as Malte Kaufmann, who suggested Goretzka should "shut his cheeky mouth and play football."

By Monday, "Goretzka" was trending, too.

Goretzka told Welt am Sonntag that he had been threatened by AfD supporters for his past political statements.

"But above all there has been a lot more encouragement. You have to fight against this opposition in order to improve something. We have to make it clear to people that we live in a democracy that can't be destroyed by anything or anyone. Hate comments tend to make me position myself even more clearly," Goretzka said.

In March, Goretzka and Bayern teammate Joshua Kimmich launched their "We Kick Corona" fundraising campaign to help social and charitable organizations continue their work through the pandemic. They donated 1 million euros (\$1.2 million) and encouraged others to contribute more than 5 million euros (\$6.1 million) in total.

AFP

Messi lied to repeatedly at Barca - Laporta

BARCELONA

FORMER Barcelona president and presidential candidate Joan Laporta has told ESPN that the club have repeatedly lied to Lionel Messi, but he does not think the Argentina international will be playing his football elsewhere next season.

Laporta was the Barca president between 2003 and 2010 and is running for re-election on Jan. 24 when the club will appoint a replacement for Josep Maria Bartomeu, who resigned in October.

If he is elected, one of Laporta's first tasks will be to get Messi -- who equalled Pele's scoring record for a single club with his 643rd Barca goal against Valencia on Saturday -- to extend his stay at Camp Nou.

Messi's Barcelona deal expires on June 30 2021 and he is allowed to negotiate a pre-contract agreement with other clubs from Jan. 1.

"I am sure Messi wants to continue at Barca," Laporta said in an exclusive interview with ESPN. "It will depend on the proposal that the new president makes him. He needs to see that there is a competitive team to reignite the love story Barca had with the Champions League but which has been on hold in recent years.

"[The club] have repeatedly lied to him and, on top of that, things



Lionel Messi attempted to leave Barcelona last summer. (Agencies)

haven't gone as everyone wanted. He is at a point in his career where he still wants to be successful and win titles.

"He cannot keep accepting that other teams win the Champions League and Barca, with Lionel, the best player in the history of the game, do not have a team competitive enough to be able to win it."

After August's 8-2 defeat to Bayern Munich, Messi told Barca he wanted to move on after 20 years at the club. He eventually ended up staying after Bartomeu, the president at the time, refused to let him leave.

Manchester City wanted to sign him in the summer, while ESPN revealed this month that Paris Saint-Germain are also monitoring the situation with the aim of reuniting him with Neymar in France.

However, Laporta has said he cannot see the six-time world player of the year pulling on another club's shirt and added his relationship with Messi and his father, Jorge, who is also his agent, gives him the advantage over the other eight candidates for the presidency.

Laporta's first spell as Barca president saw Messi's progression into the first team, the appointment of Pep Guardiola as coach and two Champions League titles.

"I don't see Messi in a shirt that isn't Barca's," Laporta added. "The story between him and the club is so beautiful that the incoming president is obliged to make sure it continues. I don't see him playing for any other club. I see him in the Barca shirt."

"Along with turning around the club's financial situation, the priority is to make a proposal to Lionel that convinces him to stay. I hope I arrive in time. And I have an advantage: Messi's trust."

"He knows the offer I make will be real and I will fulfil it. I think that will help a lot and is an advantage over the other candidates."

Another task facing the incoming president at Barca is stabilising the club financially. The club's debt rose to nearly €500 million this year due to mismanagement

by the previous board and the repercussions of the coronavirus pandemic.

"The club on the brink of bankruptcy," Laporta said. "That is one of the reasons why I am running. I did the same in 2003 to turn around a delicate situation. The magnitude is much bigger this time but the structure is the same."

"The situation is difficult but, despite everything, we're [the football club] that generates the most revenue. But we will have to find socios [club members] working in certain areas that can help us generate even more."

"The emergency plan we have is powerful, and I am sure it will work. The message is one of optimism. We can turn the situation around by reducing outgoings. We're studying the restructuring of the debt, too."

