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TANZANIA

SATURDAY 30 MAY, 2020

DIPLOMACY



FRENCH ENVOY LAUDS TANZANIA ON COVID-19 EFFORTS PAGE 3

AGRICULTURE



CALL ON MORE INVESTMENT IN PRODUCTION OF EDIBLE OIL PAGE 4

POLICY



WHO APPEALS FOR COMPREHENSIVE TOBACCO CONTROL POLICIES PAGE 5

TRADE



Z'BAR TO CONSTRUCT SEAWEED PROCESSING FACTORY PAGE 6



Mamelodi Baptist Church will not reopen owing to 'unacceptably high' infection rate in Tshwane

From 2,500 to 15 guests is how this couple scaled down their wedding amid Covid-19



Monkeys cause stir, grabbing COVID-19 hospital samples

LUCKNOW, India

A TROOP of monkeys in India attacked a medical official and snatched away blood samples of patients who had tested positive for the novel coronavirus.



No evidence has been found that monkeys can contract the infection

authorities said on Friday.

The attack occurred this week when a laboratory technician was walking in the campus of a state-run medical college in Meerut, 460 km north of Lucknow, capital of Uttar Pradesh state.

"Monkeys grabbed and fled with the blood samples of four Covid-19 patients who are undergoing treatment ... we had to take their blood samples again," said Dr S. K. Garg, a top official at the college.

Authorities said they were not clear if the monkeys had spilled the blood samples, but people living near the leafy campus feared further spread of the virus if the monkeys carried the samples into residential areas.

Garg said it was not clear if the monkeys could contract the coronavirus if they came into contact with infected blood.

"No evidence has been found that monkeys can contract the infection," said

TURN TO PAGE 2

HESLB paying out 122bn/- to reopening colleges, varsities



President John Magufuli chips in yesterday as preparations for the construction of an office building at Chamwino State House in suburban Dodoma got under way yesterday. He was on a routine tour of the project. Photo: State House

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

DISBURSEMENTS from the Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB) have reached a total of 122.8bn/- in tuition, meals and accommodation to various higher learning institutions as learning facilities gear for reopening on Monday

Addressing a press conference at the University of Dodoma (UDOM) yesterday, HESLB Executive Director Abdul-Razaq Badru said the amount has been disbursed to 81 higher learning institutions for 132,119 beneficiaries.

He said the board disbursed 63.7bn/- for meals and accommodation and another 59.1bn/- for tuition fees between 21st and 29th May 2020. This is payment for the third quarter of sixty days from 1st June to 30th July, 2020.

At the time higher learning institutions were closed owing to the COVID-19 threat, payment for the second quarter had been made, with

TURN TO PAGE 2



We encourage students to play their roles effectively by signing the relevant documents to allow them get the money as soon as possible

Zitto handed one-year term outside prisons, seditious writing ban

By Guardian Reporter

KIGOMA Urban legislator Zitto Kabwe, Leader of the opposition Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), was yesterday handed a one-year ban of not writing seditious remarks after he was found guilty on all three counts of sedition.

It was in addition to the non-custodial

TURN TO PAGE 2



"The court is sentencing you to a one-year non-custodial jail term with the condition of not uttering or publishing seditious word within the period elsewhere, including in the social media

UN appoints Mulamula to its peace building fund sixth advisory group

By Guardian Reporter

CAREER diplomat and foreign service administrator Liberata Mulamula (pictured) is among ten eminent individuals picked to serve in the United Nations sixth advisory group for two years.

A UN statement said yesterday that Secretary General António



Guterres made this appointment taking into consideration gender and regional balance as well as the terms of reference of the peace building fund adopted by the General Assembly.

Ambassador Mulamula, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, East

TURN TO PAGE 2

SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

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

FACT 1 Diseases can make anyone sick regardless of their race or ethnicity.

Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can cause people to avoid or reject others even though they are not at risk for spreading the virus.

FACT 2 For most people, the immediate risk of becoming seriously ill from the virus that causes COVID-19 is thought to be low.

Older adults and people of any age who have serious underlying medical conditions may be at higher risk for more serious complications from COVID-19.

FACT 3 Someone who has completed quarantine or has been released from isolation does not pose a risk of infection to other people.

For up-to-date information, visit CDC's coronavirus disease 2019 web page.



03/20/20 03/20/20

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

- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, especially after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.

- Stay home when you are sick.

- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.

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

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

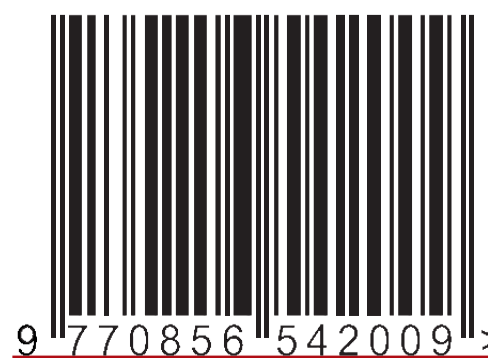
Seek medical advice if you

- Develop symptoms

AND

- Have been in close contact with a person known to have COVID-19 or if you live in or have recently been in an area with ongoing spread of COVID-19.

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



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HESLB pays out 122bn/- to reopening of varsities and colleges

FROM PAGE 1

payments for the fourth quarter expected to be effected at the start of July.

"Let me inform higher learning institutions loan beneficiaries that HESLB has disbursed money ahead of reopening next week. My plea to them is that they should sign the relevant forms as soon as possible and continue with learning activities," the director asserted.

In an effort to sort out challenges that might arise in connection with the distribution of the money to students, HESLB has sent loan officers in the various institutions to help speed up the process and ensure payments are done on time, he said.

"We encourage students to play their roles effectively by signing the relevant documents to allow them get the money as soon as possible," he reiterated.

Higher learning institutions must ensure students are paid as soon as possible, that the money is not directed for other purposes other than paying students, he emphasised.

Speaking at the meeting, University of Dodoma Vice Chancellor Prof Faustine Bee said the university is well prepared to receive students. Registration for the new learning semester after the COVID-19 break started yesterday, he stated.

Underlining that UDOM will adhere to directives issued by the health ministry, he urged students to stick to the same, noting that plans are ready to ensure water buckets and soap are located at all the relevant points.

Prof Bee told students to wear masks all the time, indicating also that UDOM will soon start making masks to make them available to those who have problems purchasing them.

"I appeal to students to sign the relevant loan forms as soon as possible in order to get their money for upkeep and tuition fees on time," he said.

Tanzania Higher Learning Institutions Students Organization (TAHLISO) chairman, Peter Nibuye lauded the government for the decision to reopen higher learning institutions, urging fellow students to timely sign the relevant forms.

Those who have registered for digital disbursement of money should not change their phone numbers as doing so might delay payment, leading to unnecessary blame on the institutions or the HESLB authorities, he cautioned.

HESLB had confirmed disbursement of money to TAHLISO, and thus the union is not ready to cooperate with students who fail to sign the forms on time, the students' leader added.

Zitto handed one-year term outside prisons, seditious writing ban



Zitto Kabwe (R), Leader of the opposition Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), leaves Dar es Salaam's Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court yesterday shortly after being convicted for seditious and ordered to refrain from making seditious statements for one year. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala.

FROM PAGE 1

sentence lasting one year, handed down by Magistrate Huruma Shaidi of Dar es Salaam's Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court.

FROM PAGE 1

Garg.

The virus is believed to have jumped from animals into people in a wildlife market in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last

Magistrate Shaidi said in his judgment that the ACT Wazalendo leader was nailed by witnesses' explanations.

He said the court was satisfied by evidence produced by 15 prosecution witnesses. Zitto

failed to defend his seditious statements, the magistrate indicated.

"The court is satisfied that the defendant failed to defend his statements in which he claimed that 100 people had

been killed by the police in clashes between herders and the officers in his western home region of Kigoma," he declared.

The MP's seditious statements were too strong and accusative and that can be differently

translated or understood by common citizens, the magistrate underlined.

"The court is sentencing you to a one-year non-custodial jail term with the condition of not uttering or publishing seditious word within the period elsewhere, including in the social media," he said in his sentencing.

He warned him that he will one day be jailed, giving an example of his recent statement that the Kisutu Resident Magistrates Court has now become the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA).

He said doors will be open for 30 days if any of the parties want to file an appeal against the judgement.

The prosecution side led by senior state attorneys Renatus Mkude and Wankyo Simon requested the court to sentence him so that the punishment serves as a warning to others.

Kabwe's lawyer, Frank Mwakibolwa, appealed to the court to consider lessening the punishments because the lawmaker's family depends on him to provide daily requirements, and that he has committed the offence for the first time.

Mwakibolwa was assisted by advocate Jebra Kambole and Bonifacia Mapunda.

In the case, the prosecution alleged that the MP committed the offences on October 28, 2018 at Kijitonyama within Kinondoni District in Dar es Salaam, while holding a press conference at the ACT-Wazalendo Headquarters.

With intent to bring hatred to the citizens of the United Republic of Tanzania against the lawful authority of the government, the leader of the opposition party is alleged to have uttered several seditious words against the Tanzania Police Force.

Monkeys steal Covid-19 blood samples in India

FROM PAGE 1

Garg.

The virus is believed to have jumped from animals into people in a wildlife market in the Chinese city of Wuhan late last

year. India has had 165,799 cases of the coronavirus and 4,706 deaths.

Monkeys have been increasingly straying into human settlements in India and causing

disturbances, even attacking people. Environmentalists say the destruction of natural habi-

tat is the main reason the animals move into urban areas in search of food.



Shinyanga Regional Police Commander Deborah Magiligimba leads officers under her command yesterday in inspecting a bus plying the Mwanza-Mbeya route after it was involved in an accident at Ngaganulwa-Usanda in Shinyanga District in which seven people were injured. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

Clean air is flowing the world over, but environmentalists not happy yet

By Yasmin Tayag

AS the coronavirus disease (Covid-19) brings life to a virtual standstill in cities under strict lockdown, a once-familiar sight is making a welcome return: clear blue skies together with fresh air and the melodies of birdsong.

The surreal juxtaposition of nature's wrath and beauty is perhaps most poignant in India, home to 14 of the 20 cities in the world with the

most hazardous air and currently under complete lockdown.

The New York Times reports that the Indian capital, New Delhi, measured an air quality index of 38 last week, while citizens there are used to a standard of about 150. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, a "good" AQI falls between 0 and 50.

Sick people say they are using their inhalers less, and Venus - the Earth's 'sister planet' - can be seen

in the night sky.

Similar patterns have been observed in the UK, where levels of the harmful pollutant nitrogen dioxide have dropped up to 60 per cent compared to the same period last year, reports the BBC. These reductions are being chalked up to the decrease in traffic on once-busy roadways.

The same goes for parts of the United States, China and Italy. As early as February, scientists with

NASA's Earth Observatory noted a dip in nitrogen dioxide, first over Wuhan, then the rest of the country.

It's heartening to imagine what possibilities collective action holds for climate change, but today's clear skies come with a steep cost: an economic crisis that has left millions without jobs. When cities reopen, the challenge we'll all face is figuring out how to maintain the positive effects of lockdown on pollution while rebuilding a healthy economy.

UN appoints Mulamula to peace building fund sixth advisory group

FROM PAGE 1

Africa and International Cooperation since May 2015, earlier served as envoy to the United States.

Others picked for the UN advisory group or panel, similarly nominated by member states including countries contributing to the fund, include Ambassador Anne Anderson from Ireland and Prof Emmanuel Asante from Ghana, who is also chairman of the country's National Peace Council.

Others are Ambassador Lise Filiatrault of Canada; Johannes Oljelund, Director-General for International Development Cooperation in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Sweden, and Sara Pantuliano who is Chief Executive of the Overseas Development Institute of the United Kingdom.

Stéphane Rey, Head of Peace Policy and Deputy Head of the Human Security Division in the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Switzerland also features. Others are Ambassador Gert Rosenthal of Guatemala and Marriët Schuurman, Director of the Department of Stability and Humanitarian Aid in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the Netherlands. Ambassador Hanns Heinrich Schumacher of Germany is also included.

The UN statement cited remarks from Guterres that the unprecedented crisis caused by the Covid-19 pandemic requires sustained investment in

peace building now more than ever. "Countries already affected by violent conflict or the risk thereof need support to adjust to the shock that the pandemic may cause on existing situations," he said.

Without peace and security, access to health and humanitarian services is severely undermined hence the need to consolidate opportunities to build peace, the statement underlined.

The United Nations peace building fund is the organization's financial instrument of first resort to sustain peace in countries or situations at risk or affected by violent conflict.

From 2006 to 2017, the fund approved a total of \$ 772m to 41 recipient countries, and from 2017 to 2019, it scaled up its commitments by approving \$ 531m for 51 countries.

The peace building fund is designed to support programming that needs to be started quickly and flexibly where required.

The Peace building fund's new strategy for 2020-24 is designed to bolster the fund with a target of \$ 1.5 billion in financing for peace building, the most ambitious strategy for the fund to date.

The SG also expressed gratitude to members of the fifth advisory group who ended their tenure in March 2020 for their advice and support which has considerably strengthened the impact of the fund globally.

Zanzibar to form special unit to fight natural resources plunder

By Guardian Reporter, Unguja

ZANZIBAR government is set to form a special patrol team to heighten the fight against people who are behind plundering natural resources such as forests and sand in the Indian Ocean Archipelago.

Minister for Agriculture, Natural Resources, Livestock and Fisheries, Mmanga Mjenjo Mjawiri said this here yesterday when responding to issues raised by members of the House of Representatives when debating the ministry's budget for the 2020/21 fiscal year.

According to him, the government is finalizing talks with the government's security forces on the establishment of the patrol task-force.

He said that the patrol team is much needed now as there has been an increase of incidents where people invade various reserve areas including forests and sand places something which poses great risk to the environment safety.

"We have received a lot

of complaints from the public on the presence of people invading rivers and streams to steal sands especially during nights, forests are also much invaded," he said.

Debating, some of the members urged the government to form the taskforce which will be able to conduct regular patrols to fight massive destruction of environment.

For his part, Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Special Departments), Haji Omar Kheir said that environmental degradation including sand harvesting in restricted areas is one of the major challenges facing various areas in both urban and rural areas.

"With this trend, having a special patrol team is vital, people have invaded a number of protected areas," he said.

The House of Representatives later approved the ministry budget proposal amount to 129.86bn/- for the 2020/21 financial year. The funds are for the recurrent expenditure and development projects.



Mwanza regional commissioner John Mongella (with face mask) has a first-hand account yesterday of the construction of a Kwimba District hospital at Icheja. Photo: Correspondent Neema Emmanuel

French envoy lauds Tanzania on fighting against Covid-19

By Guardian Reporter

THE French Ambassador in the country Frederic Clavier has lauded Tanzania for the steps it has taken in the fight against Covid-19.

Amb Clavier gave the praise when he met with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and

East African Cooperation, Prof Palamagamba Kabudi.

Ambassador Clavier assured Prof Kabudi that France supports Tanzania 100 percent for the steps it has taken against the pandemic and that his country will extend to Tanzania euro 30 million low interest loan with easy conditions for its efforts

against the disease and revamp the economy.

In their discussions Prof Kabudi explained to the French envoy on the efforts taken by the government against the pandemic and assured him Tanzania's readiness towards those efforts and added that the steps taken commensurate with the country's obtaining

situation.

The minister said steps taken by Tanzania enabled Tanzanians continue with their daily lives without affecting their economic wellbeing while at the same time adhering to guidelines given by the country's health experts.

Ambassador Clavier told the minister that France has also

given USD 500,000 assistance towards 6,000 small farmers to improve their activities including building of storage silos for their crops.

He said the president of France has addressed G20 countries and those in the Paris Club to persuade them delay debts and interest payment and if possible to

forgive some of them altogether to revamp the economies that have been adversely affected by Covid-19 pandemic in the developing countries.

Meanwhile Prof Kabudi met and said farewell to the Turkish ambassador Ali Davutaglu whose tenure has ended and wished him good life, adding that he expects

him to be Tanzania's voluntary envoy in Turkey and other countries. On his part, Ambassador Davutaglu thanked Tanzania government for its cooperation it accorded to him when executing his duties in the country and promised the existing cooperation will be continued by his successor.

Kigwangalla launches tourism promo as country reopening doors to tourists

By Getrude Mbago

NATURAL Resources and Tourism minister Dr Hamisi Kigwangalla yesterday launched a new Tanzania Unforgettable Tourist Destination promotion video as the country re-opens doors for tourists amid Covid-19 pandemic.

Speaking during the launch in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Kigwangalla said that some countries began to remove lockdowns and travel restrictions; the government has seen it better to continue welcoming tourists so as to bring the tourism industry back to its normal place.

He said that the new video showcase various attractions which Tanzanian has been blessed with, providing opportunity for tourists and guests to decide where they would like to visit.

"At present the global tourism market is full of competition especially in this time when the Covid-19 tragedy has severely affected tourism-related activities across the globe. This destination video we have launched today is vital to the future of our tourism sector as we want to ensure that the positive and wonderful image of our country continues to remain in the hearts and minds of tourists and travelers," he said.

The minister said that along with receiving tourists from various parts of the World, Tanzania will ensure that all precaution measures against Covid-19 spread are adhered to when serving the guests as per guidelines from World Health Organisation (WHO) and the country's ministry of health.

"As you heard from our President John Magufuli, Tanzania has re-opened and it is ready to welcome visitors to experience its unforgettable wonders. I would like to remind anyone offering services to tourists to adhere to all instructions highlighted in the tourism guideline which was launched recently by ensuring that safety of our customers

remains a top priority," he said.

For her part, managing director of the Tanzania Tourist Board (TTB) Devota Mdachi said that through the video tourists will be able to see many facets Tanzania's tourism has which include forests, wildlife, beaches, lakes, islands, waterfalls, mountains, history, culture and heritage.



CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR FUND MANAGEMENT AND MENTORING SERVICES IN COMMUNITY LEVEL FORESTRY RELATED BUSINESSES

The Forestry and Value Chains Development Programme (FORVAC) is a 4-year Programme funded by the Governments of Tanzania and Finland. The implementing agency of the programme is the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania.

FORVAC aims to increase economic, social and environmental benefits from forests and woodlands while reducing deforestation. FORVAC focuses on forest value chains development based on production of timber, charcoal and non-wood forest products (NWFP) in the Village Land Forest Reserves.

Currently, FORVAC is looking for a service provider to support forest-related rural micro enterprises and other small scale business initiatives in the districts of Handeni, Liwale and Songea. We are now looking for a reputable Tanzanian organization to provide services for grant management and mentoring in community level forestry related businesses.

For more details, see the specifications and application instructions (ToR) on our website (www.forvac.or.tz).

Deadline for the proposals is 18 June 2020.



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KILIMANJARO DRINKING WATER IS THE WATER YOU CAN TRUST EVERYDAY!



Simanjoro District Council chairman Jackson Sipitiek pictured yesterday opening a meeting for councillors called to discuss the Controller and Auditor General's report for financial year 2018/2019 which shows the council as having received a clean audit. He is flanked by Manyara regional commissioner Alexander Mnyeti (L) and the council's vice chairman, Sendu Laizer. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

Invest in production of edible oil, Kairuki says

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

TANZANIANS have been urged to invest in edible oil production taking into consideration the availability of domestic and foreign market.

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Investment) Angellah Kairuki made the call on Thursday during her inspection visit of sunshine factory producing sunflower oil of 'Sunbelt' brand located in Zuzu area in Dodoma City.

The minister (pictured) congratulated the investment in the factory that has a capacity to produce 25 tonnes of sunflower oil per day and whose investment had cost 230b/-.

"I congratulate you for the big investment in this area since 2015 and this provides impetus for local investors in grabbing the opportunity to produce edible oil from sunflower seeds.

She also called on Tanzania to also take the opportunity in the cultivation of sunflower due to the great demand of edible oil in the country which has been spending over 443b/- every year to import edible oil.

She also used the opportunity to plead with agricultural experts to educate the public on better farming methods of the crop.

Sunshine's commercial and Development Manager Krishna Urs said the challenge they face is the shortage of raw materials and called on stakeholders to use the opportunity to cultivate the sunflower crop to satisfy market needs.

The factory's Standard Officer Upendo Mganda lauded the investment saying it has managed to offer employment to many people.

She added that the edible oil produced by the factory is doing well in the market as it does not contain chemicals that could be hazardous to the health of consumers.



Zanzibar Industry minister urges farmers to engage more in spice cultivation

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR Minister for Industry, Trade and Marketing, Ambassador Amina Salum Ali has challenged farmers to massively engage in spices cultivation due to high demand of the products within and outside the country.

Ambassador Ali made the statement yesterday when speaking at the ongoing meeting of the House of Representatives

whereas she informed that the demand is also high for oiliness products made from variety plants and vegetables that are available in the Isles.

According to her, buyers have showed interest in purchasing oils made from cinnamon, Eucalyptus, cloves and several other vegetables.

She said maintenance of the Pemba Clove Oil Distillery which operates under the Zan-

zibar State Trading Corporation (ZSTC) will boost oil production to 300 tonnes. She said the distillery turns clove stems into essential oil that are marketed in and outside Tanzania.

Ali noted that the government secured a loan from an Indonesian company-INDESSO for construction of a factory in Pemba that will be making oil from various agricultural goods. She said the factory 'Mgelema' is

expected to produce 300 tonnes of oil per year.

"It is high time that farmers engage in cultivation of spices and other vegetables that are used to make oil. There are ready markets for these products," she stressed.

The ministry is now working to encourage farmers to establish groups for commercial farming of spices, she said adding the government will assist

them in establishing demonstration farms where interested groups can learn new ways of cultivating the crops.

The ambassador informed that the government is finalising processes for establishment of eucalyptus farms at Chamanagwe and Micheweni areas in Unguja North Region.

She said the farms are expected to produce enough raw materials for two oil making factories

in Pemba. Apart from turning clove stems into essential oil, the industry occasionally produces eucalyptus, cinnamon and lemongrass oiliness, he noted.

In 2018, Zanzibar produced only 60 tonnes of clove buds against the investor's demand of 2,000 tonnes of clove buds and 1,000 tonnes of eucalyptus, annually.

Zanzibar is the only place in East Africa which produces oil

from spices and clove stems.

Zanzibar was leading in spices production in between 1960s and 1970s. The Isles were popular for making coconut oils which were exported to a number of countries in the world.

Some of the most spice crops produced for the local and export markets are clove, pepper, chillies, cinnamon, cardamom, ginger, coriander, vanilla, garlic, lemongrass and red onions.

Ease govt's burden on prisoners' upkeep - PS

By Guardian Reporter, Morogoro

THE Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Home Affairs, Christopher Kadio, has called upon the Correctional Services Department to prepare a strategic plan that will enable the government to reduce its burden on prisoners' upkeep inside the prisons.