One of the reasons Laporta was elected in 2003 was because of the promise he would sign David Beckham -- although he eventually signed Ronaldinho instead -- but he will not be making such pledges this time round.

Asked if re-signing Neymar was a possibility, he said he wouldn't speak about other players as it could destabilise the squad, although added he liked "skilful" players and revealed he's remained in touch with many of the game's

biggest agents during his time away from football.

Former midfielder Xavi Hernandez, who is currently coaching Al-Sadd in Qatar, is another person who could play a big role in the election campaign. He has been strongly linked with Victor Font, another candidate for the presidency, but said over the weekend he wouldn't be officially endorsing anyone while praising both Laporta and Font.

"I think that's intelligent," Laporta said of Xavi's position. "He's been one of the best midfielders in the club's history, if not the best, and he will be the coach one day. I don't know if in the short, medium or long-term. That depends on the circumstances."

Meanwhile, Barcelona's Lionel Messi has explained how tough it has been to play without fans in the last year due to the coronavirus pandemic, likening the experience to a training session.

"It's horrible to play without fans, it's a very ugly sensation," Barcelona captain Messi told newspaper Marca on Monday after receiving the "Pichichi" award for the top scorer in La Liga last season.

"Seeing no-one in the stadium is like a training session and it is very tough to really get going at the start of a game."

The new normal of football in empty stadiums has certainly taken

its toll on Messi and Barca.

The Catalans were top of La Liga with 11 games to go when last season was disrupted by the pandemic but they surrendered the title to Real Madrid when play resumed in empty stadiums.

They then suffered a humiliating 8-2 defeat by Bayern Munich in the Champions League in an empty Estadio da Luz in Lisbon in August.

This season they have made their worst start in 33 years and are currently fifth in La Liga, way off the pace of leaders Atletico Madrid, while they failed to finish top in their Champions League group for the first time since 2006.

The 33-year-old Messi meanwhile is having his worst individual season since the 2007-08 campaign, scoring only nine goals in all competitions, five of which have been penalties.

"The truth is it's very ugly and that's why we are seeing such evenly matched games. It's very difficult to win, regardless of who you are playing against," Messi added.

"The pandemic has caused football to change a lot, and for the worse. You can see it in the matches, and I hope this all ends soon and we can get fans back into the stadiums and return to normality."

ESPANOL

Is relegation a genuine possibility for Arsenal?

By Leander Schaerlaeckens

WHERE is the bottom? Has it been reached yet?

Could one of the world's biggest clubs, with the world's most expensive average tickets, actually be relegated?

Or is Arsenal too big to fail?

These are the questions scores of Arsenal fans are no doubt asking themselves right about now, after a weekend that brought a fourth defeat in five league matches. The Gunners remain lodged in 15th place, just four points and three places above the relegation zone and fully 12 points removed from the Champions League berths of the top four.

After winning three of four to start the campaign, the 13-time champions have won just once in 10 games, losing seven and scoring just four goals over that stretch. On Saturday, Everton beat Mikel Arteta and his mirthless men 2-1 in a game that felt more comfortable to the home team than the score suggested.

Arsenal doesn't score enough goals, concedes too many, lacks creativity and consistency, has no apparent plan and broadly looks worse than it has in a generation.

Still ... relegation? Really?

Is that a genuine possibility?

While Arsenal plays crosstown rivals Chelsea on Boxing Day (Dec. 26), its following matches are against Brighton, West Brom, Crystal Palace and Newcastle, none of whom are in the top half



Arsenal is much closer to the relegation spots than it is to the top four. (AP Photo)

of the table. Surely that run of games will fuel a rise up the table. Right?

But what if it doesn't? What if Arteta, who began his first managerial job so well a year ago, quickly forging a team that played stylish attacking soccer before things began to spiral after the pandemic layoff, never finds the solutions to his many problems? What if, for all of his pedigree as a playmaker for the club and an apprenticeship with Pep Guardiola, the clouds never break for him?

Arsenal is off to the club's worst start to a season since 1974-75. Arteta knows all of this. He grasps the stakes. "I understand the situation," he said after the loss, per The Guardian. "My energy and focus is on getting the team out of this situation. You can't deny the spirit the players have shown every time they are on the pitch, but the results are not acceptable for the standards of this football club."

Yes, those results.

More than a third of the way into the season and well past the point where sample size stops being a problem, Arsenal is averaging a point

per game. Last season, 38 points, which Arsenal is on pace for, would have given you a 17th-place finish, the last team not relegated. In the 2016-17 season, 38 points would have dumped you out of the Premier League and into the second-tier Championship. That was the year after Arsenal truly competed for the title for the last time, incidentally, in a bizarre campaign ultimately won by Leicester City on a mere 81 points -- with the Gunners still 10 points back in second place, after squandering the league lead in January.

Even if form doesn't improve, Arsenal's saving grace might be that the two clubs at the bottom, Sheffield United and West Brom, have put out truly appalling iterations of themselves. Sheffield won only its second point of the season last weekend -- the worst-ever start to a Premier League season -- and West Brom has won only once. Burnley, in 18th, has scored just six goals in 12 games but retains two matches in hand. If it wins those two, Arsenal will be 16th as things are now.

All the same, it feels preposterous to even be discussing the prospect of a relegation of a Big Six team. Or a Big Four team, whatever delineation of the Premier League oligopoly you want to employ. It would be a collapse of unprecedented magnitude.

The most remarkable relegations in the Premier League era were perhaps that of Blackburn Rovers in 1998-99, just four seasons after winning the title; Leeds

United dropping down in 2003-04 after reaching the Champions League semifinals three seasons prior; and Newcastle United twice bouncing down and right back up. They were all well-supported and respected clubs, hamstrung by issues of mismanagement or financial collapse.

Elsewhere, Atletico Madrid's relegation from La Liga in 2000, also four years after winning it, jarred for its lack of precedent and the fact that it had been one of just four clubs to never be relegated. But Atletico had been badly mismanaged for years. In Italy, the relegations of Juventus and Fiorentina were stunning, but the former was punished in a refereeing scandal and the latter went bankrupt.

But if, say, Schalke 04 getting relegated from the Bundesliga this season -- it is winless in its first 13 games -- would feel momentous, an Arsenal relegation would be cataclysmic. Because there isn't anything major wrong with Arsenal.

Its finances are sound and its ownership, if nothing else, is stable.

The economics of the game are supposed to preclude this. The kind of money generated by clubs in Arsenal's atmosphere, way up there in the thick clouds, inoculates them from failure more severe than missing the Champions League for a season or two. With a squad worth more than \$700 million, according to Transfermarkt, you are supposed to be untouchable to the proletariat. That's the conventional wisdom anyway.

So if Arsenal should be relegated, and that remains unlikely, the most stunning thing will be that, ultimately, no amount of money can protect you from detonating in the world's most capitalist sport.

Leander Schaerlaeckens is a Yahoo Sports soccer columnist and a sports communication lecturer at Marist College. Follow him on Twitter @LeanderAlphabet.

Gwiji by David Chikoko

Simba SC begins quest for 2020/21 CAF Champions League group stage spot

SPORT

Messi lied to repeatedly
at Barca - Laporta

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Simba SC's players listen to instructions by the team's coaching panel when they participated in a recent training session in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: COURTESY OF SIMBA SC

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

TANZANIA'S Simba SC is 180 minutes away from qualifying to the 2020/21 CAF Champions League group stage for the third time when the squad takes on FC Platinum of Zimbabwe in the first leg of the first round to be played at National Stadium in Harare today from 5pm.

The Mainland Tanzania Premier League champions secured their place in the first round with a 1-0 aggregate victory over Nigerian side Plateau United, winning 1-0 in the first leg in Jos before a 0-0 home draw with the latter at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam.