He also said the department should ensure inmates whose sentences were commuted to do communal work perform their duties that are recognised and appreciated by stakeholders.

Kadio said by implementing the directive, stakeholders will appreciate the benefit from prisoners who serve their time outside the prisons instead of merely doing office chores.

He was speaking here mid this week when opening a two-day meeting that brought together senior officials of the department from the country's 23 regions.

He said some inmates can serve their times outside the prisons hence it's appropriate time for the department to have a solution to the challenge.

"There is this age-long concept - that a punishment for every prisoner is for him/her to go to jail, the concept of alternative punishment has not yet dwelt in the minds of many," he said.

He added: "This concept is found in almost all sectors in the society starting at the courts - some magistrates still hesitate giving sentence to a criminal to do community service outside the prison's walls."

He explained that in the rural communities they still do not see the importance of implementing their responsibility in the correction of their relatives who involve themselves in criminal acts, and added that even political leaders have not yet been drumming up the issue.

He said apart from numerous challenges facing the department in its performance, he called upon them to find solutions thereon instead of waiting for the government to do so.

"You have the responsibility in contributing to the ministry's achievement so as it attains its national goals," he added.

The department's Secretary Aloyce Musika said the aim of the meeting is to make an assessment on the year's performance, and to plan for the coming year.



Residents of Chipogolo village in Dodoma Region wait for customers for their gravel, as found yesterday. The going price was 1,000/- per bucket. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

Ulega urges govt offices to use locally produced milk

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

DEPUTY Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Abdallah Ulega has appealed to all government offices and other stakeholders in the country to use milk produced by the country's livestock instead of imported tinned milk.

Ulega issued the appeal here yesterday when officiating at the celebrations to mark Milk Week

held at national level in Dodoma and whose climax is slated for June 1 this year.

He said drinking milk produced in the country will spur economic growth and to individual citizens.

"It is a big shame to see government offices using imported tinned milk, I say so because today if you enter any government office you will find tinned milk, why can't we use our own milk?"

he queried.

He also called upon Tanzanians in general to prefer using locally produced goods including milk so as to provide them with markets.

He said statistics show that as a nation we are far below globally in milk drinking whereas in one year a Tanzanian drinks an average of 54 litres while he is supposed to at least drink 200 litres.

He said statistics also show that

regionally a person is supposed to drink 74 litres of milk in a year while Tanzania has a capacity to produce 3 billion litres of milk a year.

Ulega said if milk drinking is strictly adhered to by all Tanzanians the national industrial economy will go up.

He said the dairy sector is an enabling sector for Tanzania's economy hence deliberate efforts are

needed to ensure milk drinking is adhered to by all Tanzanians.

The Ag Registrar of the Dairy Board Dr Sophia Mlote said the Board has reviewed the 2004 Dairy Act to go in tandem with today's needs so as to make it spur development in the entire value chain. She however said the board is faced with various challenges including the collection and transportation of the product.

There is this age-long concept – that a punishment for every prisoner is for him/her to go to jail, the concept of alternative punishment has not yet dwelt in the minds of many

Councillors in Sikonge urge IWMA to use EFD machines in collection of levy

By Guardian Correspondent, Tabora

COUNCILLORS of Sikonge District Council have asked Tabora Regional authorities to instruct Ipole Wildlife Management Areas (IWMA) to use electronic fiscal devices (EFD) machines for collecting its various levies.

The call was made yesterday by the Council's chairman Peter Nzalalila during the councillors meeting for the year's third-quarter.

He said it would be better for the regional authorities to assist in removing the problem in IWMA for not using EFD machines for levies collection to ensure the government receives the right revenue.

Nzalalila said IWMA should be forced to use the EFDs instead of handwritten receipts.

Tabora Regional Administrative Secretary (RAS) Msalika Makungu said the government had already instructed that all government revenue to be collected via electronic machines.

He said he will communicate with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism to ensure it introduces EFD machines to protect government revenue.

Makungu added that in areas that use the EFD system in tax collection, government revenue has gone up thrice as much as it was when handwritten receipts were used.

He stressed that he will follow up the issue to find a solution thereon as quickly as possible and would give them a response during the next councillors meeting.



Makungu added that in areas that use the EFD system in tax collection, government revenue has gone up thrice as much as it was when handwritten receipts were used



Judy Laizer (R), secretary of the CCM women's wing in Longido District, presents working tools to the wing's 19 ward secretaries on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

TAS offers medical aid to PWAs in nine regions

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

THE Tanzania Albino Society (TAS) has provided nine sets of medical aids valued at 72m/- to people with albinism in nine regions of the country.

TAS chairman Mussa Kabimba said each region will receive one set that includes lotion against skin cancer valued at 8m/- and added that the exercise began with Morogoro Municipality.

He said the acquisition of the items follows TAS's own efforts and has asked the government to make the issue as a policy so as to ensure their availability considering that more than 75 percent of people with albinism come from poor families in rural areas.

He said the government should also look into the possibility of establishing a factory for making skin lotions that would be sold locally as well as for export.

"At Ocean Road (Hospital) we also treat people with albinism from neighbouring countries of Congo DRC, Rwanda and Uganda hence if we had such factory we could also sell the lotion to these countries and increase the national income," Kabimba said.

He said skin cancer treatment is available at only three hospitals in the country - Ocean Road, KCMC and Muhimbili and

for a patient to access these facilities he will have to spend a lot of money and time.

Morogoro TAS chairman Hassan Mikazi urged people with albinism to come out in big numbers for the items that are given for free at TAS regional office.

He said they target to reach 100 people with albinism living in Morogoro Municipality to receive skin cancer screening,

providing them with the lotion, masks and sanitisers for their protection against Covid-19 infection.

Skin cancer doctor from Morogoro Region Referral Hospital, Dr Janeth Peter said already 30 people with albinism have already received skin cancer screening during the first day and only two people were found to have signs of skin cancer.

Dr Peter said in their clinics they teach the patients to iden-

tify early signs of skin cancer including touching the skin, and if it's hard then it is a bad sign and should go to the nearest health centre.

Phabian Nestory (24) who resides at Sabasaba Ward in Morogoro Municipality, and Jamila Aboubakar (35) a Kandege resident at different times said they thank TAS for their ongoing efforts in making sure people with albinism receive medi-

cal aids for them.

They said the use of skin lotion day and night ensures that they can fight against skin cancer that is threatening their lives, and appealed to the government to prioritise the lotion's availability.

The nine regions that will start receiving this service include Morogoro, Dar es Salaam, Lindi, Singida, Dodoma, Tanga, Mara, Iringa and Zanzibar.

WHO calls upon all govts to implement policies on control of abuse of tobacco

By Guardian Reporter

THE World Health Organisation (WHO) has called upon all governments to implement comprehensive tobacco control policies, as outlined in the WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control to save lives and reduce health-care costs.

The call comes as the World commemorates No Tobacco Day which is observed in May 31, every year.

In a statement availed to the media yesterday, WHO Regional Director for Africa, Dr Matshidiso Moeti also called upon parents, caregivers and teachers to educate children on the harms of tobacco products use and advocate for 100 percent smoke-free public places and banning all forms of tobacco advertising.

He said that the use of tobacco is a leading risk factor for some serious non-communicable diseases such as lung diseases and was also damaging national economic development. He further urged young people to join the fight against the tobacco epidemic while encouraging youth groups to build a movement for a tobacco-free generation.

"Today, as we observe the World No Tobacco Day, with international solidarity, young people can lead the way by becoming the first tobacco free generation. I urged celebrities and influencers to reject all forms of tobacco industry sponsorship.

Dr Moeti said: "We are launching a global counter-marketing campaign against the tobacco industry's aggressive tactics to attract a new generation of customers. We will need everyone to get on board, to challenge the US\$ 8 billion investment by industry each year in marketing these lethal products."

This year's theme is "protecting youth from industry manipulation" and we are launching a global counter-marketing campaign against the tobacco industry's aggressive tactics to attract a new generation of customers. We will need everyone to get on board, to challenge the US\$ 8 billion investment by industry each year in marketing these lethal products," he said.

Dr Moeti noted that it is clear that tobacco kills half its users and smokers have a higher risk of severe disease and death if infected with COVID-19.

"In the African Region, 94 million men and 13 million women, and one in five adolescents, use tobacco products. Tobacco use is increasing among 13-15-year-old girls and use of tobacco products other than cigarettes is increasing in the region. Every year, 146 000 Africans die from tobacco-related diseases. Illness related to tobacco use accounts for 3.5 percent of annual total health expenditure in the region," he noted.

Dr Moeti said that to combat tobacco-related illnesses and deaths, 26 African countries have banned smoking in public places, among them 10 have implemented comprehensive bans.



A motorist moves across a pond along a damaged section of a road at Msanga Zalala in Dar es Salaam's Chanika suburb earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

'No Covid-19 patient still hospitalised in Ruvuma'

By Guardian Correspondent, Songea

RUVUMA Regional Commissioner Christina Mndeme has said as of May 26 this year there weren't even a single Covid-19 patient at all the eight centres allocated to receive the patients.

Mndeme issued the statement yesterday

when receiving various items for the prevention against Covid-19 infections donated by Refueling Solutions valued at 10.9m/-.

She said the items will be used in the effort against the disease's infections and stressed that the disease still exists in the country. "I ask you to convey our greetings to the entire management of Refueling So-

lutions, we have not received a big donation as this one todate," she said.

She said the donation proves high level of patriotism in contributing to efforts by President John Magufuli in the fight against the pandemic.

Speaking earlier before presenting the items, Refueling Solutions Chief Executive

Officer (CEO) Ahamad Sweya mentioned the items as 35 boxes of masks, 13 thermal scanners, 15 boxes of hand gloves and 100 PPEs for health workers.

Covid-19 is a global plague and more than five million people have been infected so far, 300,000 have died and two million have recovered.



Empty plastic bottles are loaded onto a vehicle at Buguruni in Dar es Salaam yesterday ready for sale and onward recycling. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Zanzibar planning to construct seaweed processing, packaging factory in Pemba

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

ZANZIBAR government is planning to construct a seaweed processing and packaging factory at Chamanangwe in Pemba North Region so as to benefit hundreds of farmers in the Island.

Zanzibar minister for Trade and Industries, Ambassador Amina Salum Ali told the House of Representative as she presented the ministry's budget proposal for 2020/21.

According to her, the government is currently finalizing talks with investors from Indonesia so as to commence the construction of the giant seaweed processing plant in the Isles.

She said that the government is aware of the challenges facing seaweed growers which including unreliable and unpredictable prices but those challenges are going to be tackled after soon after the plant is built.

"The factory will help seaweed growers to harvest the produce and process it locally instead of trans-

porting it as raw materials. Our aim is to see farmers improving their lives and income as they will be sure of the market of their produce," she said.

The minister said that Zanzibar has historically been among the largest producers and exporters of seaweed in the world. It is the third country in Africa.

She hailed women who have invested their efforts to produce seaweed something which has transformed their income and they are no longer economic dependent.

She further wanted seaweed farmers to apply modern farming methods and technologies which including using quality seeds for better harvests.

"Farmers in Pemba have gone one step ahead as they produce quality seaweed that can compete well in the international market," she added. The minister further requested the House of Representative to approve the ministry's budget amounting to 23.57bn/- for the 2020/21 fiscal year.

Morogoro builds ultra-modern conference facility worth 600m/-

By Correspondent Michael Sikapunda, Morogoro

MOROGORO Municipal Council is building ultra-modern conference hall worth 600m/-, with the capacity of accommodating more than 200 people at once.

Morogoro Municipal Director

(MD) Sheila Lukuba said that the new facility will provide room for councilors and other people to meet comfortably as compared to the current situation.

Money for building the facility has been borrowed from the Local Government Loans Board (LGLB)—a government-

supported financial intermediary, which is largely funded from the contributions of LGAs and grants from the central government. The facility is built in two phases, whereby in the first, MMC builds a conference hall with the capacity of hosting 200 people and in the next phase, the council will build an-

other hall with the capacity of hosting 400 people at once. A contractor building the facility, Eng Simon Machibya said that the new facility is adjustable as it provides room for the council to build another hall.

"As contractors, we considered the demand of the council by building a strong foundation

that will be able to carry another hall, without causing any problem to the entire building," said Machibya who works with Corporation Sole Works Superintendent (CSWS)—a construction firm building the MMC conference facility.

He however lauded the municipality for adhering to the

engineers' technical advice and "this is what made us execute this project smoothly. We've reached 96 per cent of construction."

He however suggested the need for local government authorities to adhere to technical advice when executing public projects in their localities.

According to him, there is a growing tendency whereby contractors are intervened by local government leaders, who have no expertise in that area.

"This is a challenge and can compromise the quality of the projects," he said, urging them to adhere to technical advice is- sued by experts.

Committee links poor management in LGAs to frauds, abuses of public funds

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

THE parliamentary standing committee on Local Government Authorities (LGAs) has linked fraud and abuse of public funds in councils with a number of factors including poor management of accounting system, delays and bureaucracies in paying contractors.

The Local Authority Accounts Committee (LAAC) made the revelation yesterday when tabling its report in the National Assembly. It also accused local councils of violating the public procurement regulations and none compliance to the use of POS machines.

The committee chairperson Vedasto Ngombale faulted the councils over poor harmonisation of the EPICOR accounting system.

"Some councils have been withholding NHIF contributions and other statutory charges," said Ngombale adding some of the councils have not been claiming value-added tax (VAT) on projects implemented by development partners.

In its report to the parliament over the annual audit reports of the controller and auditor general for the financial year ending June 2019, LAAC tasked the government to control misuse of public funds in local authorities.

Ngombale said: "Despite the beginning of the use of electronic devices in revenue collection, there are some local government authorities such as Lushoto, Mbulu, Tarime and Siha that are still using hand written receipts to collect revenue".

After tabling the report, a section of MPs demanded explanations from the government over several issues raised including consistency of massive flaws in local government spending due to fraud, financial error and legal claims.

In his report, the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) Charles Kichere revealed massive misuse of public resources done through overpayments, payments without contracts, payments without actual delivery of services or goods and generally disregarding public procurement guidelines in government and its institutions.

Ngombale cited the CAG report for the 2018/19 financial year whereas he said a total of 26 councils received 22.8bn/- in excess from the initially allocated budget.

The amount, according to the committee was a 33 per cent equivalent to the total budget planned for development budget in local councils.

The chairperson noted that some councils face shortage of workforce making it easy to mismanage public funds. He called upon the government to release the development grants on time as specified in the budget allocations.

During the same financial year, at least 157 councils did not receive 556.8bn/- grant for development.

Records shows that in 2015/16 at least 620bn/- or 61 per cent of the grants wasn't released to councils. In the last financial year, some 258.6bn/- was not released affecting the councils' efforts to implement development programmes.

Despite financial errors, the local authorities' accounts committee acknowledged that there have been some improvements in public fund spending among councils across the country.

The committee says the development could be reflected with enhanced social service—not limited—to education, health, security, defence, transportation and logistics.

The overall level of corruption and corruption compliance have also increased, said Ngombale.

A 2019 report by Transparency International indicated that corruption rates in local government authorities dropped to 10 per cent in 2019 from 25 per cent in 2015. Equally the rate in which people provide corruption to access service at local councils has dropped to 18 per cent from 25 per cent during the year under review.



Simanjoro district commissioner Zephania Chaula (2nd-L) presents to Moipo Division's Joseph Mtataiko yesterday one of six motorcycles President John Magufuli has allocated to division-level local government officials in the district as facilitation tools. Photo: Correspondent Gift Thadey

NGO suspends dispensary services, hands over drugs to district council

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

THE Arusha Branch of SOS Children's Villages Tanzania - a non-governmental organisation (NGO) has handed over various drugs to the Arusha District Council for use at District's Hospital at Olturumet after it suspended service at their dispensary.

Speaking at the handover event

the NGO's Acting Project Manager Peterson Joseph said they have provided the drugs to assist the people - the targeted group in order to improve the health of the citizens in the low-income bracket, instead of selling them or returning them to the distributors.

Peterson said the government has made tremendous improvement in the health sector hence his institu-

tion does not see the reason for it to continue providing health services, instead it will use the resources it receives for the wider community.

He also said the running costs were going up as compared to income they were receiving and added that for 2017 they had allocated 123m/- to run the dispensary located in Ngarantoni area but the money they earned was only

34.7m/- while for 2018 only 41.98m/- was earned from 166m/- that was allocated.

Acting District Medical Officer for Arusha District Council said the drugs will be sent to the District Hospital at Olturumet that serves many patients as well as other health centres and dispensaries that are in need.

He said since SOS was not offer-

ing health services on commercial basis and that it was only offering its services to children and the community surrounding it, the government will continue working together with other institutions to serve Tanzanians.

He said they will continue with all services that were being offered by the institution's dispensary.

IFAW deploys wildlife rangers to arrest poaching along Kenya, Tanzania border

By Special Correspondent, Nairobi

AN international wildlife organisation is set to deploy more than 50 community wildlife rangers from Kenya and Tanzania in a joint border patrol in response to a potential risk of poaching.

International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW) regional director for East Africa, James Isiche said the safety of wildlife is paramount in the midst of the deadly pandemic.

Isiche said the patrol sought to ensure the safety of wildlife at risk of being poached because of the lack of visitors and hospitality staff in the area due to the global pandemic, which has impacted the local economy and incomes.

"The role and presence of the community wildlife rangers particularly during this period of the COVID-19 pandemic when operations have been hampered by lack of tourism revenue to sustain them is of paramount importance as they continue to protect wildlife from potential poaching for bush-meat and other wildlife products," Isiche said in a statement.

He said the rangers simultaneously moni-

tored the wildlife-rich landscapes along their respective borderlines while staying within their international boundaries.

"Cross border landscapes are particularly difficult to preserve as would-be poachers take advantage of the fact that they cannot be pursued across the common border after committing their acts. Synchronized patrols such as this one ensure that this is not the case," he added.

Founded in 1969, IFAW is one of the largest animal welfare and conservation charities in the world.

The organisation works to rescue individual animals, safeguard populations, preserve habitat, and advocate for greater protections. Initially, IFAW was meant to scale up efforts to stop the commercial hunt for seal pups on the east coast of Canada.

With offices in 15 countries, and projects in more than 40, IFAW is one of the largest animal welfare organisations in the world. The fund is supported by individual and major corporate donors, the latter including the Disney nature and the Disney Conservation Fund, the Petfinder Foundation and Arctic Fox, among others.



Monduli district commissioner Iddi Kimanta (R) addresses Iikisongo secondary school teachers in the district on Thursday on preparations for next Monday's (June 1) resumption of classes for Form Six students, complete with sensitisation on the Covid-19 pandemic. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

WINDHOEK

AU: Time to boost Africa's food security is now

THE African Union Commission Department of Rural Economy and Agriculture has urged African countries to utilise the Covid-19 phase for boosting food security with agricultural research and innovations.

The Commissioner of the organ Joseph Leonel Correta Sacko said Covid-19 has created an opportunity for Africa to explore contextualized solutions relevant to the continent.

"This is the best time to boost Africa's food security. It presents us with a crisis within a crisis. The science and technology and inno-

vation are a critical agenda now than ever before," she said in her remarks during an e-forum on the contribution of agriculture research and innovation in mitigating the impact of Covid-19 in Africa last week.

She underscored the essence of science in finding solutions to the current crises of climate change and Covid-19 which are likely to negatively impact Africa's food security.

Supporting Correta Sacko, Dr Idrarahim Mayaki, the Chief Executive Officer at Africa Union Devel-

opment Agency (AUDA)-NEPAD said the Covid-19 is a local problem which requires hypothesized native solutions. He warned African countries against shelving local research findings and opting for external results which did not solve the problem.

"We should not push forward other people's agenda but instead push the African agenda so that the continent becomes self-reliant," he said. The Covid-19 pandemic crisis comes at a time where Africa has been deprived of normal agricultural yields due to the effects of

climate change; on the other hand, floods and drought are adversely affecting food production in the southern African region.

During the meeting, a farmer's representative, Elizabeth Nsimadala, who is also the president for the Pan African Farmers Organization (PAFO), also highlighted some of the challenges being experienced by farmers due to Covid-19.

Among the challenges are: lack of farming inputs as stocks could not be delivered at the onset of the farming season due to travel

restrictions imposed as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Nsimadala said there is a need for improved synergies between the extension of research and farming in Africa.

She also appealed for formation of digital platforms in the region where farmers can aggregate, share and utilize data.

"There is a need for African government to ensure that farmers access post-loss harvest funds so that they can recover from unforeseen disruptions. This pandemic should also be a wake-up call for

us to think around how best we can move research from the lab to the farm in order to attain food security for the continent," she said.

The meeting which was held to elicit perspectives and secure buy-in from stakeholders in the continent's agriculture science, technology and innovations saw over 200 representatives across the continent participating.

Among the participants were the CAADP-XP4 implementing organizations. These include the Forum for Agricultural Research in Africa (FARA); the Centre for Co-

ordination of Agriculture Research and Development in Southern Africa (CCARDESA); African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS); West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF), and Association for Strengthening Agricultural Research in Eastern and Central Africa (ASARECA).

The contributions made during the meeting are set to be filtered and used for the development of a complete and detailed road map that sub-regional and continental bodies will follow to fully address the impact of the Covid-19 on the agricultural and research sector.

AfDB accepts independent investigation into Adesina

By Joël Té-Léssia Assoko

THE Office of the Board of Governors of the African Development Bank (AfDB) heeded Washington's call by approving a new investigation into the management of its President, Akinwumi Adesina.

Meeting on the evening of May 26, the Board of Governors Bureau, the body overseeing the AfDB's Ethics Committee, approved the launch of an independent investigation into allegations of whistleblowers regarding the governance of Akinwumi Adesina (pictured), its president.

The decision of the bureau of the board of governors follows a request from the US administration, through Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin, who in a letter on 22 May had requested an independent analysis of the whistleblowers' recriminations and allegations.

The US administration said it had reservations about the process that led the ethics committee on 5 May to reject the whistleblowers' accusations, which were judged to be "unfounded", "unsubstantiated" or "unsubstantiated".

In the aftermath, the Ivorian Minister of Development, Kaba Nialé, considered that the conclusions of the ethics committee exonerated Akinwumi Adesina and proposed to the governors "to adopt the conclusions of the investigation by declaring the president completely exonerated of all allegations made against him".

Kaba Nialé chairs the Bureau of the Board of Governors, whose membership rotates and includes two other representatives of the bank's shareholders: Argentina and Namibia.

Under the Bank's statutes, the Board of Governors is the only body with "the final authority to decide whether or not to act on any complaint or allegation of a breach by the President of the Bank of the provisions of the Code of Conduct".