The FC Platinum, Zimbabwe champions, have Tanzanian striker, Elias Maguri, on their

books.

They dispatched Mozambique's Costa do Sol 4-1 on aggregate in the preliminary stage.

The outfit is eyeing a third straight CAF Champions League group stage qualification.

Simba SC's head coach Sven Vandebroek has a squad of 24 players for selection but he will miss the services of Ghanaian attacking midfielder Bernard Morrison who was left behind in Dar es Salaam.

New signing, Ugandan midfielder Taddeo Lwanga, remains doubtful due to the uncertainty surrounding his registration status for this competition.

The return leg will be played in Dar es Salaam on January 6. The 16 aggregate winners from all first round ties will advance into the group stage where they will be divided up into

four groups of four.

The group stage's round-robin matches will be played from May to July, while the 16 losers in the first round will drop into the CAF Confederation Cup playoff round.

Qualifying for the CAF Champions League group stage is at the top of the agenda for Simba SC this season and with good reason, the financial rewards are lucrative.

Teams are guaranteed millions for just reaching the group stage and after that, results, as well as television money, dictate what the final prize fund will be at the end of it all. Group stage qualification guarantees \$550,000.

According to the club's chairman, Mwina Kaduguda, after reaching the quarterfinals in 2019, they are targeting a place in the semi-finals which comes with a monetary reward of

\$875,000. Winners of the league were normally rewarded with \$2.5 million as the prize money, but reports are suggesting that the new prize money will be increased to \$4 million.

In a related development, Tanzania's representatives in the CAF Confederation Cup, Namungo FC, has capitalised on home advantage in a 4pm kick off against Sudan's Al Hilal Obeid at Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam before completing the mission next week in Sudan.

Namungo FC qualified for the first round of the competition as South Sudan Football Association (SSFA) failed to secure the tickets for the match day officials for the return pitting South Sudan's Al Rabita against Namungo FC.

The continental football governing board, CAF, handed Namungo FC a walkover. They had a 3-0 first leg advantage.

TONIGHT @ 7:00

EATV SAA 1

WEDNESDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Weekend Movie (r)
13:30 Kali Za Wana
14:00 Planet Bongo (r)
14:30 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Nirvana (r)
16:00 Skonga (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 Kibiashara Zaidi

EATV SAA 1
Coverage of the days current events accompanied by interviews with prominent people on diverse topics ranging from national to social interests.

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

Resurgent Ihefu FC dares unbeaten Yanga

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

HOSTS Ihefu FC and Yanga will both be looking to secure maximum points from their final Vodacom Premier League (VPL)'s first phase fixture before the Christmas break when they meet in Mbeya today afternoon.

Yanga enjoy an eight-point lead at the top of the VPL while hosts Ihefu FC despite the squad's recent improved results, it is in the relegation zone as the league reaches the half-way mark.

The league leaders will be looking to extend their unbeaten run to 17 games, while the newly promoted side will be keen to prick Yanga's invincibility before the mid-season break.

Ihefu, who currently lie in 16th place with 13 points, are entering today's contest with confidence after securing back-to-back wins for the first time this season.

In what has been a difficult start to life in the top flight, Ihefu FC's victory against Kinondoni Municipal Council (KMC) FC was only the former's third of the campaign.

In encouraging signs for Ihefu FC new head coach, Zuberi Katwila, who took over following the sacking of Maka Mwalwisi in October after a series of poor results that left them rooted to the bottom of the table, Ihefu have not lost in their last four home games.

Up front, Ihefu FC will be relying on striker, Joseph Kinyozi, who has been a crucial performer for them so far this season with three goals.

Kinyozi seems to be finding his feet following successive goals against Kagera Sugar and KMC FC in the last two games.

Speaking ahead of the game, Yanga's assistant coach Juma Mwambusi said he expects a tough game.

He stated: "We expect a tough game, Ihefu have shown improvement, they are coming on the back of two successive victories."

"They are motivated to deny us the three points, they are ready to fight to stop us. Our target is three points in every game, we have our targets. Our players understand this and are ready for the battle, we are well prepared."