The Ivorian leader's recommendation of a few weeks ago clearly did not win unanimity within this body.

The decision of the Board of Governors, in the wake of the letter from the US administration, could reinforce, among Adesina's supporters, the suspicion of an American desire to torpedo the AfDB boss's chances of being reappointed to this position in the elections, which have been postponed until the end of August 2020.

A letter from the US law firm Hughes Hubbard & Reed LLP, sent in early February to the chairman of the ethics committee, warned the latter of the need for an independent investigation - which he proposed to "advise" - in accordance with "generally accepted best practices for the conduct of internal investigations in response to complaints from highly confidential whistleblowers".

In their letter, the firm's lawyers recalled that they had previously exchanged views with Steven Dowd, the U.S. Executive Director at the AfDB, whose name has often been mentioned recently - without any formal evidence - as one of the architects of the slingshot against Akinwumi Adesina.

In a statement issued on Wednesday, May 27, the AfDB President said he was "convinced that fair, transparent and just processes that respect the rules, procedures and systems of governance, as well as the rule of law, will ultimately prove that I have never violated the code of ethics of this extraordinary institution".



Division-level local government officials in Shinyanga Region pictured with motorcycles President John Magufuli has gifted them as working tools. This was shortly after a presentation ceremony on Thursday at which Shinyanga commissioner Zainab Telack was chief guest. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

Investing in girls, women's empowerment in Africa

WASHINGTON

THE World Bank Board of Directors has approved \$376 million in additional International Development Association (IDA) financing to build human capital and improve human development outcomes in Africa.

This is the fourth additional financing to the Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend project (SWEDD), a significant regional initiative developed in response to a call for action by the Presidents of Niger, Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Mauritania in 2014.

The newly approved expansion brings the total World Bank investment toward the SWEDD to \$680 million, with an additional EUR 10 million invested in parallel financing by the Agence Française de Développement

(AFD) in Mali.

SWEDD 2 will scale-up activities underway in Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali and Mauritania and expand into two new countries, Cameroon (US\$ 75 million) and Guinea (\$60 million).

"Cameroon's vision for 2035 emphasizes how healthy and well-educated Cameroonians will achieve the country's enormous potential for shared prosperity. However, challenges faced by girls and women today, including child marriage, early and frequent pregnancies as well as early school drop-out, put girls and their future children at heightened risk of poor health outcomes, tremendous loss of educational opportunity and future earnings prospects", said Abdoulaye Seck, World Bank Country Director for Cameroon.

"SWEDD 2 will serve as an instrument for empowering girls and building human capital, initially concentrating on three regions, namely the Far North, North and Adamaoua, where about 700,000 girls 10-19 years of age are vulnerable to these risks."

Overall, the SWEDD 2 will continue to invest in activities that target adolescent girls and their surrounding communities to improve life skills and sexual and reproductive health knowledge among adolescents, keep girls in school, expand economic opportunity and create an enabling environment for girls' social and economic empowerment through the nexus of statutory, religious and customary laws and norms, including through the prevention and improved response to gender based violence. Investments will also enhance last mile delivery

of essential medicines, including access to contraceptives at community level and strengthen the capacity for midwives to deliver services in rural areas to women and adolescent girls.

One important aspect introduced by SWEDD 2 is the enhanced attention to strengthen legal frameworks that promote women's rights to health and education. Activities supported by the project have been identified at both national and regional level through peer consultations between parliamentarians, judges and lawyers in and beyond SWEDD countries. These include reinforcing legislation, strengthening judicial capacity and promoting knowledge and application of existing legislation in communities where harmful practices are highly prevalent.

The Guardian

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Taking A New Look
At The News
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Having Covid-19 vaccine by Dec a 'miracle' well worth celebrating

A SORT of consensus is starting to build up around the world, with a view to expecting an effective vaccine against the novel coronavirus by the end of this year.

This expectation has gained credence after it was reaffirmed by none other than Dr Anthony Fauci, Director of the US National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases.

This is a top scientist known for his cautious scientific attitude, who energetically worked to put the picture right when US President Donald Trump was championing the use of hydroxychloroquine for treating Covid-19 symptoms.

Of course, as happened, the World Health Organisation eventually urged that the idea be discontinued.

The top US epidemiologist said in an interview earlier this week that if all things fall in the right place, the US and the rest of the world might have a vaccine for Covid-19 by November or December.

This announcement also needs to be seen in the shadow of ongoing cut-throat competition for a workable vaccine, which has two sides. One involves a Western scientific alliance, with the US being top financier of an Oxford University-AstraZeneca vaccine development effort, apart from other efforts in the US itself.

The other is work going on in China, which is being regarded with a certain alarm in higher circles of those in the US presidency at the moment, though much of the rest of the world is relaxed about it.

This competition is surely helping to enervate the search for a Covid-19 vaccine but in no way guarantees that the dream will come true within the timeframe espoused. There are teething problems involved in developing vaccines, if history is any guide.

Will Covid-19 certification and temperature screening mean end of quarantine facilities?

STUDENTS are starting to return to college and university campuses following the reported fall in the number of Covid-19 cases around the country.

Not much hospitalisation related to the disease remained as of mid last week, removing impediments to the resumption of activities conducted in large groups like colleges - and hence the decision to permit them again.

However, the government is still wary of 'rogue infections' if the reopening was to be too wide especially for primary schools, which are clearly hard to organise in hygienic terms. Secondary schools will likely fare better.

It is in that spirit that the University of Dar es Salaam has been handed back some of its hostels that for some time served as premises for mandatory quarantine for travellers coming from Covid-19-hit countries.

A total of 844 persons coming from outside were quarantined there for two week periods, before the country's airspace was closed. The hostels are now ready to house students again, this on the basis of affirmations of medical officials who ensured that the premises are adequately decontaminated.

People who will be entering Tanzania in the new situation will no longer need to be quarantined, as they will have medical certification of being free of Covid-19.

At the same time, temperature testing devices provide some sort of bird's eye-view of a person's Covid-19 status in a second. This way, public premises or offices become safer than if only face masks and hand sanitisers were involved - and it also helps pick out any likely cases of infection, were the temperature reading to be excessively high.

At a ceremony to receive back the premises and instruct that students return there, the university's

A top-level expert has publicly observed that the US and the rest of the world have never developed a vaccine against this family of viruses. The reference was clearly to the Serious Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) that broke out in China back in 2012 and is still sending tremors around the globe.

Another variety is the Middle East version of the same disease that broke out around 2014 and still around, but clearly not as wildly expanding as Covid-19 is.

Earlier versions of the SARS plague diminished gradually and didn't spread with ease all over the world, but Covid-19 is worlds different and much more work is being done on the current plague than earlier.

But to say that vaccines for SARS and MERS were not found in the past eight years but a vaccine is likely for Covid-19 is to suggest that researchers did not have adequate financing to put together a credible range of combinations of tests targeting different aspects of the SARS virus in its two distinctive forms.

HIV and AIDS has been around since the early 1980s and still have seen no effective vaccine, with some tried with some success at individual level not on a mass scale.

Experts say the reason for this is that by the time testing becomes a mass issue, some sort of mutation of the virus occurs on account of exposure to the basic vaccine compounds.

So there is plenty of reason to stay in the mental frame that Covid-19 will be around for quite some time yet, as developing vaccines isn't easy and can hardly be a six-month job as some top level authorities wish to affirm.

All the same, the earlier such vaccines are found, the better for humankind. It will indeed be cause for global celebration of a dream come true.

authorities narrated their reactions and fears upon hearing that the hostels would host Covid-19 suspects coming from abroad.

While the scale of decontamination must indeed have been intense, it is the overall drop in Covid-19 cases in the country that provides the 'promise' that no problems will arise. If the premises are clear as all those who were there developed no symptoms while there, not much is to be feared about students going back - particularly in that adequate decontamination has been done.

Many will also cite local remedies like herbal applications which medical doctors now agree are relatively effective against the coronavirus. Testimony from President John Magufuli himself on a Covid-19 case in the family nailed the matter.

We can only hope that this situation will continue and that there are as few coronavirus cases as possible. Understandably, fear will not be altogether rid of - that is, until the virus is brought under control, which is what the world is battling after.

At the practical level, we still have many unanswered questions, for instance about costs of ensuring precautions against Covid-19 in schools and colleges. The task has been directed at school authorities, but they are without adequate funds for quite a number of items and a new burden is being placed on their shoulders.

There is also the new problem of educational spacing and it is not easy to see how it will be resolved, as Form VI students can be placed on social distancing only if their 'juniors' don't go resume classes now.

This means that the government might have to sequence the return to school one class year at a time, which is hard to project. But problems are there to be solved - and challenges to be met.

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How can we fight bad information about health?

By Dora-Olivia Vicol

IN this briefing, we look at health misinformation and how fact checkers and the general public can stand up to crises, conspiracies and inaccurate everyday health advice.

At the time we started working on this briefing, news that a new virus was claiming lives in the Chinese city of Wuhan was just breaking. By the time we completed it, the new coronavirus had spread across most of the world.

Entire countries went on lockdown, with businesses shuttering up and the public retreating indoors. But while things were coming to a standstill on the outside, the rumour mill went into overdrive.

A flurry of conspiracies, homemade remedies, and unsubstantiated DOs and DON'Ts circulated across social, and some traditional, media. Much of it had the potential of causing real harm to people's lives.

As we continue to face confusing and contradictory misinformation about the Covid-19 pandemic, we have reviewed findings from psychology and health communication to explain how health misinformation travels and determine what we, and you, can do to fight it.

There is a long history of misinformation. In many respects, Covid-19 is unprecedented. The speed of its spread and the impact it has had on lives and livelihoods around the world are extraordinary.

And yet, health myths are not unique to the new coronavirus. During the 2015 Zika outbreak, a post claiming that it was a man-made virus received over half a million views. But the fact is that it is not; rather, it comes from the Aedes mosquito.

When Ebola swept across West Africa from 2013 to 2016, unfounded rumours that medical workers were the carriers of the disease dissuaded many from turning to treatment centres, leading to home remedies that thwarted efforts of containment, and even attacks on health facilities.

Then there is the anti-vaccination argument - involving long-debunked but stubborn myths that just won't go away. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), vaccine hesitancy is one of the world's top ten public health risks.

To make sense of the different ways in which health misinformation takes hold of the public



imagination, we find it useful to distinguish between three scenarios: crises, conspiracies, and everyday advice.

Crises refer to moments of radical disruption and information overload. This is what happens during outbreaks and national emergencies, when even the simplest everyday routines are thrust into uncertainty. Covid-19 is no doubt one such crisis.

Conspiracies, by contrast, are wildly unsubstantiated allegations; narratives of secret deals and hidden intentions which spread from groups of convinced believers on to the general public. Anti-vaccination conspiracies constitute one of the best known examples of this. Despite the overwhelming evidence that vaccines save millions of lives a year, a staggering 21 per cent of people around the world have doubts about their safety.

Then there is what we call everyday misinformation. These are in the realm of unsubstantiated advice, alternative cures or even moral norms which cause harm through setting unrealistic expectations of our bodies, and recommendations of unproven treatment.

There are ways to fight each one of them. Crises: Use clear messaging to mitigate the information overload. Fighting misinformation in times of crisis takes clear, simple messaging, delivered early and regularly, using sources and channels that people trust. Think of messages like: "stay at home", or "wash your hands".

This is because going through a crisis is a particularly stressful experience. We tend to actively

look for information, and try to make sense of the transformations around us. But paradoxically, we are less able to process complexity.

The stress of a crisis, combined with a well-documented aversion towards uncertainty, makes it harder to distinguish information from the noise. This is why the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention recommend simple, regular messaging that leaves no room for interpretation.

With anti-vaccination conspiracies, the advice is that we need to focus on prevention to stop harmful narratives from gaining exposure.

Anti-vaccination arguments, by contrast, are extremely difficult to correct. Experimental research has found that corrections can make erroneous belief stronger in time.

Notably, even in experiments which found a minor improvement in belief, there is no evidence that debunks improved intention to vaccinate.

We do not know with certainty why this happens. One explanation is that corrections increase the familiarity of myths - and with it, the public's likelihood to believe them. We have looked at this in more depth in another briefing.

Another explanation is that readers who are already very skeptical of vaccination may reject new information to protect prior beliefs. This is what psychologists refer to as motivated reasoning.

Finally, anti-vaccination attitudes may also be difficult to correct because they represent an

entire worldview, rather than the sheer absence of information.

A survey with over 5,000 respondents in 24 countries found that belief in conspiracy theories is the best predictor of vaccine hesitancy. This is not something one can easily change.

Conspiratorial ideation is not a minor quirk like believing in star signs, but a person's entire worldview or way of interpreting events through filters of suspicion and mistrust. WHO makes it clear that vaccine deniers are unlikely to change their minds.

When it comes to vaccine hesitancy, then, prevention is better than the cure. Marking a misleading anti-vaccination post as false via Facebook's Third Party Fact Checking initiative, for instance, reduces the likelihood of its influencing new audiences - even though it is unlikely to change the views of existing believers.

Similarly, health communicators can mitigate hesitancy by emphasizing high safety, instead of low-risk, and avoiding fear-inducing pictures of needles. The multi-country survey found that disgust towards needles is the third best factor which explains vaccine hesitancy.

In every case, fighting misinformation is a matter of truth and trust. Having the latest medical evidence is only half the fight against health misinformation.

The other is about earning the public's trust. This takes time, patience and a long-term campaign that takes into account the media's consumption practices and the public's value systems.

Research on everyday health behaviours shows that long-term interventions can improve health-seeking behaviours such as taking up walking, using protection or accessing quitlines for smokers. But this requires targeted, sustained intervention. So, ensure you take care over what you share. In times of crisis, when the rumour mill goes into overdrive, think about what you share.

An experiment conducted in the US at the beginning of this year found that participants who were simply asked to choose which posts they would share from a list of 30 Covid-19 stories selected false posts about as frequently as they selected true posts.

This is a worrying finding. Focusing on what's share-worthy and thinking about what's likely to provoke the most intense reaction from our peers can make us lose track of accuracy.

So take a second, and think about what you share. The same experiment found that participants who were first asked to think about accuracy were a lot more discerning with their selections.

You can make a difference. Share our work today and help more people access good information.

Dr Dora-Olivia Vicol is a researcher with Full Fact. This briefing is part of a research programme with Africa Check and Chequeado.

Why Tanzania's transparency score higher in OBS 2019

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

THE Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2019 finds a modest global improvement in budget transparency, which is consistent with the overall trend measured by the survey over the past dozen years.

While these gains provide grounds for hope, levels of publicly available budget information remain limited: the global average transparency score on this round of the survey is 45 out of 100.

Presenting the Open Budget Survey (OBS) 2019 finds to Tanzania Parliamentary Budget Committee through video conferencing in Dares Salaam this week organised by Policy Forum, Programme Manager for Research and Analysis at HakiElimu, Bonaventura Godfrey, said that Tanzania transparency score has silently increased to 17 (out of 100).

He noted: "Tanzania's transparency score of 17 in the OBS 2019 was moderately higher than its score in 2017."

A transparency score of 61 or above indicates a country is likely publishing enough material to support informed public debate on the budget.

He mentioned the reasons behind for the increase of the score, among others as, Tanzania has increased the availability of budget information by: Publishing the Citizens Budget online in a timely manner; and by increasing the information provided in the Pre-Budget Statement and Enacted Budget.

Godfrey has noted that if in future the government wanted to score higher it should prioritise the following actions to improve budget transparency:

Publish the Executive's Budget Proposal and In-Year Reports online in a timely manner. Specifically, all volumes of the budget books should be posted online in draft form, as submitted to the National Assembly, before the budget is approved.

The Executive's Budget Proposal should be published at least in advance of the budget being approved by the legislature.

An Executive's Budget Proposal is the government's most important policy instrument. It presents the ways the government plans to raise revenues and where these funds are allocated, thus transforming policy goals into action.

The In-Year Reports should be published within three months of the end of the respective reporting periods.

Produce and publish the Mid-Year Review and Year-End Report online in a timely manner.

He however said that transparency alone was insufficient for improving governance.

Inclusive public participation was crucial for realising the positive outcomes associated with greater budget transparency.

The OBS also assesses the formal opportunities offered to the public for meaningful participation in the different stages of the budget process.

It examines the practices of the central government's ex-



Inclusive public participation crucial for realising greater budget transparency. File photo

ecutive, the legislature, and the supreme audit institution (SAI) using 18 equally weighted indicators, aligned with the Global Initiative for Fiscal Transparency's Principles of Public Participation in Fiscal Policies, and scores each country on a scale from 0 to 100.

Godfrey said that the survey indicated that Tanzania has a public participation score of 9 (out of 100). He noted Tanzania's public participation score of 9 in the OBS 2019 was moderately lower than its score in 2017, which was 15 score.

The reason given was the Cessation of showing the Bunge sessions live to the public.

He has said that the Tanzania's Ministry of Finance and Planning has established public consultations during budget formulation, but to further strengthen public participation in the budget process, should also prioritise the following actions: Pilot mechanisms to monitor budget implementation; expand mechanisms during budget formulation that engage any civil society organisation or member of the public who wishes to participate; actively engage with vulnerable and underrepresented communities, directly or through civil society organisations representing them.

He said that although the Tanzania's National Assembly has established public hearings related to the approval of the annual budget, it should also prioritise the following actions:

Allow any member of the public or any civil society organisation to testify during its hearings on the budget proposal prior to its approval; allow members of the public or

civil society organisations to testify during its hearings on the Audit Report.

Also, he suggested that the Tanzania's National Audit Office should prioritise the following actions to improve public participation in the budget process: Establish formal mechanisms for the public to assist in developing its audit programme and to contribute to relevant audit investigations.

Regarding the oversight, Godfrey said that the OBS has shown that the legislature and supreme audit institution in Tanzania, together, provided weak oversight during the budget process, with a composite oversight score of 33 (out of 100).

Tanzania's National Assembly provided limited oversight during the planning stage of the budget cycle and weak oversight during the implementation stage.

To improve oversight, the following actions should be prioritised: Legislative committees should examine the Executive's Budget Proposal and pub-

lish reports with their analysis online.

A legislative committee should examine in-year budget implementation and publish reports with their findings online.

In practice, ensure the legislature is consulted before the executive shifts funds specified in the Enacted Budget between administrative units; spends any unanticipated revenue; or reduces spending due to revenue shortfalls during the budget year.

A legislative committee should examine the Audit Report and publish a report with their findings online.

To strengthen independence and improve audit oversight by the Tanzania National Audit Office, the following actions are recommended: Require legislative or judicial approval to appoint and remove the head of the supreme audit institution.

Ensure audit processes are reviewed by an independent agency.

The emerging practice of establishing independent fiscal institutions. Tanzania does not have an independent fiscal institution (IFI).

IFIs are increasingly recognised as valuable independent and nonpartisan information providers to the Executive and/or Parliament during the budget process.

For his part, one of the members of the Budget Committee, Dr Dalaly Peter Kafumu (MP), wanted to know what was the benefit of making the executive budget proposal transparent as a nation.

Reacting to his question, Godfrey said that there were several benefits. He said that when the financial systems are transparent they increase the government's credibility in the international arena. And thus, enable the government to easily access loans and grants from development partners and donors.

He further noted that transparency caused the citizens to trust their government who have put it in power; and encourages tax-payers to pay taxes willingly after seeing how their money is spent.

Another member of the committee,

Medrad Kigola (MP), wanted to know what to do to ensure the documents needed were published online timely for the country to score high. He also wanted to know how many Tanzanians were able to access the documents put online.

Answering those questions, Godfrey said that when the documents are put online, it would be easier for a large part of the population to access it instantly.

He said that according to the Tanzania Communications Regulatory Authority (TCRA), over 30 million Tanzanians are connected to internet. So, publishing the documents online was vital for them.

Riziki Lulida said that transparency and openness on budgets and all financial related matters should not be done by the government only, but all players including donors, non-governmental organisations, and civil societies should equally be transparent in their budgets.

The Open Budget Survey (OBS) is the world's only independent, comparative and fact-based research instrument that uses internationally accepted criteria to assess public access to central government budget information; formal opportunities for the public to participate in the national budget process; and the role of budget oversight institutions such as the legislature and auditor in the budget process.

The survey helps local civil society assess and confer with their government on the reporting and use of public funds. This 7th edition of the OBS covers 117 countries.

This report presents the global findings of the Open Budget Survey 2019 - the seventh assessment since the OBS was launched in 2006.

Research for OBS 2019 was conducted in 117 countries by civil society groups and budget experts and reviewed by independent, anonymous experts. Governments were invited to comment on the draft results and the majority did so.

Can there be more reaping from Mafia's marine parks?

By Correspondent Gaudensia Mngumi

TANZANIA has enormous endowments like wild games found in Serengeti, Ngorongoro and the Kilimanjaro, but again, Mafia Island is one among the greatest natural awards to mention. It is as an attractive archipelago for economic opportunities, academia, tourism and most important an ecological zone that has favoured the proliferation of many projects including investments in hotels, scientific visits and researches and fishing.

Mafia is one among eighteen Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) which are found in Tanzania Mainland others are Nyororo Island Marine Reserve, Mbarakuni Island Marine Reserve and Shungimbili Island Marine Reserve.

There are also Mnazi Bay and Ruwama Estuary all based in Mtwara. In Tanga region there are five marine parks including Tanga oelacantha in Muheza, Mwewe Island Marine Reserve while Dar has several such as Bongoyo Island, Fungu Yasini, Mbudya Island, Pangavine, Sinda, Kendwa and Makatube.

According to Dr Albogast Kamukuru, aquatics scientist from the University of Dar es Salaam, who did his PhD studies in Mafia Island Marine Park (MIMP), Mafia is the biggest and first Marine Park in Tanzania, established in 1995 following the enactment of Marine Parks and Reserves Act of 1994. The Mafia Island Marine Park encompasses former Chole Bay and Kitutia Reef marine reserves and some additional marine and coastal habitats of Mafia District.

All that area offers important marine and coastal ecosystems in Tanzania including mangrove swamps, coral reefs, sea grass beds, coastal forests and extensive intertidal flats. These ecosystems support high diversity of flora and fauna in the sea ecological systems, according to Kamukuru.

The Mafia Island Marine Park is so outstanding because of the unique



Dugong and sea turtles are among endemic marine creatures on Mafia Island. File photo

creatures found in that area including the rare herbivorous dugong (Dugong dugon) being one of the critically endangered marine mammal species in the world. There are other five species of marine turtles which are listed on Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna (CITES) in Mafia, notes Kamukuru.

In the interview with The Guardian, he mentions the marine turtles that are highly migratory species of which females have to nest on sandy beaches among treasures found exclusively in Mafia archipelago.