Wednesday afternoon also sees two other intriguing matches, Mtibwa Sugar will host Dodoma Jiji FC in Morogoro while KMC FC travel to Dodoma to take on relegation threatened JKT Tanzania.

Morocco confident of Namungo FC's victory over Al Hilal Obeid

By Correspondent Nassir Nchimbi

TANZANIA'S Namungo FC head coach, Hemed Suleiman 'Morocco', has said he is not worried about today's CAF Confederation Cup match between his side and Sudan's Al Hilal Obeid as he is confident the former will post victory over the latter and have a good chance to advance to the next stage.

Namungo FC hosts the Sudan club in the first leg of the first round of the competition at the Azam Complex in Dar es Salaam.

The Lindi-based team will face their opponents in the return leg in Khartoum on January 5.

Morocco, who was training his team in Zanzibar in readiness for today's clash, said his players are fit and ready to fight for victory in the first game against their opponents.

Speaking to The Guardian, he



Namungo FC head coach, Hemed Suleiman.

said that the friendly matches they have played in the Isles have added quality in his players and he believes that they will be able to start well against their opponents, who so far do not know what

approach the former will use.

He disclosed: "We won a friendly match against Mafunzo and we then beat Zimamoto, the main thing for us is that these matches have bolstered our confidence, we will take the pitch whilst hoping we will get a convincing victory."

Namungo FC advanced to the first round of the tournament after CAF had cancelled the outfit's re-match against Al Rabita of South Sudan in the preliminary stage.

The clash, which was scheduled to be played at the Azam Complex, did not take place because, according to CAF, the South Sudan Football Association (SSFA) failed to fulfill conditions for holding the tie, which had Al Rabita serving as hosts.

The continental football governing body, therefore, declared Namungo FC winners and the team, who recorded 3-0 victory over Al Rabita in the first leg,

made it to the first round.

The first leg, which took place at the same venue on November 28, ended with Namungo FC posting the 3-0 victory, with Stephen Sey scoring a brace on the 19th and 38th minutes while the third goal was scored by Shiza Kichuya on the 63rd minute.

The re-match was originally to be played in South Sudan but Al Rabita through SSFA requested that it should be played in Dar es Salaam due to lack of a stadium that meets the requirements of the world football governing body, FIFA, and CAF in South Sudan.

Another reason was the continuation of border closure due to the COVID-19 crisis and insecurity in the country and the request was approved by CAF.

Morogoro junior tennis coach impressed by players' performance

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

MOROGORO'S junior tennis coach, Harun Michael, has said he is delighted with the level of performance shown by his players at various events, which took place in various parts of the country this year.

Michael issued the statement in an interview yesterday after his players performed well at this year's Jubilee junior tennis tournament which was held at Arusha Gymkhana Club (AGC) from December 19-20.

The tournament attracted more than 60 junior tennis players and Morogoro was represented by Rajab Abdallah, Lamak Musaji, Sabra Waziri, Hassan Mfaume and Rajabu Mussa.

"I'm happy with tennis development in the country, especially in Morogoro where I'm drilling the players, I train more than 60 juniors and they have been performing well at various events in the country and my plan is to see to it that the region produces many players who can represent the

country at international events," he said.

He said the Jubilee junior tennis tournament had Musaji emerging as winner in U-8 boys category while Waziri was runner-up in the same age group in girls category.

Mfaume was runner-up in boys U-14 singles, Abdallah lost in the U-18 singles quarterfinals.

"The just ended Arusha event was very competitive but I'm happy with the performance showcased by my

players, they did well, Musaji was at his best as he won in the U-8 boys' category, this is not the first time that he performed well, he did the same at the BQ Open tournament which was held at Dar es Salaam Gymkhana Club (DGC), I can see a great player in him," he said.

At the Jubilee junior tennis tournament, which is an annual feature, players competed in the U-6, U-8, U-10, U-12, U-14, U-16 and U-18.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