"Whale shark (Rhincodon typus) is the world's largest cartilaginous fish measuring over 12 metre length found seasonally on the western side of MIMP. Whaleshark is listed on Appendix II of CITES as a vulnerable species. That is why Mafia is so significant to Tanzania and the world at large."

He remarks that Mafia has a special importance, the island has a great importance economical, in academia as well as ecological due to enormous outstanding marine diversity found in the area.

"Economically, Mafia Island contributes substantial fish supply to Ferry fish market in Dar es Salaam City. The island offers numerous tourist attractions including whaleshark

watching, sport fishing, scuba diving and snorkelling (swimming with a diving mask or a breathing tube)," notes Kamukuru.

He further explains that ecologically, MIMP is endowed with high diversity of reef fishes with an estimated of 400 species. Extensive coral reefs, seagrass beds and mangroves ecosystems often offer refuge to threatened and endangered species and form important ecological links including physical, chemical and biological interactions.

"For scientists Mafia Island is everything. The importance of core zones within MIMP allows scientific researchers to establish baseline information used to evaluate the impacts of fishing of marine resources."

But, despite such endowments people in Mafia are discontented. They have feelings that despite the huge revenue potentials found in their sea the huge marine parks 'harvests' are taken away and there is no much for the locals to brag from their one and only 'treasure' that is found in their archipelagoes.

When speaking with The Guardian in different occasions Mafia residents challenged existing policy and laws that has given the Mafia District Council (MDC) only 30 per cent of the revenues collected from MIMP, while the rest of it is taken away by



the Marine Parks Authority, for them that has contributed and exacerbated economic challenges such as transportation in particular, because the finances was not utilised internally to solve locals critical transport problems.

For them, they haven't seen much developments coming to the marine parks, despite that the island is the mother of the great and the 'mighty' oceanic diversities. Few months ago The Guardian interviewed some members of Sauti ya Wanawake Mafia (Sawama), a women empowerment platform established in a bid to support women and girls to uplift their lives through various entrepreneurs programmes. In generally they mentioned transportation challenges.

The women uplifting platform appealed for protection of the island's biodiversity that could benefit all parts considering the fate of the locals particularly women, children and the sick who suffer a lot when it comes to move from one point to another especial for those living in the islands.

The voice of Sawama members in Kiegeani village in the archipelago challenged that despite the fact that the MIMP has been there for decades, the local folks have been experiencing transport problems stressing that they are tired of using crude tradi-

tional canoes which are common in carrying people and cargo around small island of Mafia.

Women want involvement and equally resources sharing and distribution model that feature partnerships among government, communities -the Mafia District Authority and private sector particularly the hotel and tourists centres investors.

Not only the women, the Twendekezi fishers association that operates in Mafia District wants the finances obtained from MMPS to benefit the locals as well by supporting fishing activities because it is the key economic activity in the island.

The fishers claim that since colonial eras Mafia Island has been in 'darkness' and has remained so while locals have been living with the stories like Mafia is a home place of dugong and unique sea turtles and have been seeing tourists from various place in the world coming to the island for swimming and viewing the whale sharks.

Some officials in the Island charged that the Mafia District Council (MDC) is not allowed to collect the revenue's from the parks and people were irked as the MIMP owe the MDC around 91,000,000/- which were tax arrears for several years, according to them, last year (2019) the Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa, during his official

visit to the island, ordered the MIMP to be paid the funds immediately and was utilized in building a high school in the island.

Nevertheless, the year 2020 was expected to bring new light to Mafia, hence solve the transportation hurdles and open up new avenues for other sources of finance, the New Mafia was expected in February 2020 as the government promised to launch a ferry boat that will ferry people and their cargo from Nyamisati to Mafia Island.

Speaking with Nipashe, The Guardian's sister newspaper the District Commissioner, Swibu Nnundama, was much adamant that 2020 is the year for Mafia people to stand out of the crowd, to arise and shine as the island will be full-time accessible. The DC is referring to the promise made by the CCM Secretary General Dr Bashiru Ally, who in his last November visit to Mafia, assured the community that the marine ferry will soon jet into the Mafia seas' as soon as possible probably this June.

Despite that promise people in the island want the resources obtained from Mafia Island Marine Parks to be used solely for Mafia alone because it is the only source of income in that area. But, making resources from the park usefully for the local alone isn't a good news to the DC.

"I can only say no region has done its development alone. We have list of priorities for every region and the government is the provider. We can't work on that trajectory. There are gold in Geita, tanzanite in Manyara, Mt Kilimanjaro in Moshi, as a nation we all share the resources in all regions of Tanzania."

According to the DC there are about 12 villages located within the MIMP which are Kungwi, Kiegeani, Jibondo, Juwani, Balemi, Marimbani, Chemchem, Miburani, Bwejuu, Mlongo which have solar power facilities, schools and health care services which are funded and managed by the central government funds, now how can one say Mafia revenues should remain within Mafia?

Not all hand sanitisers work well against Covid-19

By Manal Mohammed

SINCE the outbreak of Covid-19, sales of hand sanitisers have soared. It's become such a sought-after product that pharmacies and supermarkets have started limiting the number that people can buy at one time.

New York State - in the US - once even announced that it would start producing its own hand sanitiser to meet demand. Though hand sanitisers can help reduce our risk of catching certain infections, not all hand sanitisers are equally effective against the coronavirus.

As with other viral respiratory infections - like the common cold and flu - the novel coronavirus (called SARS-CoV-2) is mainly spread when virus-laden droplets from a person's mouth or nose are transferred to other people. However, a recent study has suggested that it can also spread through stool.

Aside from inhaling droplets, you can also get respiratory viruses including SARS-CoV-2 by touching anything contaminated with the virus and then touching your face, in particular your mouth or nose.

Now, we touch our faces a lot without even realising it. A study from New South Wales found that people touch their faces about 23 times an hour.

Washing with warm water and soap remains the gold standard for hand hygiene and preventing the spread of infectious diseases. Washing with warm water (not cold water) and soap removes oils from our hands that can harbour microbes.

But hand sanitisers can also protect against disease-causing microbes, especially

in situations when soap and water aren't available. They're also proven to be effective in reducing the number and type of microbes.

There are two main types of hand sanitisers: alcohol-based and alcohol-free. Alcohol-based hand sanitisers contain varying amounts and types of alcohol, often between 60 per cent and 95 per cent and usually isopropyl alcohol, ethanol - ethyl alcohol - or n-propanol. Alcohol is known to be able to kill most germs.

Alcohol-free hand sanitisers contain something called quaternary ammonium compounds - usually benzalkonium chloride - instead of alcohol. These can reduce microbes but are less effective than alcohol.

Not only are alcohol-based hand sanitisers found to be effective at killing many types of bacteria, including MRSA and E coli, they're also effective against many viruses, including the influenza A virus, rhinovirus, hepatitis A virus, HIV and Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV).

Alcohol attacks and destroys the envelope protein that surrounds some viruses, including coronaviruses. This protein is vital for a virus's survival and multiplication. But a hand sanitiser needs to be at least 60 per cent alcohol in order to kill most viruses.

Hand sanitisers with less than 60 per cent alcohol were also found to be less effective at killing bacteria and fungi and may only reduce the growth of germs rather than killing them outright.

And even hand sanitisers containing 60 per cent alcohol can't remove all types of germs. Studies have found that hand washing is more effective than hand sanitis-



With shortages leading some people to try and make their own hand sanitisers, it's also important to know these might not be effective enough against Covid-19. Photo: Shutterstock/Elizaveta Galitckaia

ers at removing norovirus, Cryptosporidium (a parasite that can cause diarrhoea), and Clostridium difficile (bacteria which cause bowel problems and diarrhoea).

With shortages leading some people to try and make their own hand sanitisers, it's also important to know that these might not be as effective as commercially available products.

Washing hands for 20 seconds with warm water works best. If hands are visibly dirty, hand washing with soap and water is more effective than using alcohol-based hand sanitisers. Research has found that the detergent effect of soap and the friction of washing work together to reduce the number of microbes on our hands as well as the dirt and organic materials.

Sneezing or coughing into

your hands also requires more than just a pump of hand sanitiser to disinfect them. This is because if your hands are contaminated with mucous, the hand sanitiser might not work as well because mucous acts to protect microbes.

As a result, the best and most consistent way of preventing the spread of the coronavirus - and reducing your risk of contracting it - remains washing

your hands with soap and water as a first choice, and avoiding touching your face as much as possible.

But alcohol-based hand sanitisers with at least 60 per cent alcohol are a practical alternative when soap and water aren't available.

If you are using hand sanitiser then, just like when washing with soap and water, you need to make sure that you cover

your hands - including between your knuckles, wrists, palms, back of your hand and your fingernails - fully, rubbing it in for at least 20 seconds so that it's truly effective.

Manal Mohammed is a lecturer in Medical Microbiology at London's University of Westminster. This version of the article is republished from The Conversation. ENDS

A pandemic nurse's love letter to New York

Shannon Stapleton, Clare Baldwin NEOSHO, Mo.

THE coronavirus pandemic has restricted almost everyone's freedoms in America but for Meghan Lindsey it has done the opposite. This is the freest she has ever felt.

Traveling to New York City at age 33 to work as a COVID-19 nurse was the first time that Meghan (pictured), a married mother of two, had ever left southwest Missouri.

"It was my first time on a plane," she said, describing how she came to work 12-hour shifts in the intensive care unit at NYU Winthrop Hospital.

"Flying into New York was the first time I'd ever seen the ocean."

There are many stories about the lonely coronavirus deaths in the city's hospitals and the traumatic work of the nurses who staff them.

Meghan's story is about unexpected opportunities. It's a story of how the pandemic gave a woman the chance to strike out into the world, confront danger and make a difference, and how her husband stayed home to care for their daughters. It's a story about new beginnings.

"I always wanted to do something for my country," said Meghan. "This was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do something meaningful."

Meghan's first nursing shifts in New York were a shock.

There are a lot of sick people in Missouri with chronic diseases like diabetes, where the progressions are slow and the declines are familiar.

COVID-19 patients are stunned by a virus that turns their lives upside down and in many cases

ends them.

"One of my patients had her toes done up all nice and pretty and still had her jewelry on," said Meghan.

Because they were coronavirus patients and visitors were banned, it was Meghan who would hold their hands as they died.

"Once you FaceTime and you meet their family and you hear them crying and sobbing, you know their cute little nicknames and you start to know them, it just gets to be really personal," said Meghan. "You have a hard time separating yourself and not truly grieving for them as well."

Despite all of the death, Meghan's time in New York City's COVID-19 wards was unexpectedly affirming. The pandemic gave Meghan something that her life in Missouri so far had not: a feeling of everything sliding into place.

When Meghan graduated from nursing school, it wasn't like she imagined. It turned out to be just a job. She mourned.

"Now for once, it's actually something important," said Meghan. "This is the first time since I've become a nurse that it's like, 'yes, this is why.' I can make a difference, and I can help, and I am strong enough for this."

Her kids, she said, are proud. "They know that what I'm doing is hard and that I put my life in danger."

Meghan is from a small town in Missouri. Most Sundays, she goes to church. Her mom was a manager at Walmart and her dad worked construction. Before he lost his job to the pandemic, her husband Aaron sold fire suppression systems to small businesses.

Meghan is the first in her family to finish college and has long held her family together. As thrilling as it was to be in New



York, it was also hard.

Meghan often wondered if she should come home. Her husband Aaron told her no. He and the girls were fine, what she was doing mattered and he was proud of her. He sometimes called her superwoman.

"If he wasn't such a good dad and there for my children, I could never do this," said Meghan. He deserves

credit too, she said, "but I guess you could say the lime-light's on me."

Being a COVID-19 travel nurse isn't glamorous. Meghan had to wear protective gear during her shifts and there was a lengthy decontamination process when she got home each night. She lived in a hotel room with another nurse and had to find a laundromat every few days to

wash her scrubs.

But sometimes it did feel like a grand adventure. She saw the Statue of Liberty. She heard someone speaking Russian. She learned how to fold a slice of pizza.

Restaurants sometimes gave her and her friends free food "because we're nurses," she said with a bit of awe.

She took selfie after selfie standing in the middle of empty New York City streets and no cabbies honked at her.

Her husband Aaron said he was sometimes a little jealous (it's New York), occasionally wor-

ried (again, New York), but mostly he was just really proud. "Meghan hasn't been out there in the world," he said. She nailed it.

Now, at the end of her contract, Meghan is unsure of what the future holds.

She is back in a small town in the Midwest. She no longer has a job and she is coming off the biggest high of her life. She sometimes asks herself, will I have the desire to go back to this life?

Something about New York stood out to her: people there had aspirations to make something of themselves.

Co-innovation paves way for protection of Africa's endangered elephants and rhinos

By Guardian Reporter and Agencies

IN the fight to protect Africa's endangered wildlife, powerful tech such as cloud computing, drones, and machine learning can play a critical role in enhancing conservation efforts, and in combating poaching and the resultant illicit trade.

In the on-going collaboration between SAP's Co-Innovation Lab and the nonprofit Elephants, Rhinos & People (ERP), strides made to combat poaching of elephants and rhinos could become a blueprint for conservation efforts across the continent.

According to Rudi de Louw, Head of the Co-Innovation Lab at SAP Africa advances in technology and new ways of collaborating are paving the way for the development of innovative solutions to protect Africa's wildlife. "Having powerful technology means nothing if you can't achieve accuracy and consistency in the data and outcomes it produces.

We undertook an extensive and on-going co-innovation project with ERP focusing on technical feasibility, product development and refinement. The outcomes are exciting and potentially game-changing - especially, in this case, for an elephant and rhino population that remains under threat."

There are an estimated 30,000 rhinos remaining in the wild today, a significant decrease - largely due to poaching and habitat destruction - from the half million that roamed Africa and Asia at the start of the 20th century.

Rhino poaching reached crisis levels in the last decade, with instances in South Africa increasing more than 9,000% from 13 in 2007 to 1,215 in 2014. Encouragingly, the latest reported figures show a sharp decline in rhino poaching activity, with 594 cases in 2019.

Elephants have also been targeted. After a single poaching incident in 2014 - the first in South Africa in a

decade - elephant poaching activity spiked, with 71 reported cases in 2018.

The latest official figures show a decrease of more than half for 2019. Across Africa, thousands of elephants have been brutally slaughtered in recent years, with almost entire populations being wiped out in certain African countries.

The nonprofit Elephants, Rhinos & People was founded to preserve and protect Southern Africa's wild elephants and rhinos through a strategy that is based on alleviating poverty in rural areas surrounding the threatened creatures.

It forms part of the structure of groupelephant.com, a largely employee-owned group of companies, nonprofits and impact investment organizations with a strong global presence that also includes EPI-USE, the world's largest independent SAP HCM and Payroll specialist.

Since 2017, ERP.ngo has piloted an anti-poaching strategy that has completely eliminated poaching of megafauna in the areas it monitors. David Allen, ERP Air Force project lead at ERP, and a senior SAP practitioner in EPI-USE, says the deployment of new technologies has been a core element of the initiative's success. "Following a year-long testing and innovation process in partnership with the Co-Innovation Lab, we have made major strides in refining our machine vision, machine learning and response capabilities."

An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) was initially used to monitor the movement of elephants but was quickly deployed to provide a layer of intelligence to how teams responded to alerts.

"This way a guard could make an informed decision over whether there's need for an anti-poaching team or, in the case of a fire, a fire team without first having to travel out to the affected area. We gradually expanded this layer of intelligence to other areas," says Allen.



Allen says one of the first priorities for the project was to address occasional instabilities in their prototype IT environment. "The Co-Innovation Lab team helped us migrate to SAP Cloud Platform, and SAP is providing three years' cloud hosting to support the production process."

Siddharth Taparia, SVP and Head of Experience Marketing at SAP, who led the team, says the project marked a world-first for the organization. "While we have supported non-profit organizations by providing our on-premises solutions before, this was the first time we supported a partner in the Cloud and illustrates how the brave new world of cloud is transforming businesses of all sizes."

Following the migration, ERP and the Co-Innovation Lab started working on technical feasibility tests for some of their more ambitious ideas, many of which have over time proven invaluable to the success of conservation efforts. One of these ambitious ideas, according to De Louw, involves extensive development of machine learning algorithms to enable the team to improve its response, data capturing and processing capabilities.

"A network of different cameras within the reserve trigger whenever movement is detected. Machine vision is used to track movement while machine learning algorithms help distinguish between threats and non-threats. This has required us to feed our algorithms vast amounts of data to train them to distinguish between animals, people and other movement."

This accuracy is important: as soon as rangers receive too many alerts - especially if they prove to be false - trust in the system starts eroding. "We need to reduce false-positives to ensure rangers are only alerted when something requires their attention."

This is simpler to accomplish with the on-the-ground cameras, but our UAV-mounted cameras require significant further training and development. A rhino seen from ground level is fairly easy to distinguish from an elephant or person, but as soon as you take an aerial view, animals tend to fade into the landscape. As our data set grows and

we refine our machine learning algorithm, these types of inaccuracies will be resolved over time."

Technology, however, is only one part of solving the problem of poaching. According to Allen, without the support of local communities most conservation efforts are doomed to failure.

"The poaching trade is immensely profitable. A single rhino horn can fetch more than R5-million on the global black market. For local communities where the average income is as little as R3,000 per month, promises of more money could be life changing. Poachers exploit this, promising a small share of the profit in exchange for protection from authorities."

Este Smith, Managing Director of ERP says they have introduced several initiatives to involve local communities in conservation efforts, which bring them a direct socio-economic benefit for their efforts. "Our Ashoka accredited PEACE (Planning, Education, Agriculture, Cooperatives and Environment) Model is used to provide a holistic, replicable and sustainable poverty alleviation strategy in these remote communities living either adjacent to, or within conservation areas."

PEACE Centers are cooperatively-run hubs within local and district municipalities that provide communities with centralised access to education, improved service delivery and agricultural initiatives ranging from permaculture gardens to commercial operations. By enabling residents to unlock and utilise local resources in a sustainable manner, we help pave a way for them to move out of poverty and toward prosperity."

Through their #BIKES4ERP initiative, ERP has donated more than two hundred bicycles, to aid community member movement and help children who live far from the nearest school get to class more easily.

A 'study-to-own' contract was set with each child to empower them to attain an education - if they attend school for a number of years, ownership of the bicycle will transfer to them. #BIKES4ERP has had a positive effect on the aca-

dem achievements of the recipients, ensuring that they are able to get to school more easily - saving precious time and effort, and based upon records kept to date the pass rate of the schools where the bikes are deployed grew from below 50% to more than 85% in 2019.

Through our We Code program, which is held in partnership with local high schools, we are also providing coding training to local youth,' says Smith. 'The course allows young people to learn coding in a way that is exciting and relevant to them, for example through programming drones, which builds important digital skills while also enhancing the relevance of other subjects such as math and science.'

According to Smith, the We Code program also potentially holds direct benefits for ERP. "One of the main constraints to scaling our conservation model is the lack of drone pilots. By investing in local youth skills development, we could also create the next generation of drone pilots to support similar conservation efforts across the country - and later, in other parts of Africa."

Smith explains that in the wake of the economic devastation caused by the novel coronavirus-related government shutdown, ERP has funded and mobilized a multi-location logistics effort to feed indigent people in communities adjacent to its land-based projects. In the month of May, several hundred thousand meals will be distributed to 9 locations near conservation areas that ERP is either leasing, negotiating to lease, or simply safeguarding with drone technology. The feeding program will soon be extended to cover an area Zimbabwe, where ERP is currently exploring conservation land deals.

ERP will eventually deploy its technology model to other conservation areas in South and Southern Africa. "We are already working on opportunities to scale our solution to reach other reserves. Through a range of community initiatives, we hope to mobilise local communities to support conservation efforts while also unlocking greater skills development and economic opportunities in the process. With our partners at the Co-Innovation Lab, we will also continue to refine the technology underpinning our efforts to protect some of our continent's most majestic endangered animals."

CSO women leaders play key role in scaling up fight against Covid-19

By Guardian Reporter

AS the world and indeed Tanzania continue to battle against the Coronavirus - a pandemic that has taken the international community by storm and threatened people's way of life.

A key concern that has emerged is on how the virus will adversely impact women, and the role that women have in ensuring that gender equality, and placing the voice, rights and agency of the people at the center are prioritized in response and recovery efforts.

The role of women in the Coronavirus response cannot be understated.

According to a United Nations Secretary General's policy brief on the Impact of Covid-19 on Women, globally, women will be the hardest hit by this pandemic and will be essential to the recovery within communities. Research also shows that women are better equipped for handling health crises, highlighting the need to ensure women's equal representation in the pandemic's response planning and decision-making.

In Tanzania, women have been playing a critical role in the Corona virus response. The majority of front-line healthcare workers are women, and in the home, the majority of caregivers for the sick, elderly and children are also women.

Every day, women are making impactful decisions and taking action within their respective spheres of influence, with several women leaders and women's organizations in the country already putting their skills, knowledge and networks to work to effectively lead in COVID-19 response.

From civil society organizations (CSOs), two women leaders - Mary Rusimbi and Asha Aboud Mzee, have joined the effort in promoting the need for, and the effectiveness of women's leadership in the Coronavirus crisis and beyond.

Mary Rusimbi is the Founder and

Executive Director of Women Fund Tanzania, the first women's rights fund that also houses the Women's Coalition on Constitution and Leadership.

As a long-standing women's rights leader, she is one of two co-chairs for the Strategic Steering Committee of the recently launched Tanzania chapter of the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN Tanzania), a network which aims to bring women leaders from all spheres of life together to enhance women's leadership at all levels.

As the country continues to fight the Coronavirus, Rusimbi says, women leaders can play an instrumental role in drawing attention to the disproportionate socio-economic consequences faced by women, predicting that women will be harder hit by the pandemic.

"I say this because for one, women make up the majority of the informal sector, and will therefore bearing the brunt of the economic effects. As primary caretakers, women have had to contend with the increased burden on their domestic responsibilities, and we are seeing an increase in cases of gender-based violence, along with early pregnancies with girls no longer able to go to school," she said.

Although on the global front, women leaders are being recognized as performing better on pandemic responses compared to men, currently, just 7.2percent of heads of state are women, and just 18 percent of the world's Health Ministers, which includes the Tanzanian Health Minister, are women. Previous health outbreaks have also demonstrated the effective role of women's leadership; with women playing a notable role in leading information outreach efforts at the grassroots community level during the Ebola virus, for example.

"Evidence has shown that women's leadership is central to any health epidemic, and this must be acknowl-



Mary Rusimbi, Executive Director of Women Fund Tanzania

edged through action. It requires leveraging women's unique expertise by making them part and parcel of decision-making processes, and it is not just about having women there in numbers, but ensuring that their voices, opinions and perspectives are heard as well," says Rusimbi.

Asha Aboud, another member of the AWLN Tanzania Strategic Steering Committee and chair of the Zanzibar CSO umbrella organization, ANGOZA, says the civil society sector has been playing an active role in raising the awareness of the public, with CSOs speaking out on issues of prevention and the impact of the pandemic on women and girls.

"As in the rest of the country, school

closures increased women's domestic workload in Zanzibar, and we are also seeing women's livelihoods being affected in the informal sector with the decrease in customer traffic and government curfews that have been put in place," she says.

About further underscores the need for women's leadership, saying: "Women leaders need to speak out and use their unique ability to reach and connect with other women to help come up with the required solutions."

"Women's perspectives need to be heard on these issues, as it is only the shoe wearer who knows if it is tight or loose. We must also make sure that we are able to mobilize even more

women speak out as well."

UN Women, through the Women's Leadership and Political Participation "Wanawake Wanaweza" Phase II project, has been working with the African Women Leaders Network (AWLN) Tanzania chapter through the support of the governments of Finland, Sweden and Germany to ensure that women leaders from the grassroots to the highest levels are able to raise awareness on the impacts of Covid-19 on women and girls, and advocate for women's inclusion in decision-making.

Before the pandemic, women all over the world were entering politics in greater numbers than ever before. Their visibility in decision making

was growing, as was the realization that the full and equal participation of women is essential for achieving gender equality and the sustainable development goals. In countries moving towards gender equality, strong gender equality mechanisms and women's movements were progressively advancing gender equality laws and policies, as well as ensuring that the needs of the most left behind were not forgotten.

Tanzania has also made considerable progress in the area of women's leadership, with a woman Vice President and women Deputy Speakers in both mainland and Zanzibar as notable examples. In parliament, women make up more than 37percent of the national parliament, with women comprising of about 21percent of cabinet ministers, 27percent of deputy ministers, 17percent of permanent secretaries and at the local level, 15percent of regional commissioners, 33 percent of district commissioners and 5 percent of elected district councilors.

"In order to make sure that we safeguard the progress made in women's leadership and participation, stakeholders need to come together in a joined-up effort to elevate women's leadership and participation in the Covid-19 response, and in all decision-making organs," said Hodan Addou, UN Women Tanzania Representative.

According to Rusimbi, in the coming months, the AWLN Tanzania chapter will continue to work with UN Women to ensure that the network leads outreach and advocacy efforts on Covid19 and women's increased representation in leadership.

"These are key priorities for the network. Women's leadership is not just for women but for everyone, and it is our responsibility as women, men, boys and girls to continue to sound the alarm so that the needs of women and girls are effectively addressed," says Rusimbi.

Learning to live in the 'Valley of Uncertainty' over Covid-19

By David Wallace-Wells

THE more we learn about Covid-19 and the best practices with which to combat it, the clearer it is that we are living still in a valley of pandemic ignorance.

We are suffering and dying at historic rates but the laws governing the ebb and flow of the virus remain maddeningly inscrutable.

Even when the news is good - with case rates stabilising even through a period of "reopening", for instance - we don't really know how to explain it. And when the news is scary - as it was when a new syndrome suddenly arose, affecting children long thought practically invulnerable - we struggle to contextualise it.

Just three weeks ago, no one outside a few hospitals had even heard of such a thing as a "paediatric multisystem inflammatory syndrome", or heard it described as "Kawasaki-like" and "Covid-related."

We still don't know the nature of that relationship, which the World Health Organisation (WHO) has just reminded us, pointing out that many of the children exhibiting symptoms of the new syndrome are not, in fact, testing positive for Covid-19.

But the outbreak in New York is big enough to begin using as a rough guide for expectations. There, as of a few days ago, 110 New York minors have been diagnosed with the syndrome, in a city with roughly 1.75 million minors and approximately 25 per cent exposure to the disease.

It is crude math

This math is crude, based on incomplete data and some perhaps shaky assumptions, but in the absence of ballooning case numbers in the next few weeks, it implies that the risk of even contracting it, assuming a coronavirus infection, is very low: about one-fiftieth of one per cent (0.02 per cent).

Five children with the new syndrome have died - which suggests that, if the data is complete and reliable, the risk of fatality is about one thousandth of one per cent (0.001 per cent).

This is roughly the fatality rate of chicken pox though, given the novelty of the disease, it's likely that many more children will contract Covid-19 than get chicken pox in a given year.

And the data may well not be at all complete or at all reliable - this is what happens with new diseases, indeed what is still happening with Covid-19, particularly in places, like parts of the United States, with such insufficient testing.

In some places, like Georgia and Florida, the limited testing is compounded by direct and purposeful massaging of the data.

But the public-health uncertainty is much bigger and more profound than American incompetence. The disease remains something of a mystery in patients; just as frustratingly, it remains a mystery at the population level, where social and political decisions

must be made and where nevertheless we have only something approaching best guesses about best practices.

At first, epidemiological models made projections that were too high, then too low; lockdowns seemed first our last defence against a pandemic deluge, but the benefits are growing increasingly uncertain.

We still have only the crudest understanding of which social-distancing policies work and which might be excessive; of the effects of seasonality; of why certain countries have been relatively spared despite quite limited precautions and others have fared quite poorly despite aggressive interventions.

For instance, Sweden has been routinely held up as an illustration of the risks of intervening too little in the course of the virus, while Japan hasn't done much more, and is faring much, much better.

Germany has been hailed as a model and yet, subtracting the experience of New York, isn't actually performing better than the United States, which has been mocked on the world stage. Compared to California, which has a similarly sized economy, Germany is actually doing worse.

What of school reopenings?

Over the last few weeks, as American states have begun to reopen, the early-returns data on those reopenings have been brandished like ideological tools in arguments over the propriety of lockdowns, social distancing and mask-wearing - among other things.

But we do not know precisely the impact of any of these things, and there are simply too many variables to really extrapolate from those early results. It may well turn out that the benefits of true social isolation, beyond the end of mass gatherings, is relatively limited.

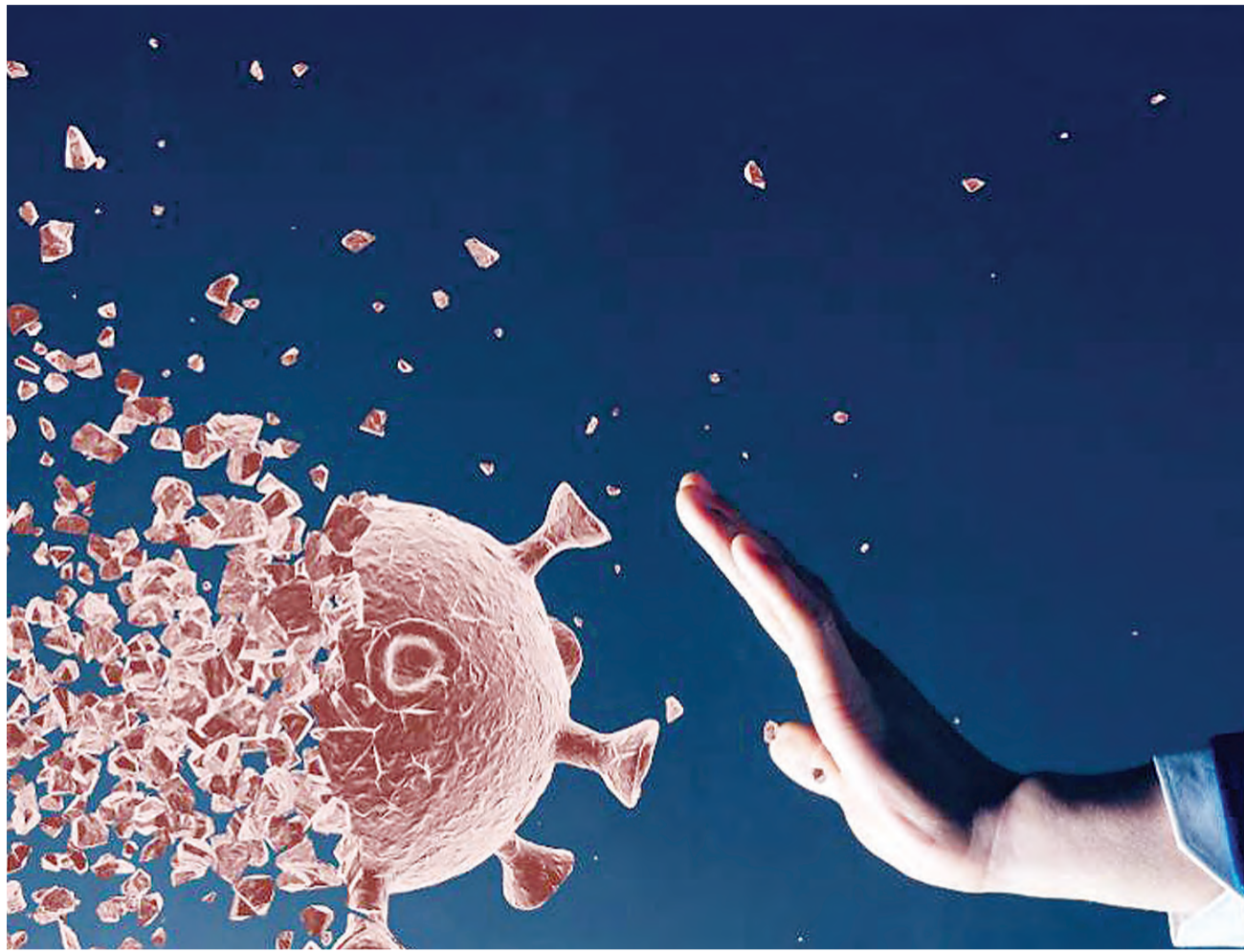
It may be that social isolation is really only effective if the sick do not isolate at home but in quarantine centres where they don't risk infecting the rest of their family.

It may be that masks do an enormous amount of work - but it may also be, as Donald Trump tried to prophesy into reality back in the winter, that warmer weather would seem to somewhat magically make things much better; or it may be all a matter of vitamin D or constraining the activity of "super-spreaders".

We have spent the last few months desperate to know everything - lecturing one another about mask wearing, spending time on beaches or in parks, about the need for ventilators.

However, almost every single day our best understanding of the disease and how to deal with it is being revised or even reversed, updated and complicated and caveated and questioned - learning, it seems, more each day about how little we know.

We may be living in that valley of ignorance for quite some time, observing the haphazard behaviour of a "patchwork pandemic" whose shape



only begins to make sense to us months, at least, down the road.

And this is one big reason we should probably pump the brakes on any planning, or projection or advocacy about whether or not American schools should reopen in September. We simply don't know much yet about those risks.

The question of schools is an illustrative case study of our coronavirus ignorance - not just because we know so little now but because we do have a pretty good sense of when we will know more.

On other epidemiological questions, our progress may not be very linear or predictable. But thankfully, on the relationship of children to disease spreads, in a few months we will almost certainly know quite a bit more. That's because many other nations of the world are, effectively, running a global experiment whose results can inform decisions we make here.

As recently as a few weeks ago, more than one billion school-age children around the world were stuck at home by quarantine. But schools are already opening, in different ways, in Germany, France, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Israel, Australia, Japan and China - to name just a few.

At the moment, our best scientific understanding of juvenile transmission and school closures comes from anecdotes, small-scale lab experiments, and imperfect data sets.

These school systems all around the world will be the equivalent of "human challenge trials," in which citizens volunteer to be a part of experiments as a way of speeding along our understanding of new drugs or treatment plans in the middle of a crisis. What happens in those places will be our best guide to school policy, with the data sets reassuringly enormous.

When will we know what they say?

When will we know what they say? Good data on the effects of particular policies can take about a month to arrive, given the natural month-long life cycle of the disease.

This means that the world will probably have a clear idea of the relative risks of reopening schools by the end of June at the latest - and perhaps, additionally, some actionable intelligence about what kinds of reopenings work best.

In the meantime, it is almost certainly premature to be making concrete plans for the autumn - and absolutely premature to be making them beyond that, as the University of Cambridge did last week by declaring that all lectures

would be remote through the summer of 2021. New York University did the opposite, announcing that school would resume as normal this autumn.

Already, the French are worrying over a small new wave of infections hardly a week after reopening, but, overall, school openings in 22 European countries have not produced a meaningful increase in cases - yet.

For now, the strongest arguments about the reopening of schools being safe come from anecdotes. The eminent economist Emily Oster summarised one such story in her parenting newsletter thus: In one case, very early in the epidemic, researchers identified a set of cases in the French Alps, all linked to one set of travelers, and the cases included one child. During the infected period, this child visited three different schools (it is completely unclear why) and had 112 school contacts. None of these contacts was infected.

In Wired, David Zweig passes along a similarly encouraging story, from research in New South Wales, Australia: From March to mid-April, 18 individuals in 15 schools were confirmed as Covid-19 cases. Among the 735 students and 128 staff members who were in close contact with those initial cases, just two children became infected.

Even more strikingly, "no teacher or staff member contracted Covid-19 from any of the initial school cases", the report stated. But that report was conducted during a time when school attendance had dropped to 5 per cent - not exactly a model of true reopening and conditions which allowed for social distancing in the classroom.

In general, the data about the susceptibility of children to Covid-19 is also encouraging, though far from definitive. One study found that school-age children were about one-third as susceptible to the virus as adults, though, if in school, they may also have three times as many contacts with others - which roughly counteracts their reduced susceptibility.

In her newsletter, Oster surveys a lot of this research, too: an early study in Iceland that tested 848 children and found no infections, a study from Italy showing basically the same thing, and no cases under the age of 20 in a survey of people in the Netherlands who went to the doctor complaining of flu-like symptoms during the epidemic.

And these are just infection rates; fatality rates, even for those children who do contract the disease, are minuscule. The statistician David Spiegelhalter calls minors an "unbelievably low risks".

The research on transmissibility is less reassuring. A relatively small German study showed that children with the coronavirus carried as much viral load as adults. This suggested that they were roughly as likely to infect others as adults - and that schools could become very powerful vectors of the disease, even if most of the students weren't much at risk of getting very sick.

But as Alasdair Munro points out in an illuminating Twitter thread surveying the state of knowledge about children and Covid-19 more generally, a more precise analysis of the same data would've found significantly lower viral loads in children.

Munro's sense of what the science suggests for schools is: "Children can get Covid-19 so can almost certainly spread it. But, they are barely affected by infection, and appear less likely to catch or spread it than adults. Schools seem lower risk than adult work environments."

How much less would seem to be the key question, though the wave of school closures that swept across not just the United States but the entire northern hemisphere earlier this spring, forcing 1.5 billion school children to stay home, seemed built on the supposition that no risk was acceptable - that even if children weren't themselves going to die from Covid-19, gathering them in groups every day only to return them to their families represented a real threat, community-wide.

An editorial published recently by the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) offers a strong counterargument, suggesting quite emphatically that those closures were not just unnecessary but also quite damaging.

To begin with, the authors write, school closures are only effective in reducing the spread of diseases characterised by generally low transmissibility but higher "attack rates" in children - while in cases like Covid-19, with the opposite dynamic of infection, the spread may be as bad or worse if children are sent home from school.

They note that early data from the UK and China suggest that "school closure would be insufficient to mitigate the pandemic", and that "data from the SARS outbreak in

China, Hong Kong, and Singapore suggest that school closures did not contribute to the control of the epidemic".

British modelling of the outbreak in Wuhan, they added, "predicted that school closures alone would prevent only 2 per cent to 4 per cent of deaths - much less than other social-distancing interventions".

But notably the JAMA authors, though they are both MDs, are less focused on questions of disease transmissibility than they are on the matter of overall social costs of school closures. These are very real and perhaps as profound as - or more than - the economic costs of lockdowns we've heard so much about.

While it will be a while before the direct effect of these school closures can be quantified, we know how bad missing school is in general, and how much more it affects lower-income students - who by fifth grade can fall as much as three years behind their richer classmates simply because of how much they fall behind each summer, when there isn't school.

According to Eliza Shapiro of the Times, in New York, 16 per cent of school children will be taking remedial remote classes during the summer, a number that "reflects how many students have fallen behind academically during remote learning". The negative impacts will only increase as school closures extend.

Nevertheless, more than two-thirds of American parents say that they would not be comfortable sending their child back to school, currently, even if those schools were to open. And in Israel, where schools have reopened, this was a problem, with many parents keeping their children home out of fear.

The big-picture question

This raises the big-picture question: When considering when and in what form to reopen schools, what standard is being - or should be - applied?

Is it parents' sense of safety? Public-health considerations related to the spreading of risks to adults and making children vectors of disease? Social costs of school closures to children but also to parents and even to health systems and other essential services burdened by lack of child care?

The dilemma is knotty and complicated, not just because each of these considerations has its own embedded value set but because in some cases those values run up against one another.

This means that the answer, when we arrive at it, won't be statistical or scientific, however much easier that kind of resolution would be, but political and social.

What level of risk are we comfortable with and what social cost are we willing to endure to reduce it?

Presumably, we could be doing much more to make schools safe, for children but also for their families and communities, with rigorous testing and public-health supervision and medical support.

In other words, this would be by way of treating students and staff as though the school itself was an essential, frontline service - much like health care or food production.

Of course, it is. Distressingly, though, we are supporting hardly any essential or frontline workers with that kind of protection. And if the only thing we feel can pull us out of that valley of ignorance is definitive data, chances are that we will never get that anything that satisfying - that we get neither a case-closed data set proving that there is no risk nor any finding so striking that it becomes inarguable that schools should stay closed.

Instead, the results from global school reopenings are likely to show that children remain at significantly lower risk, but not zero risk, and that they help spread the disease somewhat - meaning that school reopenings do increase the likelihood of real outbreaks of the much dreaded pandemic.

In other words, even come the incoming month (June), we are likely to find ourselves living still in that valley of ignorance, knowing a bit more about the disease and how it affects us but not enough to treat these questions as neutral matters for "expertise" to adjudicate. Or to trust that there is any way, without a vaccine, for us to get to truly zero risk, for ourselves or our children.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 93 00--

WORD-FIT

SOLUTIONS

3 LETTERS: CRY, LNB, ONE
 4 LETTERS: EAST, SAVE, GIVE, REAL, DARE, EASE RANK (7 WORDS)
 5 LETTERS: EASEL, EDITS, DRIVE, DAILY EVOKE (5 WORDS)
 6 LETTERS: ASSIGN, BETTER, ONLINE, DEARIE PASTOR (5 WORDS)
 7 LETTERS: BARAKOA
 8 LETTERS: COLOMBIA
 10 LETTERS: ENGINE ROOM

CROSSWORD

CLUES: Across

1 maize with high sugar content
 5 in control of
 7 a grass-like plant with triangular stems, growing in wet ground
 8 Identities of People
 10 an act that harms someone
 11 calm, peaceful
 13 a person who uses something
 15 a set of moral principles
 14 act a part in a play or film in an
 17 overly restrained or unemotional way
 19 very old
 20 a native of Ossetia

Down:

1 a small mark
 2 flat, level
 3 kind of rocks which metals are found
 4 a person's head
 6 fierce anger that continues with great force
 7 strict in judgment
 9 annoying
 12 to shout
 14 grasses growing in water
 16 indicating that a voice or instrument is silent
 17 United Arab Emirates
 18 Latin word for "deity"

BUSINESS



SACC general secretary Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana.

CAUTION

Mamelodi Baptist Church will not reopen owing to 'unacceptably high' infection rate in Tshwane

TSHWANE

THE government has given the greenlight for religious gatherings, but the leadership of Mamelodi Baptist Church in Tshwane has decided that it will not be reopening from 1 June when the country moves to Level 3 of lockdown.

The EFF has slammed President Cyril Ramaphosa for moving the country to Level 3 of the nationwide lockdown, along with the reopening of schools, certain sectors of the economy and churches. In a statement on Thursday, two days after President Cyril Ramaphosa announced that religious gatherings of up to 50 people would be permitted, the church said it believed the risk of infection during services was still "unacceptably high", especially in Tshwane, which is one of the country's hotspots for the virus.

It said church and community members who may be in need of counselling or other services were, however, welcome to visit or call the church for support and they would be assisted. The church houses scores of people who were left displaced after floods destroyed their homes in the area last year.

It added that it would continue with its social ministry of distributing food parcels, vouchers, and running feeding schemes. "The community will be kept informed of any changes on this decision should the need arise and circumstances change. Church members are encouraged to keep in touch with their cell groups and to tune in to the online devotions and church services on the Mamelodi Baptist

Church Facebook page every Sunday morning at 09:30," the church said.

Amongst the organisations which have championed the reopening of religious gatherings has been the South African Council of Churches (SACC) and the African Christian Democratic Party. These organisations and other groups met with Ramaphosa to argue for the reopening of places of worship.

The SACC has since dismissed claims that it coerced government into allowing places of worship to open under Level 3, News24 reported. SACC general secretary Bishop Malusi Mpumlwana said the accusation that churches strong-armed the government into allowing religious gatherings was from those who had "failed to appreciate the intensity of people's spirituality, especially the poorer communities of our society."

This after a debate ensued on social media platforms following Ramaphosa's announcement on Tuesday, with some believing the decision would cause more harm than good. The country's third largest political party, the EFF, has also slammed government for the decision to reopen churches.

In a virtual press briefing on Thursday, EFF leader Julius Malema pleaded with religious leaders to not open their places of worship, saying that if they cared for their congregations and had high moral standards, they would keep them out of danger, News24 reported.

South Africa moves to Level 3 on Monday. Places of worship will be expected to not have more than 50 congregants and maintain a 1.5 metre physical distance. Services will also be

BIAS

Black women influencers paid far less than their white counterparts

NEW YORK

It seems like such an attractive and lucrative career path to choose especially when because you get to do what you love and get paid for it. Unfortunately, this career path seems to have inherited a flaw of traditional careers - pay discrimination.

Racial pay discrimination does at times creep up alongside gender pay discrimination and is seen to be an issue in many corporate workplaces.

Following the release of the Hopper Hq Instagram rich list, it's noticeable that black women influencers don't make the top cut of those receiving big checks in their industry. Hopper Hq reports that Kylie Jenner is the highest paid Instagram star, earning at \$1.2 million per post, with her being categorised in the celebrity niche.

In the beauty and fashion influencer categories, black women are not seen in the top five of the high earning influencers. According to the Hopper Hq rich list, Huda Kattan - who is representative of women of colour - is the highest paid beauty influencer, at \$91 300 per post. But unfortunately the first black woman, being Shayla Mitchell who earns \$6 900 per post, only appears 10th on the list.

In the fashion category, no black woman influencer appears in the top 17 highest earners on the list. To compile this list Hopper Hq compared levels of engagement, influencer niche, audience and influencer status.

Countless Instagrammers, and YouTubers, have posted about how their lives are not glamorous as it appears, and the prevailing issue is finances. These influencers have revealed how their white counterparts earn significantly more and get booked for brand deals more often than they do.

British YouTuber Patricia Bright, with close to three million subscribers



First black woman influencer Shayla Mitchell.

on the video sharing app, told The Cut that she found out she wasn't even getting paid a fifth of the income her one white counterpart was making.

"Even though we had the same

number of subscribers, I wasn't even making a fifth of what she was making. When I asked how she got all of those deals, she told me how she had friends at those brands. It's that kind of access,

too, that is a barrier to our success," she tells the publication.

British Instagrammer Ama Peters, with more than 48 000 followers, has shared how her race has played a role in the brand partnerships she books. "I think race affects the work I get. Working with a lot of British brands, they kind of favour the average English-looking blogger. I want to break through that ceiling and show other people they can have a career in fashion, blogging or anything, no matter the race they are," she tells The Guardian.

These are not the first influencers to open up about how their race affect their income and it has reached a level where a group was started to specifically address the economic marginalisation of black influencers.

A Forbes contributor argues that black influencers lead trends and dominate conversations online but many of them are overlooked and underpaid. Black people working as influencers often speak about how difficult it is to attain and sustain income in the business.

Here, Mhlahli Ndamase - who ranks 17th on the Hopper Hq beauty top earners list - and Sibule Mpanza share how YouTube is not a quick way to make money: Being an influencer or being paid to market brands using your social media accounts as a career is, like many in the industry have reiterated, a full-time job. Could this line of work, although relatively new, suffer from some pay discrimination practices faced by traditional corporate jobs? Labour economist and consultant Andrew Levy says this is definitely the case.

In traditional work environments, Andrew says: "The first wage discrimination is according to gender, women are routinely discriminated against. The second, around the world - this is not a South African problem, is based on race. So obviously black women have the most difficult time of all."

RESTRICTION

From 2,500 to 15 guests is how this couple scaled down their wedding amid Covid-19

DURBAN

Kenyan couple, Justus and Grace Ngari, had to cut down on a lot to make their wedding government-compliant in Kenya.

Pictures from their wedding are going viral on social media and have left many wondering why Kenyan couple Justus and Grace Ngari decided to go ahead with their nuptials amid the spread of the coronavirus and current lockdown. Justus, who now lives in Durban, tells DRUM they had to cut down on a lot to make their wedding government-compliant in Kenya. He says they had 15 guests - the initial tally was 2,500.

"We had planned quite a big event, our wedding was supposed to have 2 500 guests whom we had already approached. The bridal team would have comprised of eight guys and eight ladies, but we reduced them to have only the best man and maid of honour," Justus says.

He adds that the wedding, which took place on 9 May, was originally planned for 25 April. "But because of the coronavirus issue we had to postpone." Justus says due to closure of government offices they could only get clearance to proceed with their wedding from the registrar of marriages at a later stage.

"We also had booked our venue at Alliance Boys High School where the reception was to be held but because of the pandemic, we had to forfeit. For the rest of our friends and family, we streamed the day live on online platforms so they could join us that way," he tells DRUM.

When asked why they opted to proceed with the wedding instead of cancelling, Justus says they decided to take a "bold step."

"This pandemic is unpredictable, so we decided to take the bold step. The marriage is between the couple, the best man and maid of honour who are the witnesses and the priest, we had



Justus and Grace Ngari.

already obtained clearance from the registrar of marriages, which was expiring on 17 May. So we prayed about it and God made a way."

To spice things up, the couple incorporated a Covid-19 theme into their wedding. "The whole experience was awesome, especially spicing [up] our wedding with the Covid-19 theme - we shall never forget the face masks, our wedding was not so populated and also the photos of our friends which we put on the seats," he says.

He says although they had to sacrifice many luxuries for their big day, they kept the important bits. "At least parents of both bride and groom witnessed this great day and were very excited and my wife got to be walked down the aisle by her parents," he says.

Kenyan couple's Covid-19 wedding

Although they forfeited money they'd paid for the big wedding, Justus and Grace still saved some cash. "We have saved a lot since we reduced the numbers. The food we had [been] prepared to pay for and the sitting arrangements all changed abruptly. We also had a very big reception venue. So everything changed and we thank all friends who helped us meet our targets," he says. But the couple has no regrets.

"It was a nice wedding, not tiring. Given an opportunity to choose, I would still go for that. Sometimes we felt low, but our family members kept cheering us. So far we are happy and our day was very colourful, though we really wanted a big wedding so that we could dance and celebrate. This is the only big celebration you do when you are alive so we also feel we never met our expectations

in terms of a bigger wedding," he says.

The newlyweds met back in 2017 when they boarded the same minibus after work. They exchanged numbers and although nothing happened immediately, they reconnected after some time and the rest is history.

Just like in South Africa, gatherings in Kenya are prohibited by the government as part of its lockdown regulations. Since the beginning of April, a nighttime curfew has been implemented and public and social gatherings are banned. People have been encouraged to stay at home with all schools and religious centres shut. It is compulsory for people to wear masks in public spaces and the resumption of restaurants operations is the only easing of the rules during the lockdown.

LIFESTYLE

Kenyans cut out luxuries amid job losses, lowering of salaries

NAIROBI

After salary cuts and reduced incomes from businesses, a majority of Kenyans are restructuring their lifestyles. The reduction in incomes has forced most people to get creative on how to manage their finances.

Tabitha Melanoi had always been a "lover for big brands". Before Covid-19 ate into her earnings, she never bought unknown brands, which tend to be pricier. Today, she looks back and laughs. "Covid-19 has opened my eyes to other more affordable brands," says the mother-of-three says.

Tabitha, who works with an airline, is making do with 25 percent of her salary. "Honestly, I didn't think we'd survive. But with some adjustments, we're doing quite well," she says. These adjustments are both behavioural and purchasing changes. She buys groceries at the market, cereals from wholesale stores, follows her shopping list to the letter and no longer forces her children to eat, which reduces food wastage.

"They're usually fussy eaters, something they got from me. If I ask them to drink yogurt and they don't want, that's fine with me. It's available for them when they want it," she says. These have considerably reduced her food expenses. She has also cut out saloon visits for her children completely, thanks to Covid-19, helping make savings.

She has been washing and braiding her two daughters' hair, something she plans to continue post-Covid 19. "We really don't need to go to the salon once a week! Did I mention that I touched my hair?" she says.



Pay cut has forced most people to get creative on how to manage their finances.

Tabitha and her husband have also discovered that they do not need artisans like plumbers; they can fix broken windows, redo their floor designs, and paint their home. "Such sweet discoveries!" she says. Her children are in private schools and will not be changing their schools for now.

"My husband and I decided to take our children to a school that we can afford even if one of us loses a job. That's one of the best decisions we made," she says. Her biggest pandemic lesson on money is the need to have liquid cash, save more, and invest diversely.

"I'd saved money with a Sacco, but it's inaccessible. I've also realised that if I can survive on 25 percent of my earnings, it means I could have saved a lot more and invested," says Tabitha who is also servicing a loan.

Fortunately, through her employer, she got a temporary moratorium. The crisis has provided this couple with an opportunity to review their lifestyle after all this is over. "We're now ready to build our home instead of renting, and I will sell my car and buy a smaller one," she adds.

Lucy Naipanoi has experienced how easily life can change. "My husband and I used to drink three bottles of wine a week and eat out every weekend. I've since forgotten how the wine tastes like," she

says.

An entrepreneur in the travel industry, Lucy had to sell her fridge to get money to stockpile food as she was not financially prepared. "In January, we bought goats with the hope of selling them in April. That plan is a dead end. Markets are closed so we can't sell the goats. This has affected our income," she says.

Due to reduced earnings from the travel industry which is bearing the biggest brunt of Covid-19, she has let go of her househelp, reduced her TV subscriptions from three to one service provider, and like Tabitha, does her daughter's hair, instead of paying a hairdresser.

Is she worried about the future? "A little bit but we're taking it one day at a time. We started a new business in March so we're hoping it will work out. But, this is the last time something like this is happening to me. I'm never spending Sh2,800 per week on the wine again," she says.

Andrew Ranja, a father-of-three and a lawyer describe himself as a "pretty disciplined spender." When he was young, his mother ingrained in him the discipline of saving for a rainy day. "Covid-19 has really driven the point home; boy has it rained!" He exclaims. Even though he and his wife, June have been living frugally, they've

had to reallocate expenditure.

"We've cut down a little bit on extra foods like eggs, sausages, ordering out, and are we bulk buying shopping from wholesale outlets," he says. His children's school is charging fees for online classes but not exorbitant. "It's 10 percent of the total school fees so I'll keep the 90 percent 'savings' for next term or use it for something else," he says.

Back in 2015, Andrew went through an experience that taught him that money can easily disappear. He took this lesson to heart and admits it is one of the reasons why they have not experienced much of a lifestyle restructuring. As a disciplined spender, living within his means, he has developed a good saving habit. He is, however, quick to note that hoarding is bad.

"My savings can only take me so far; I really have to rely on God to provide and so far He has provided miraculously," he says. It is not only people with children who have been forced to relook their lifestyles. Single people are making changes too. Irene Bogonko, 32, works in the flower industry, as a production and logistics manager. Even before the crisis, the industry was already counting losses due to the December-January rains that affected flower growth which translated to lower sales.

"Covid-19 put the final nail in the coffin and we had to take a 50 percent pay cut to tide the company and ourselves through this hard time," she says. Her expenses had to change. First off the table were her elaborate makeup, nail, and hair expenses.

"Two months ago, I wouldn't be caught dead wearing a synthetic weave. Look at how humble Covid-19 has made me," Irene says waving her hair which is cheaper compared to human hair extensions which were her best buys. While her favourite pass time was to go eat at fancy restaurants, now she is seemingly content with eating at home, experimenting with home recipes.

Working from home means no fuel expenses as well as the impulse buying that characterised her drive to and from work daily. "Those things I used to buy on the street are not tempting me anymore," she says. Another exciting money-saver for Irene is the fact that there are no-evening meet-ups or parties. "The normal world is quite extravagant. Why should I spend Sh5,000 on a baby shower?" she wonders.

Avoiding unnecessary events are some of the changes she is planning to make after Covid-19, in addition to carrying lunch to the office, eating out once a week, and cancelling her gym subscription, which she admits she never really used.

For many people, the biggest financial lesson from this pandemic is the importance of setting aside cash for emergencies and increasing their savings. But Irene believes savings will not help someone during a crisis of this magnitude.

"My neighbours recently moved out to a cheaper house after spending all their savings. What we really need is a positive attitude, and peace of mind. When you have these two, you can think clearly and be ready to take the needed action. Be it moving back home or selling your car. Don't fear to start over afresh because this will make you anxious and stressed," she says.

INCENTIVE

Cyprus says it'll pay holiday costs for any tourist who will test Covid-19 positive

NICOSIA

Cyprus has pledged to cover the holiday costs of anyone who tests positive for coronavirus after travelling there in a bid to encourage tourists back to the country.

Medicine, accommodation and food for patients and their families would be paid for by the government under the new plans. However, tourists would have to cover the cost of airport transfers and repatriation flights.

The move was announced on Wednesday as part of a package to lure visitors back to the island, which relies heavily on tourism, accounting for about 15 per cent of the country's GDP. Cyprus has reported fewer than 1,000 infections and 17 deaths, according to latest figures.

A 100-bed hospital will be kept aside for tourists who test positive, and further "quarantine hospitals" will be made available for the families of patients being treated. All passengers will be made to undergo a test three days prior to departure, and they will be expected to present their test certificate before boarding their flight.

Airports across Cyprus will reopen on June 9 to holidaymakers from countries deemed as low risk, including Germany, Greece and Malta. It is expected that passengers from Russia and the UK - which account for more than half of all visitors to the country - will be able to return in July.

"The hit is massive, and we are trying to do our best now and do what we can for the remainder of the season," said deputy tourism minister Savvas Perdios. "We have worked extremely hard to keep the virus in check here."

Cyprus was among 11 countries, including Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Slovenia and Spain, to come together last week to reach an agreement to implement a new set of rules to allow cross border travel ahead of the peak European summer season.



Cyprus deputy tourism minister, Savvas Perdios.

BANNED

US recommends recall of diabetes drug metformin following fears that it has high levels of carcinogen

WASHINGTON

The US Food and Drug Administration has asked five pharmaceutical firms to voluntarily recall their formulations of the diabetes drug metformin after the agency found high levels of a possible cancer-causing impurity. The FDA said the companies' extended-release versions of the drugs contained the probable carcinogen N-nitrosodimethylamine (NDMA) beyond acceptable limits.

NDMA contamination was responsible for the FDA's recall in April of the heartburn drug Zantac sold by Sanofi, as well as some other, generic versions of the treatment containing the ingredient ranitidine. An FDA spokeswoman said it had not found elevated NDMA levels in immediate-release metformin.

The FDA, which said it would post the company recall notices on its website, named Canadian company Apotex Corp as one of the firms whose metformin tablets had high levels of NDMA. It has not yet revealed the names of the four other firms.

However, patients should continue taking metformin tablets until their doctors can prescribe a

replacement, the agency said. The FDA started an investigation into metformin, which is used as an initial treatment for patients with type 2 diabetes, in December.

Concerns over NDMA contamination of ranitidine and metformin formulations were raised by the online pharmacy Valisure. Valisure said in March that its independent tests showed high levels of NDMA in metformin made by 11 companies, including Amneal Pharmaceuticals and Aurobindo Pharma.

Tests on 38 batches of metformin from 22 companies found that 16 batches from 11 companies had NDMA exceeding the FDA's acceptable daily level of 96 nanograms, Valisure said. Several batches contained levels 10 times the daily acceptable intake limit. A nanogram is one-billionth of gram.

NDMA is believed to be toxic to the liver and a possible factor in cancers of the stomach and bladder. It is found at low levels in processed foods such as cold meats and cheese and in alcoholic drinks and tobacco smoke. Several brands of the blood pressure medication valsartan were recalled in 2018 and 2019 because of NDMA contamination.

RELIEF

All SA domestic workers can return to work on Monday

JOHANNESBURG

All domestic workers will be allowed to go back to work during Alert Level 3, cooperative governance and traditional affairs minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma confirmed on Thursday.

Level 3 of the national lockdown starts on Monday, June 1. The regulations governing it were published late on Thursday afternoon. "Relevant health protocols and social distancing measures for persons employed in private residences must be adhered to," the regulations state.

This presumably include physical distancing (of at least one and half metres from another person), and wearing masks. "There are particular challenges sometimes in a domestic environment and we will be looking to see whether the existing directions may need to be elaborated or expanded to provide for circumstances like that," said Ebrahim Patel, minister for trade, industry, and competition.

"But even as domestic workers return, it is absolutely vital that it be done in those circumstances where it can be done safely." While draft regulations included the proviso that domestic workers had to use private transport, this is not included in the final regula-



A SweepSouth worker on duty in Johannesburg.

tions. There are no restrictions on transport.

Cleaning agency SweepSouth, which connects customers with domestic workers, says it will resume operations on Monday. Customers - as well as cleaners - must confirm that their households are Covid-19 symptom-free before the cleaners will be allowed back. Cleaners must be provided with

hand sanitiser and bleach, as well as white vinegar and bicarbonate soda, SweepSouth said. Where possible, private transport must be arranged for the cleaners. SweepSouth domestic workers must pass an educational course on "sanitisation cleaning" before they will be allowed to work, and must wear face masks and maintain physical distancing.

Domestic workers are a support structure for those who must go back to work under Level 3, said Dlamini-Zuma. Only live-in domestic staff and childminders in private households - as well as those caring for the sick, mentally ill, elderly and people with disabilities - had been allowed to return to work as part of Level 4 rules. By some estimates there

are more than one million domestic workers in South Africa, and many have been left without an income during the lockdown.

So far, only around 14,000 domestic workers received money from the Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) as part of the Covid-19 Temporary Relief scheme (TERS). The UIF is paying out money to workers who are put on unpaid leave, have been laid off temporarily, or whose employers can't afford to pay their full salaries. The minimum amount paid is R3,500 a month during the lockdown period. Until recently, only domestic workers who were registered with the UIF could get the money - but that changed this week.

Government issued new regulations that now also include all employees who were not registered with UIF, as long as they worked for one employer for more than 24 hours per month.

As the function of TERS is to support lost income, domestic workers should be eligible for a payment in April - as they weren't allowed to work during that stage of lockdown, says Amy Tekié of the Izwi Domestic Workers Alliance.

FAME

Nuns, including 95-year-old, become TikTok influencers

THE HAGUE

A group of Dutch nuns are becoming influencers on TikTok with a series of videos inspired by social media celebrities.

The latest video by Sister Hannah, who runs the TikTok account from the Casa Carmeli Convent in Vogelenzang, in Noord-Holland, has notched up over 515 000 views. And even though the nun has only made 34 videos so far, she has 29 700 followers and more than 384 000 likes.

Sister Hannah says her inspiration was from seeing how social media influencers spread their messages to the public, and she wanted to do the same with religion. Sister Hannah lives in the convent with five other nuns who all are supporting her and can be seen on the TikTok videos

she uploads. The oldest nun at the convent, a 95-year-old, even joins in the fun and features on some of the videos.

How social media influencers are adapting their content while social distancing

Fashion and lifestyle influencers Ashley Ballard, Coco Basse, and Lucie Fink share what it's like to be a digital creator from home and offer tips and tricks for how anyone can connect with a digital audience.

Sister Hannah admittedly "doesn't understand much" about social media but she wanted to use it to spread love and a message about religion. "I want to show the outside world that we still exist, to speak to people and to get the message. This is a way of getting the message to young people," she says. "We want to be who we are, but we also need to reach young people to show them who we are. We

have to be a bit active in the world."

"I saw a video of an influencer showing awful outfits for different occasions. In the convent, we don't have to choose what to wear," the nun says. She said every day it was the same thing, and so the idea for the video where her clothes remained unchanged while the influencer alongside her flips through different garments was born. Reactions to the video were mixed, ranging from people who are curious about the way she dresses or those who think it's funny to those who object to what she's doing.

Despite her critics, Sister Hannah has the support of her fellow sisters and says she can live with the criticism. "People sometimes put too much weight on faith and religion, and it's not something to treat lightly, but I think you can touch and reach a lot of people by sending a message with humour," she says.



Dutch nuns who are becoming a sensation on TikTok.



People at Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market.

REFUTE

China denies that coronavirus did originate from Wuhan wet market

BIEJING

Genetic evidence has all but confirmed that the virus originated in Chinese bats before it jumped to humans via an intermediary animal host. But where and how that spillover first happened is still up for debate.

Initially, authorities in Wuhan, China, reported that the first cases of the virus emerged at the local Huanan Seafood Wholesale Market. But following an investigation of the animals sold there, the Chinese Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said this week that it has ruled the site out as the origin point of the outbreak.

According to the Wall Street Journal, Gao Fu, the director of the Chinese CDC, told Chinese state media: "It now turns out that the market is one of the victims." Samples collected from animals at the market came back negative for the new coronavirus, suggesting that they couldn't have infected shoppers. The cases linked to the wet market weren't the first in China

Wuhan authorities first informed the World Health Organisation (WHO) about the unknown, pneumonia-like illness that would later be identified as the new coronavirus on December 31. A majority of the initial 41 cases were linked to the wet market, which was shut down on January 1. Given that the SARS outbreak in 2002 and 2003 started at a similar venue in Guangdong, China, the wet market seemed like a logical origin. (The SARS coronavirus jumped from bats to civet cats to people.)

But none of the animals at the market tested positive for the virus. Colin Carlson, a zoologist at Georgetown University told Live Science. If they were never infected, they couldn't have been the intermediary host that facilitated the spillover.

A growing body of research supports the Chinese CDC's conclusion that the outbreak's origins were unrelated to the market. The virus seems to have been circulating in

Wuhan before those 41 cases were reported: Research published in January showed that the first person to test positive for the coronavirus was likely exposed to it on December 1, then showed symptoms on December 8. The researchers behind the study also found that 13 of the 41 original cases showed no link to the wet market.

Similarly, an April study suggested that the coronavirus had already established itself and begun spreading in the Wuhan community by early January. The identity of "patient zero" hasn't been confirmed, but it may have been a 55-year-old man from China's Hubei province who was infected on November 17, according to the South China Morning Post (SCMP), which reviewed government documents.

The wet market could have been the site of a super-spreader event

Carlson told Live Science that the Wuhan wet market may simply have been the site of an early super-spreader event - an instance in which one sick person infects an atypically large number of others. Other super-spreader events around the world have also created clusters of infections that cropped up almost overnight. In Daegu, South Korea, for example, one churchgoer infected at least 43 people.

These instances don't necessarily involve a person who is more contagious than others or sheds more viral particles. Rather, the infected person has access to a greater number of people in spaces that facilitate infection. A market, in which shoppers interact with one another and vendors in close quarters, is one such risky place.

The coronavirus also probably did not leak from a lab

Lingering questions about the pandemic's origin have given rise to a range of unsubstantiated theories. One suggests the coronavirus may have accidentally leaked from a local laboratory, the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV), in which scientists were researching coronaviruses.



ISIDINGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

ITV	7:00	7:00	16:30
SUNDAY 31 May	Habari	Habari	Capchat rpt
5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi	Al Jazeera	Al Jazeera	Meza huru
6:00 HABARI	Watoto Wetu	Meza huru	Innovation
6:40 Kumekucha	Isidingo	Isidingo	19:30 Jagina rpt
7:00 Habari	Igizo: Mizengwe rpt	Igizo: Mizengwe rpt	20:00 Series: Itohan
8:00 Al Jazeera	Bongo Movie rpt	Bongo Movie rpt	20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
9:00 Watoto Wetu	Tamasha la Michezo	Tamasha la Michezo	21:30 Capital Prime
10:00 Isidingo	Mwangaza	Mwangaza	22:00 Turning the spotlight rpt
11:40 Igizo: Mizengwe rpt	The Great queen Seonduk	The Great queen Seonduk	22:30 Eco@Africa
12:00 Bongo Movie rpt	ITV Top 10	ITV Top 10	23:00 Al Jazeera
14:00 Tamasha la Michezo	Kipindi cha kikristo	Kipindi cha kikristo	
15:00 Mwangaza	Jiji Letu	Jiji Letu	Wed 03 June
16:00 The Great queen Seonduk	Mapishi	Mapishi	06:00 Al Jazeera
16:45 ITV Top 10	Matukio ya wiki	Matukio ya wiki	07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
17:30 Kipindi cha kikristo	Igizo: Mtego	Igizo: Mtego	09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
18:00 Jiji Letu	Habari	Habari	13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
18:15 Mapishi	Mizengwe	Mizengwe	14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
18:30 Matukio ya wiki	Mjue Zaidi	Mjue Zaidi	16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
19:30 Igizo: Mtego	Bongo Movie	Bongo Movie	16:30 Culinary delight rpt
20:00 Habari	ITV Top 10	ITV Top 10	17:00 Innovation rpt
21:05 Mizengwe	Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost	17:30 Meza Huru
21:20 Mjue Zaidi			19:00 Sports Gazette
22:05 Bongo Movie			19:30 Chetu ni chetu
23:35 ITV Top 10			20:00 Series: Itohan
00:30 Telenovela rpt: Elena's Ghost			20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
			21:30 Capital Prime News
			22:00 Dakika 45:
			22:45 The Décor
			23:15 Al Jazeera
			Thurs 04 June
			06:00 Al Jazeera
			07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
			09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
			13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
			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: (Destino) Destiny
			21:30 Capital Prime News
			22:00 Capchat rpt
			23:00 Al Jazeera
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			06:00 Al Jazeera
			07:00 Morning Jam (Via Capital Radio)
			09:00 Lete Raha (Via Capital Radio)
			13:00 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny
			14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio)
			16:00 Series rpt: Itohan
			16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt
			17:30 Movie: Keeping mum
			19:00 Drive It
			19:30 Eco@Africa
			20:00 Albu Yako
			20:15 Local Pgm: Business Edition
			20:45 Telenovela: (Destino) Destiny
			21:30 Capital Prime News
			22:00 Malumbano ya hoja rpt
			00:00 Al Jazeera
			Sat 06 June
			08:00 CNN International
			09:00 Drive It rpt
			09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt
			10:00 Culinary delight rpt
			10:30 Innovation rpt
			11:00 Out n'about rpt

WORLD

Protests over Floyd's death turn violent in Minneapolis, spread to other US cities

WASHINGTON

IN the wake of the death of George Floyd in police custody, protests have continued after turning violent on Wednesday night with fires burning and businesses looted in Minneapolis, the biggest city in the midwest state of Minnesota.

Demonstrations over his death also spread to some other U.S. cities including Los Angeles and Memphis, local media reported.

Floyd died on Monday evening shortly after a white police officer held him down with a knee on his neck though the black man in his 40s repeatedly pleaded, "I can't breathe," and "please, I can't breathe."

The police officer's way of handling the man is not approved by the local police department.

Protesters gathered for a second night Wednesday evening in Minneapolis. Videos on social media showed that some demonstrators grew vio-

lent, looting a Target and Cub Foods supermarket, setting fire to an Auto Zone, and smashing the windows of other nearby businesses.

"The situation near Lake Street and Hiawatha in Minneapolis has evolved into an extremely dangerous situation," Minnesota Governor Tim Walz tweeted last night.

"For everyone's safety, please leave the area and allow firefighters and paramedics to get to the scene."

The Minneapolis Fire Department said in a statement Thursday that firefighters responded to approximately 30 fires overnight, including at least 16 structure fires. No civilians or firefighters were injured in the blazes.

Footage showed buildings on fire in Minneapolis in the early hours of Thursday.

A report by The Wall Street Journal said residents took morning walks over broken glass and a McDonald's was recognizable only by its salvaged drive-through menu after the riot.



Protesters gather at the scene where George Floyd, an unarmed black man, was arrested by police officers before dying in hospital in Minneapolis, Minnesota [Reuters]

On the edge of the shopping plaza that included the looted Target, a resident told local media she had been sitting in her car since before sunset, just in case she needed to leave quickly. "We're afraid to go to bed," said the woman, who declined to give her name. "I've never seen this."

Amid the riot, the owner of a nearby pawn shop shot and killed a person suspected of looting his building. Police are investigating the shooting with one suspect in custody.

A video shared on Twitter by Minnesota Public Radio photojournalist Evan Frost showed people gathering again outside local police's Third Precinct by mid-morning. Officers stood with face shields around the building and on its roof.

Minneapolis Mayor Jacob Frey called for the city to remain calm in a plea to his residents overnight. "Please, Minneapolis, we cannot let tragedy beget more tragedy," he tweeted.

The mayor and Floyd's family on Wednesday called for the arrests of the officers involved in his death, and federal

authorities on Thursday promised a "robust criminal investigation."

The four officers involved in the case were fired shortly after a video recording Floyd's death went viral on social media on Tuesday, sparking a national outcry for justice.

Minneapolis police's statement about Floyd's arrest said that "he physically resisted officers" after getting out of the vehicle, but the video showed two officers grabbing Floyd and pulling him from a vehicle as they put handcuffs on him. Some other cities also saw protests Wednesday night.

In Los Angeles, demonstrators marched on a major freeway and at least one protester was injured after falling off a moving police car, said the report of The Wall Street Journal.

In Memphis, a silent demonstration holding signs reading "Black Lives Matter" and "Stop killing black people" turned into separate verbal confrontations with Memphis police and two counter-protesters.

Memphis police temporarily shut down a portion of road after the confrontation grew, local newspaper The Commercial Appeal reported.

"The death of Mr. Floyd is deeply disturbing and should be of concern to all Americans," the Major Cities Chiefs Association, which represents the heads of police departments in largest U.S. cities, said in a statement on Wednesday.

U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday called Floyd's death "very sad and tragic," saying "justice will be served" in his case. Floyd's death evoked the country's memory about the case of Eric Garner.

Xinhua

UK cautions EU against financial 'self harm' over Brexit

LONDON/BRUSSELS

EUROPEAN companies would be the losers if the European Union tried to impose barriers on London financiers, as such firms would be unable to access some of the deepest markets in the world, Cabinet Office Minister Michael Gove said on Thursday.

"There are few places in the world where you have such a deep and broad capital market," Gove told the Brexit committee of the upper house of the British parliament.

"If it were the case that the EU chose deliberately to raise the bar-

rier themselves on access for our financial services to their market, the losers would be investors in equities in EU companies who would not be able to get the very best price for any transaction that they wanted.

"It would be another example of potential self harm on the EU's part," Gove said.

In Brussels, the EU trade chief said the same day that the EU is willing to move in negotiations on future EU-UK relations, but Britain must make a bigger effort to do the same in talks next week.

EU trade commissioner Phil Hogan told EU lawmakers that the



negotiations had not made much progress to date.

"Perhaps the United Kingdom has come to the conclusion that there's not going to be a deal. I hope not because we want a deal, but speed is of the essence be-

cause time is short," he told the trade committee of the European Parliament, before the next round of negotiations next week.

Britain told the EU on Wednesday it needed to break a fundamental impasse to clinch a Brexit trade deal by the end of the year and said an agreement on fisheries might not be ready by July.

Also on Thursday, EU Budget Commissioner Johannes Hahn said the European Commission wants higher guarantees for the next long-term EU budget to back Commission borrowing for economic recovery and as a safeguard against a "hard Brexit".

Britain left the European Union on Jan 31, but has various financial obligations to the 27-nation bloc that will last many years.

EU law now says that the maximum national contribution to the EU budget by governments can be 1.2 percent of gross national income (GNI), even though actual payments are lower.

The EU executive wants to raise that ceiling to be sure to have enough cash to repay the 750 billion euros the Commission is set to borrow on the market to stimulate economic recovery across the bloc after the coronavirus pandemic.

Agencies

Boeing set to lay off nearly 7,000 due to outbreak

NEW YORK

BOEING will cut 6,770 US employees in its first round of involuntary layoffs triggered by the collapse of commercial air travel amid the novel coronavirus pandemic, the aircraft builder said on Wednesday.

The layoffs are part of Boeing's previously announced plans to reduce its global workforce of 160,000 by 10 percent through routine turnover as some employees leave for other jobs, retirements and involuntary layoffs.

"The COVID-19 pandemic's devastating impact on the airline industry means a deep cut in the number of commercial jets and services that our customers will need over the next few years, which in turn means fewer jobs on our lines and in our offices," David Calhoun, Boeing's chief executive officer, said in a statement.

"I wish there were some other

way. We also will have to adjust our business plans constantly until the global pandemic stops whipsawing our markets in ways that are still hard to predict."

So far, about 5,500 US employees have agreed to leave the company voluntarily.

Boeing's commercial aircraft business will take most of the cuts. The company's defense, space and security divisions are expected to lose about 100 workers through involuntary layoffs.

Most of the involuntary layoffs that Boeing announced on Wednesday are expected to center on the company's assembly plants in the Seattle area. Boeing also is likely to cut jobs at its services arm as the collapse in demand for air travel also reduced expenditures for parts and maintenance services.

Another 4,000 jobs

Boeing still must cut another 4,000 jobs to meet its stated goal of



reducing its workforce by 16,000 employees. The company said those layoffs will be announced in the next few months.

Calhoun told employees there are some tentative signs of an economic turnaround that will benefit Boeing.

"Some of our customers are reporting that reservations are outpacing cancellations on their flights for the first time since the

pandemic started," he said in a statement.

"Some countries and US states are starting cautiously to reopen their economies again. And some parts of our business, most notably on the defense side, will continue hiring to meet customer commitments and fill critical skill positions."

Departing workers will receive severance pay, temporary

healthcare coverage and assistance in finding another job, the company said.

Boeing isn't the only company announcing cutbacks in the sector as airlines reduce, postpone or cancel orders for new aircraft.

Boeing's European rival Airbus has announced plans to cut jetliner production by about a third, with layoffs as needed.

General Electric Co, a builder of jet engines and other parts for Airbus and Boeing, has also announced plans to cut thousands of jobs.

Spirit AeroSystems in Wichita, Kansas, a builder of fuselages for the 737 Max, cut about 2,800 workers after Boeing temporarily suspended production of the plane in January.

Previously, Boeing announced that it would cut production of its 787 twin-aisle jet by 50 per-

Agencies

China adopts decision to make Hong Kong national security laws

BEIJING

CHINA is set to make Hong Kong national security laws as a related decision was adopted at the national legislature on Thursday.

The decision will also allow the central government's national security organs to set up agencies in Hong Kong when needed.

Deputies to the 13th National People's Congress (NPC) voted overwhelmingly to approve the decision at the closing meeting of the NPC annual session.

Rounds of applause erupted in the Great Hall of the People when the decision was passed.

The NPC Decision on Establishing and Improving the Legal System and Enforcement Mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to Safeguard National Security consists of an introduction and seven articles. The decision was made to safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests, uphold and improve "one country, two systems," safeguard Hong Kong's long-term prosperity and stability, and guarantee the legitimate rights and interests of Hong Kong residents, says the introduction.

Li Zhanshu, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee, said the decision "serves the fundamental interests of all Chinese people including Hong Kong compatriots."

For the next step, the NPC will entrust its standing committee to make national security laws to be promulgated and enforced in Hong Kong.

HKSAR Chief Executive Carrie Lam welcomed the move and said the HKSAR government will fully cooperate with the NPC Standing Committee to complete relevant legislation as soon as possible.

On Thursday, Lam took part in a public campaign in Hong Kong to support the national security legislation. In less than five days, more than 1.85 million Hong Kong residents have signed a petition supporting the legislation.

"NATIONAL SECURITY IS LIKE THE AIR"

The legislative move came after prolonged social unrest and escalating street violence had plunged Hong Kong into the gravest situation since its return to the motherland in 1997.

Hong Kong had witnessed rampant activities of "Hong Kong independence" organizations and violent radicals as well as blatant interference by external forces.

Presenting the draft to the national legislature last week, senior legislator Wang Chen said increasingly notable national security risks in Hong Kong have become a prominent problem. There are apparent "weak links" in Hong Kong's existing legal system and enforcement mechanisms in safeguarding national security, said Wang, vice chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.

Considering Hong Kong's situation at present, efforts must be made at the state level to establish and improve the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the HKSAR to safeguard national security, he said.

"National security is like the air. Without it, no one can survive," said Witman Hung, an NPC deputy from the HKSAR. "The NPC decision comes at the right time."

PURVIEW OF CENTRAL AUTHORITIES

Alan Hoo, chairman of the Basic Law Institute in Hong Kong, said national security legislation is a state legislative power no matter a country adopts the unitary or federal system. National security laws can be found in both common law and continental law systems.

Hong Kong, he said, cannot remain unguarded. In an online article on the issue, Secretary for Justice Teresa Cheng of the HKSAR government said national security is a matter of national interest that concerns the whole population of China and falls squarely within the purview of the central authorities.

Cheng stressed that it is fundamental to recognize that the central authorities hold the ultimate responsibility for national security in all local administrative regions.

Xinhua



A resident writes down his signature in a street campaign in support of the national security legislation for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region in Hong Kong, south China, May 23, 2020. (Xinhua)

Chinese products forward global efforts to fight COVID-19 pandemic

FIVE foreign military airplanes landed in Shanghai on a same day to pick up coronavirus prevention supplies; the world's largest transport aircraft joined the international convoy to transport medical supplies from China; passenger flights around the world were dispatched to China for medical materials.

That is just a small part of the "air fleet" recently landing in China and then carrying batches of China-produced materials to respective destinations.

The short supply of medical materials remains an urgent task that needs to be addressed by global countries in the sudden outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. To cope with the situation, China, while ensuring strict implementation of containment measures at home, is doing all it can to supply the

world with medical materials, offering important "strategic" replenishment for the global efforts to fight the pandemic.

According to incomplete statistics, in March and April, China had exported 27.8 billion pieces of masks, 130 million protective suits, 73.41 million COVID-19 test kits, 12.57 million sets of infrared thermometers, 49,100 breathing machines, 124,000 patient monitors, 43.63 million pairs of protective goggles, and 854 million pairs of surgical gloves.

"China boasts the largest manufacturing industry on Earth, with a fast-growing capacity to build medical devices and a history of making the goods the world needs at record speed," said a Canadian newspaper.

It's still remembered that the head of a Suzhou-based company worked day

and night and slept only two hours per day just to complete the order of 200 sets of disinfecting devices placed from Wuhan, as his employees were not able to return to work because of the traffic restrictions implemented to curb the spread of the virus during the epidemic. The man said the work was tiring but worthy: it can protect people and save their lives.

Life comes above everything. That is a simple value of the Chinese, and also the positive energy carried in the Chinese products. To fight the virus and race against death, China has overcome difficulties and made all-out efforts to promote work resumption of related enterprises in places where condition permitted. It also mobilized enterprises to engage in cross-industrial produc-

tion. Carmakers, smart phone manufacturers, garment factories and even solar equipment producers shifted their production to masks.

A WTO report indicated that 80 countries have prohibited or limited the exportation of medical supplies such as masks and gloves since the outbreak. However, such ban has never been implemented in China, even when the country was at the hardest time fighting the disease.

Since April, the export of China's anti-pandemic supplies has shown a conspicuous growing trend, with a daily volume of around 1 billion yuan (\$140.1 million) earlier this month to the current 3 billion yuan. Behind the growing trend is the Chinese people's profound understanding of a shared future for

mankind, as well as the responsibility of Chinese enterprises in the global war against the virus. Many Chinese enterprises noted that they would produce what's needed in the pandemic.

No hesitation is allowed in the urgent task of fighting the pandemic. After assisting Wuhan in February, China's jumbo cargo aircraft Y-20 once again headed up to the sky for its first-ever overseas mission - sending medical supplies to Pakistan. Sending the badly-needed materials to the place in dire need demonstrated China's resolution and concrete action to assist the global efforts fighting the pandemic.

Besides, China is also doing its best to make purchase channels of anti-pandemic materials unimpeded. The Chinese government encouraged air-

line companies to transport cargos with passenger flights, increased the number of trips of the China-Europe freight service, and opened international seaways to ensure supplies of medical materials. Multiple cities have launched green channel for the transportation of medical supplies, striving to minimize the time for customs clearance.

At the critical moment of the global anti-pandemic war, medical supplies produced in China are being sent to foreign destinations everyday at the fastest speed.

So far, these supplies have been exported to 194 countries and regions, offering huge support and strong guarantee for the global community to fight the disease.

People's Daily



Northwest China's Shaanxi province turns desert into oasis

NORTHWEST China's Shaanxi province has created an oasis out of the Mu Us Desert, one of the four major deserts in China, turning 93.24 percent of the desertified land into a sea of green, according to the provincial forestry bureau.

This means that the desert, which has existed for over 1,000 years, will vanish from the map of Shaanxi under generations of efforts in taming desertification.

Shaanxi's Yulin, where a part of the desert is located, has been reducing desertification by 1.62 percent annually since the founding of the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1949, which constantly narrowed the Mu Us Desert.

Over the past years, the forest coverage in the city has been lifted from only 0.9 percent to 34.8 percent, extending the green part of Shaanxi 400 kilometers northward.

The change of the desert reflects the relationship between human and nature. During the Wei, Jin, Southern and Northern Dynasties (220-589), the place was a fertile land with thriving grasslands.

However, due to unrestricted exploitation, a small piece of sandy land appeared in Tang Dynasty (618-907) and started to encroach into the grassland. By the founding of the PRC, the desert has developed into one that covered an area of 42,200 square kilometers.

The ecological miracle of the Mu Us Desert is attributable to the per-

sistent and unremitting efforts of local people.

Fifty-four militiamen with an average age of 18, removed more than 800 sand dunes in Bulanghe township of Yulin, and built 30 windbreak and sand fixation forest belts there.

A local farmer named Shi Guangyin founded the first farmers' company in the country focusing on sand control, and battling desertification remains a lifelong career for him. In over 30 years, "national desertification control hero" Niu Yuqin, a villager in Yulin's Jingbian county, restored green land covering 7,333 hectares.

Such stories of local people dedicating themselves to sand control for generations are widely circulated in the local community, and it was their quiet but persistent efforts that created the "Mu Us Oasis".

China deserves the respect from all countries in the world for fighting against desertification, said an official with the United Nations.

The transformation of the Mu Us Desert is inspiring. Environmental protection is a long-term task in China and ecological restoration a cause that will benefit many generations to come and lays a foundation for long-term development.

By accelerating ecological progress and tackling ecological and environmental problems, China is sure to create a more beautiful environment with a bluer sky, greener mountains and clearer waters.

People's Daily

Burundi opposition leader files case contesting presidential vote

NAIROBI

BURUNDIAN opposition leader Agathon Rwaswa filed on Thursday a case at the constitutional court challenging last week's presidential election outcome, saying he had evidence of fraud.

Burundi's election commission said on Monday the ruling party candidate, retired General Evariste Ndayishimiye, had won the presidential election with 69 percent of votes cast. It said Rwaswa (pictured) had garnered 24 percent of the vote. The commission's Chairman Pierre Claver Kazihise said the turnout had been huge and the election was peaceful.

"Appalling errors were made across the country, no district or province was spared. We have provided evidence that there has been a massive fraud," Rwaswa told reporters after filing his complaint. "The an-



nounced results are false."

He said the court had eight days to decide the case.

The May 20 vote to replace President Pierre Nkurunziza, however, had been preceded by political violence including the arrest, torture and murder of opposition activists, according to a local rights group.

There was also controversy over holding the election during the coronavirus crisis.

Hundreds of Burundians were killed and hundreds of thousands exiled after unrest surrounding the last election in 2015, when the opposition accused Nkurunziza of violating a peace deal by running for a third term.

Rwaswa said the evidence in his filing showed that people had voted using dead voters' identities and use of an electoral register which has never been published by the electoral body and ballot box stuffing.

The Conference of Bishops of Burundi on Tuesday also criticised the election conduct, saying some parties' observers had been chased from polling stations.

The electoral body's officials were not immediately reachable to comment on Rwaswa's complaints.

Five other candidates also stood in the polls, in which 5.11 million registered voters were eligible to participate.

Agencies

Joe Biden losing economic argument to Trump as US begins to re-open

WASHINGTON/NEW YORK

U.S. President Donald Trump is trusted more than Democrat nominee Joe Biden to handle the economy, polls show, even with more than 40 million Americans filing jobless claims and growth stalled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

Some Biden (pictured) supporters fear that vulnerability could intensify if Trump becomes the face of an economic recovery as the country re-opens after shutdowns, giving the Republican president's re-election prospects a boost when he needs it most.

Biden is expected to release a large-scale recovery plan in the coming weeks. Democrats are watching closely to see if his message matches the moment, saying the party's presumptive nominee needs to ramp up criticism of Trump's response to the pandemic and show leadership for moving forward.

Biden, who has held online events from home during the shutdown, "stayed in his basement and did the proper thing, but now it's different," said a leading Democrat in Michigan's Macomb County, a suburban Detroit county critical to Biden's hopes of taking the state back after Trump's 2016 win there.

Biden should be out in communities across the country demonstrating how to reopen businesses while following public health guidance, said the Democrat, who asked not to be named in order to speak candidly. "He needs to show what life is going to be like and how we are going to do it."

Trump has staked his political future on the economy, pushing a return to normal as U.S. deaths from COVID-19 topped 100,000 nationwide. Biden has preached caution, endorsing a phased re-opening approach but saying this week the country could not fully revert until there is a vaccine.

Though the former vice president has an edge on Trump in overall support ahead of the Nov. 3 election, Reuters/Ipsos polling this week showed Trump with a 42% to 34% lead over Biden in terms of which candidate was trusted more on the economy.

Americans were split between who has a better plan for a national recovery: 37% favored Biden while 35% favored Trump.

An improving economy could play to Trump's strengths, said Ian Sams, an adviser at Navigator, a polling organization.

To better compete, Biden "must put Trump's mismanagement of the economic fallout of the coronavirus on the front burner," said Sams, who was a spokesman for Senator Kamala Harris' 2020 Democratic presidential campaign.

Democrats should amplify concerns about whether unemployed workers and small businesses have been given enough help, he added.

A spokesman for Biden's campaign, TJ Ducklo, said Biden "has and will continue to make the clear case for an economic recovery that makes rebuilding a stronger, more inclusive middle class the centerpiece."

Agencies

Xi's 'two sessions' messages reassuring at difficult times

BEIJING

ERADICATING absolute poverty, upholding people-centered philosophy and seeking new opportunities from challenges, Chinese President Xi Jinping brought reassuring messages at times of uncertainty and difficulty.

Xi spoke on a wide range of topics at this year's "two sessions," which closed on Thursday.

The two sessions are the country's annual meetings of the National People's Congress (NPC) and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, participated in deliberations with national legislators and joined in discussions with political advisors.

PEOPLE FIRST

An NPC deputy himself, Xi joined deliberations with lawmakers from north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region on May 22, the first day of the annual session of the national legislature.

"People first" was the keyword in the discussions. Xi referred to the recovery of an 87-year-old COVID-19 patient after 47 days of care by a team of 10 doctors and nurses.

"Many people worked together to save a single patient. This, in essence, embodies doing whatever it takes (to save lives)," he said.

China mounted swift and sweeping actions to contain the disease. It has mobilized the best doctors, most advanced equipment and high-demand resources. The eldest patient to have been cured is 108 years old.

"President Xi emphasized people and lives are the top priorities," said Huhbaater, a professor of Inner Mongolia Agricultural University and an NPC deputy who heard Xi speak.

NEW OPPORTUNITIES

China decided not to set a specific annual economic growth target for 2020, but set eyes on winning the battle against poverty and finishing building a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

Xi touched upon the absence of a



Chinese President Xi Jinping

numerical growth target. "Had we imposed a target, the focus would have been strong stimulus and a simple grasp on growth rate. That is not in line with our social and economic development purposes," he said.

Xi urged efforts in seeking new opportunities amid challenges as he joined discussions with national political advisors from the economic sector on May 23.

"Our economy is still characterized by ample potential, strong resilience, large maneuver room and sufficient policy instruments," Xi said.

China has the largest industrial system in the world with the most complete categories, strong production capabilities and complete supporting sectors, as well as over 100 million market entities and a talent pool of 170 million people.

The Chinese president anticipates faster growth in the digital economy, intelligent manufacturing, life and health, new materials and other strategic emerging industries, highlighting the creation of new growth areas and drivers.

Xi stressed steady progress in creating a new development pattern where domestic and foreign markets can boost each other, with the domestic market as the mainstay.

He called for unwavering efforts to make economic globalization more open, inclusive and balanced so that its benefits are shared by all, and to build an open world economy.

PUBLIC HEALTH PROTECTION

On May 24, Xi joined deliberations with lawmakers from central China's Hubei Province, which was the hard-

est hit by COVID-19.

"We must face the problems upfront, step up reform and waste no time in addressing the shortcomings, insufficiencies and loopholes exposed by the epidemic," he said, stressing fortifying the public health protection network.

Xi noted several priorities: reforming the disease prevention and control system; boosting epidemic monitoring, early warning and emergency response capacity; perfecting the treatment system for major epidemics; and improving public health emergency laws and regulations.

ENHANCING NATIONAL DEFENSE

When attending a plenary meeting of the delegation of the People's Liberation Army and People's Armed Police Force, Xi commended their role in battling COVID-19 and stressed achieving the targets and missions of strengthening the national defense and armed forces for 2020.

The epidemic has brought a profound impact on the global landscape and on China's security and development as well, he said.

He ordered the military to think about worst-case scenarios, scale up training and battle preparedness, promptly and effectively deal with all sorts of complex situations, and resolutely safeguard national sovereignty, security and development interests.

Noting that this year marks the end of the 13th five-year plan for military development, Xi said extraordinary measures must be taken to overcome the impact of the epidemic to ensure major tasks on the military building are achieved.

Xinhua

US falsely accusing China undermines international rule of law

FOR a long time, some American politicians and organizations, out of ulterior motives, have stirred up trouble based on hearsay, knitting the conspiracy theory about the origin of COVID-19 and trying to hold China accountable for the pandemic and claim compensation from the country.

On May 12, Lindsey Graham, Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on the Judiciary, even introduced the so-called COVID-19 Accountability Act to instigate chaos again, showing a total disregard for the law.

A major infectious disease outbreak is classified as a public health emergency as well as a force majeure in terms of legal theories.

From the aspect of substantive law, the existing international

legal system hasn't specified in any way that the country where a virus has been first discovered should assume responsibility.

It is widely known that the virus came into being purely by accident and it is obviously unfair to falsely accuse pandemic-hit regions and people and cause secondary damage.

According to procedural law, the principles of sovereign equality and immunity indicate that the courts in one country have no right of jurisdiction over the sovereign act of a foreign government to prevent and control the epidemic.

The Charter of the United Nations (UN) stipulates the principle of sovereign equality over each other," said the Roman law. The doctrine from an-

cient Rome has formed the basis of state immunity in the course of history and been supported by the judicial practice of the sovereign states nowadays.

A sovereign state is thus exempt from the jurisdiction of foreign national courts, a right protected by the international law rather than a "gift" given by foreign government.

It should also be noted that the estoppel principle of the international law requires countries to be consistent in applying the rules. As some U.S. politicians found no legal grounds for butting in China's anti-pandemic attempts, they didn't simply give up.

To justify their accusations against China, they intend to amend the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act of the U.S., a

commitment of the country to sovereign immunity.

Such a move will not only impair the logic and operation of the international law, but trigger global sovereign litigation, causing chaos in the international legal system and putting a strain on international relations.

Many legal experts in the world have made remarks to expose the true faces of some U.S. officials behind such clumsy tricks.

Some American politicians have claimed that the novel coronavirus originates from a lab in Wuhan, China, yet they fail to provide any evidence, said Lawrence Gostin, Professor of Global Health Law at the Georgetown University of the U.S.

Facts should matter, instead of unfounded allegations made by some media and individuals, noted Armin von Bogdandy, Director at the Max Planck Institute for Comparative Public Law and International Law, adding that he disagrees that China has to pay the damages.

Peter Hilpold, Austrian legal expert as well as Professor of International Law at the University of Innsbruck in Austria, pointed out that the unconfirmed claims from the U.S. has damaged China's reputation and for this, China could also claim compensation from America.

The law has to be based on evidence and facts. To find out the origin of the virus is a serious scientific problem as well as a professional issue that

needs to be tackled with reason, which makes it necessary to listen to and respect the opinions of scientists and professionals.

There is a general consensus in the international scientific community that the novel coronavirus is neither man-made nor genetically engineered.

With the further investigation and research into the virus, the pandemic turns out to happen much earlier than people thought in many countries. Experts from the World Health Organization (WHO) made it clear that the source of the virus couldn't be determined yet.

The joint statement of 27 well-known medical experts from 8 countries recently published on The Lancet and Nature, both authoritative journals in the world, and the reports released by professionals from America,

Australia and Britain have also confirmed that the virus wasn't man-made.

Faced with such facts, some Americans have already become a laughingstock for their embarrassing and untenable accusations.

Despite feeble arguments, some U.S. officials still refuse to halt the farce of trying to hold China responsible and claim damages. It is evident that they are plotting to politically blackmail China through the presumption of guilt.

Tom Ginsburg, Professor of International Law at the University of Chicago, pointed out that many right-wing politicians in the U.S. are focusing on China's problem to whitewash their own mistakes.

People's Daily



In this Wednesday, May 27, 2020 photo, Marina, a medical worker, boxes during a training session with French boxer Hassan N'Dam, at the Villeneuve-Saint-Georges hospital, outside Paris. A world champion French boxer is taking his skills to hospitals, coaching staff to thank the medical profession for saving his father-in-law from the virus, and giving them new confidence and relief from their stressful jobs. (AP Photo)

Punching through turmoil: Pro boxer helps medical staff cope

PARIS

HASSAN N'Dam, former middleweight boxing champion of the world, wanted to repay the French hospital that cared for his father-in-law through his bout with COVID-19.

Perhaps with Champagne? Or chocolate? No, N'Dam thought: "These are things that won't last. I wanted to leave something quite memorable."

It occurred to him that he held the answer in his own hands – or rather, in his fists. He would give the staff at Villeneuve-Saint-Georges hospital boxing lessons, to help them relieve the tension of long shift work during the pandemic – "letting off steam, getting rid of all one's emotions."

"They have seen so many (difficult) things that they came here looking for something," said N'Dam, who wore a sky blue face mask as he spoke at the hospital. "Sometimes they came to laugh, to let off steam. Others came to discover something, others to learn, improve."

The 36-year-old N'Dam, who represented Cameroon at the 2016 Olympic Games, has won 37 of 41 pro fights – 21 by knockout. His 30-minute training sessions have been immensely popular with the staff.

As a nurse in the intensive care unit, 27-year-old Marina De Carli has been on the front line of the pandemic since it hit France.

"In the ICU we see things that are not easy," she said. "So it feels good to let the pressure drop a bit."

Wearing camouflage-pattern shorts and a

face mask, she threw punches into the burly boxer's hands during her fifth and final class.

"Advance, advance, advance, go back, go back, go back," N'Dam calmly advised her.

Operating theatre nurses Kenza Benour and Nassima Guermat warmed up for their training by skipping rope – awkwardly, because their shoes were covered with blue plastic protective shields.

Guermat's strong left-right hook combinations pounded N'Dam's hand pads, as his wife looked on.

The hospital boxing bouts also gave N'Dam valuable time to see his father in law, Jean-Claude Valero, as he recovered from the virus. On Wednesday, Valero was well enough to sit and watch N'Dam in action.

Philippe Wodecke, 55, who works in part of the unit which treated Valero, was keen to learn from the ex-world champ. Dressed in crimson red tracksuit pants and wearing a T-shirt from the 2012 London Games, the orthopedic surgeon's pugilism belies his age.

Light on his toes, the stocky surgeon unleashes a quick four-punch combination that seems to surprise, and perhaps even impress N'Dam.

Wodecke's boxing career is unlikely to take off. But the workouts have been an invaluable help for him and his weary colleagues.

"A moment of escape, a moment of relaxation amid the torment," Wodecke said. "He's done us a lot of good."

AP

Starting to use five reserve players will excite players, test coaches

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL ENEZA

WORLD soccer federation, FIFA, is making changes to football administration in relation to how many players teams can substitute in the course of one match, where an improvement is being made from three to five. That means coaches have ability to replace nearly half of the starting line-up in the course of the game, which alters the data on which some professional techniques are based, and altogether opens new vistas both for players and coaches. It will mean plenty of things as to what is a first team line up, etc.

The new arrangement is expected to start being observed as the Tanzania Premier League restarts early in the week, as notification to that effect had already been sent to the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) during the early days of the premier league 'lockout' due to the coronavirus pandemic. It means that clubs had already started preparing for the change, but as regular training was not being done, it can safely be said they are just starting to work on the alteration of rules and how coaching as well as playing technique is affected. Clubs will have to figure out if the change is just technical or it also imposes an obligation.

It is possible for instance to ignore change as technical and continue with the current format, where there are three technical changes that a coach can make. What the change of rules implies is that replacing players owing to injury can now be safely separated from technical alteration of the line up in the course of the game, as it is unlikely that more than two players hobble off the pitch owing to injury inside 90 minutes. In that case technical changes can remain limited to three players, while room is opened for non-technical replacement, that is, where a player is replaced because of injury, without the coaching seeking to make alterations to the pattern of play. He is thus compelled to do so owing to that instance of injury.



Yanga defender, Andrew Vincent (L), blocks Simba SC's John Bocco when the two clubs clashed in this season's Vodacom Premier League game, which took place in Dar es Salaam in January.

It can be suggested that coached will have a more difficult time than anyone else in how the change in rules shall work out in practice, as this breadth of replacement raises expectations on the part of players that they will have more playing time. This enhances their career expectations both in the specific or current club and among others, as each spate of play has its unseen quantity of luck, like scoring an excellent goal and rising in the charts. That means there will also be more divisions in club leadership as to how this rule is being applied.

While this does not signal any chaotic situation as such, it brings about intense questioning at the whole series of assumptions tied with using players for 90 minutes, as substitution is an exception rather than the norm. Now coaches are implicitly

being asked to make it the norm, so that they make greater use of the 30 players registered as club players for that year, as each one of them ought to have the standard to play for the proper club side. The idea that players are registered to help others in practice sessions has never been suggested in the profession, by players, coaches or media pundits, in which case it can be put aside.

That hence introduces a question as to how far that assumption is valid, that all players registered for a premier league side can play for the team with some regularity. Even in top leagues outside, players can feature for a season only occasionally, though they seem impressive enough to have been sought from afar, not just recruited from a club academy. In that case coaches will be under pressure to use players more frequently, which can tamper with careful patterns

of play and a sense of trust between coaches and players, or often among players. Noise from the bench for substitutions is but a nuisance for the first side.

So we should brace up for plenty of 'politics' in that regard, where pundits and ex-players or other veterans will have a field day evaluating how coaches are using the new rule, changing playing patterns and their benefits, or perhaps defects. Still it is hard to see how the new rule can be said to lead to defects as soccer is based on the idea that any player can be substituted, as otherwise there would be no playing patterns but personal styles. At times teams are built around exceptional individuals for their ability to hold the ball, to give passes or uncanny scoring abilities, but even here the qualities are relative. The old problems will remain like ability to recruit and keep good players; substitution won't be the major issue. S



In this April 15, 2019, file photo, the elite men break from the start of the 123rd Boston Marathon in Hopkinton, Mass. The 2020 Boston Marathon, which was rescheduled to run on Sept. 14th, was canceled Thursday May 28, 2020 for the first time in its 124-year history due to the COVID-19 virus outbreak. (AP Photo)

Boston Marathon canceled for 1st time in 124-year history

BOSTON

ORGANIZERS canceled the Boston Marathon on Thursday for the first time in its history, bowing to the social distancing requirements of the coronavirus outbreak and ending a 124-year run that had persisted through two World Wars, a volcanic eruption and even another pandemic.

The race, which draws a field of 30,000 and already had been postponed from April 20 to Sept. 14, will be replaced by a virtual event in which participants who verify that they ran 26.2 miles (42.2 km) on their own will receive their finisher's medal.

"It became clear as this crisis developed that Sept. 14 was less and less plausible," Mayor Marty Walsh said at a news conference outside City Hall, where runners traditionally gather for a pre-race pasta dinner.

"This is a challenge, but meeting tough challenges is what the Boston Marathon is all about," Walsh said, invoking the response to the finish line bombings seven years ago. "It's a symbol of our city's and our commonwealth's resilience. So it's incumbent upon all of us to dig deep, like a marathon runner, like we did in 2013, and keep that spirit alive."

Although the title of Boston Marathon champion is contested by a few

dozen elite athletes, the field includes more than 30,000 recreational and charity runners, with as many as 1 million people lined up along the course trek from Hopkinton to Boston's Back Bay. That presented organizers with a social distancing problem that won't be solved by the fall.

"There's no way to hold this usual race format without bringing large numbers of people into close proximity," Walsh said. "While our goal and our hope was to make progress in containing the virus and recovering our economy, this kind of event would not be responsible or realistic on Sept. 14 or any time this year."

The longest-running annual marathon in the world, the Boston Marathon began in 1897 when 15 men drew a starting line in the dirt in Ashland and headed for the city to commemorate the first modern Olympic Games the previous year. In 1918, the format was modified to a relay due to World War I; the 2013 race was stopped when two bombs exploded at the finish line, several hours after the winners had finished but while many recreational runners were still on the course.

Boston Athletic Association CEO Tom Grilk said the race also had to adjust when temperatures along the course approached 90 degrees Fahr-

enheit (32 Celsius) in 2012; ten years ago, ash from a volcanic eruption in Iceland grounded air travel and prevented many European runners from coming to Boston.

"There is a pretty rich history of accommodation and addressing reality. This is this year's reality," Grilk said.

"The spirit of Boston and the spirit of the Boston Marathon is to be strong and to be smart. When necessity drives you in a direction you might not have liked, you need to have the strength, the wisdom and the guidance from public officials to do what's right."

The race was scheduled in April on the state holiday to commemorate the battles in Lexington and Concord that marked the start of the Revolutionary War. Traditionally, the Red Sox have scheduled their first pitch for that morning so baseball fans could wander over to Kenmore Square after the game to see the runners pass by with one mile to go.

In announcing postponement in March, Walsh cited the desire to salvage the estimated \$211 million pumped into the city's economy each year. The B.A.A. and marathon runners also raise about \$40 million for charity.

AP

Dortmund, Favre facing tough questions after Bayern's 'big step'

BERLIN

BORUSSIA Dortmund visit bottom side Paderborn on Sunday with uncertainty surrounding the future of coach Lucien Favre after Tuesday's 1-0 defeat by Bayern Munich left their Bundesliga title dreams in tatters.

Favre and Dortmund were forced to deny rumours that he is set to resign, and face Paderborn attempting to at least keep some pressure on reigning champions Bayern, who sit seven points clear with six matches remaining.

Second-placed Dortmund may also have to make do without Erling Braut Haaland, after the teenage sensation was injured against Bayern, reportedly in an accidental collision with the referee.

Swiss Favre was forced to clarify comments made on Tuesday when he said he would "talk about it (his future) in a few weeks", saying the following day that he was not "giving up at all".

Several German newspapers have suggested Favre is set to leave at the end of the season, with Niko Kovac, who was sacked by Bayern last year, reported to be his likely successor.

"We are certainly not having a coaching debate," Dortmund sporting director Michael Zorc insisted to Sport1.

"Lucien must have expressed himself misleadingly in a moment immediately after the game."

Barring an unlikely late-season collapse from Bayern, it will be the second straight season that Favre's Dortmund have pushed their rivals close in the title race before ultimately coming up short.

Dortmund led for much of the campaign last term but stumbled late to finish two points off the pace.

"We said before the season that we wanted to play for the title again," added Zorc.

"We didn't manage to be better than Bayern. Now we can be disappointed, take a deep breath, and then set a new goal for Sunday. Full focus is on second place."

Dortmund will be confident of getting back on track against a Paderborn side who are rooted to the foot of the table, eight points adrift of the relegation play-off spot, despite three consecutive draws since the Bundesliga resumed following the coronavirus lockdown.

"We mustn't talk of a miracle because there are still 18 points to be won," said Paderborn coach Stef-

fen Baumgart.

"As long as it's still mathematically possible we have to give it everything we've got."

- Bayern's 'big step' -

Bayern are now firmly on track for a record-extending eighth straight title and on Saturday host a Fortuna Dusseldorf side who boosted their survival hopes with a 2-1 midweek win against freefalling Schalke.

"We set out to take a big step (against Dortmund). We succeeded. We showed a lot of determination," said Bayern coach Hansi Flick.

Dusseldorf, who occupy the relegation play-off spot, are five points clear of second-bottom Werder Bremen, although the four-time Bundesliga champions have a game in hand.

Bremen, who have only spent one season out of the top flight since the Bundesliga's formation in 1963, visit Schalke on Saturday.

Schalke coach David Wagner is under pressure after his side threw away their European hopes with a 10-match winless run, including three straight defeats since the restart of the season.

Player to watch: Jadon Sancho -- Dortmund will need Jadon Sancho to be back at his best on Sunday, with Haaland's injury leaving them without a recognised out-and-out striker.

English winger Sancho is yet to start a game since the restart after his own fitness problems, but has featured as a substitute in all three matches.

The 20-year-old has scored 17 goals in all competitions this season.

Key stats

5 - Home wins in the 27 matches behind closed doors since the league returned.

5 - Shots by Haaland without scoring against Bayern. He had previously scored 10 goals from 21 attempts on goal in the Bundesliga.

45 - Goals in Bayer Leverkusen's last 11 league matches, an average of 4.09 goals per game.

Fixtures

Today

Hertha Berlin v Augsburg, Mainz v Hoffenheim, Schalke v Werder Bremen, Wolfsburg v Eintracht Frankfurt (1330), Bayern Munich v Fortuna Dusseldorf (1630)

Tomorrow

Borussia Moenchengladbach v Union Berlin (1330), Paderborn v Borussia Dortmund (1600)

AFP

Premier League return: the issues to resolve

LONDON

PREMIER League football is set to return on June 17 after a three-month coronavirus-enforced absence.

Nothing realistically will stop Liverpool from being crowned English champions for the first time in 30 years.

But there are a whole host of other issues to sort out, including relegation and next year's European places, with the drama set to take place in empty, echoing stadiums.

AFP Sport takes a look at what still needs to be resolved.

When will Liverpool be champions?

Liverpool were 25 points clear of Manchester City and just two wins away from becoming English champions for the first time since 1990 when the league was suspended in March.

But while COVID-19 may have delayed their title party, nobody seriously believes it is not going to happen.

Two more wins would make it mathematically impossible for City to catch Liverpool but the Reds could triumph by winning their first game if City lose at home to Arsenal on June 17.

Jurgen Klopp's men can also break two of City's most cherished records -- they need 19 points from the remaining 27 to beat the Manchester club's total of 100 points from the 2017/18 season and they could also better City's record title-winning margin of 19 points

AFP

Pep Guardiola's career, as a player and as a manager, has been dedicated to his pursuit of the Champions League. (Agencies)

Pep Guardiola and the European Cup: It's complicated

BY GRAHAM HUNTER, SPAIN WRITER

IT'S now exactly nine years since Pep Guardiola last laid hands on the trophy he most cherishes: the Cup With The Big Ears -- which the champions of Europe have hoisted to the sky every year since 1956. That was at Wembley, May 28, 2011. And for Manchester City fans, I guess there's some retrospective schadenfreude that not only was his triumph against the otherwise all-conquering Sir Alex Ferguson's Manchester United, it was what Fergie called "a hiding."

Not for Guardiola. In the modern history of football, he'd be one of the most obsessed with the line of thinking that: "Celebrating past glory is a weakness. ... Everything hinges on the next game, the next performance, the next trophy." He also lives with a healthy obsession for winning that competition, be it named the European Cup or the Champions League.

There is, in fact, a cocktail of reasons why he's suffering from an irritating thorn in his side about not conquering Europe since Pedro, Lionel Messi and David Villa lit up Wembley in one of the all-time great European performances. Pride, ambition, professional self-exhortation -- all of those, of course. But Guardiola grew up thinking of the European Cup as a holy grail, something agonisingly out of reach of the Catalan club that he loved, Barcelona, for whom he became a ball boy before emerging as their cerebral midfielder.

Guardiola began to yearn for a trophy that Real Madrid had made a decent attempt at turning into private property and then used, or certainly their fans and media used, to taunt all of those of a Barca persuasion. Well, you would ... wouldn't you?

There's nothing as intoxicating as that which is lusted after, which carries allure and which you can witness being savoured by others, but feels constantly just out of reach. Universally, everyone can relate to that.

Yet what the curiously buoyant number of Guardiola sceptics should realise is that even if it would pain him to turn 50 in January with just three -- rather than several more -- Champions League winner's medals, he understood, right from the start, that the European Cup is a fickle, often cruel mistress. Anyone trying to portray the Catalan as someone chasing his tail in ever-decreasing circles, bewildered at why, even with the resources at Bayern Munich and City, he's not added to the two finals he won in 2009 and 2011 would be going down a blind alley.

From his very first interaction with the European Cup, 34 years ago, until this season, when his courting of the Champions League has been interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic, it's a story of a trophy doing the dance of the seven veils with him. Tempting, tantalising, very occasionally throwing itself into his arms, but more often remaining hidden away and quixotic.

For relatively recent converts to Spanish football, Barcelona or Guardiola, plus those who are simply a

good deal younger than he or I, it might come as a shock to realise that by the time Guardiola turned 15 he'd witnessed his club win La Liga just once. It happened twice during those 15 years, but the first, when he was age 3, hardly counts as influencing him greatly.

It was an era when European Cup qualification depended exclusively on being champion of your country. So the heart-stopping, dramatic and eccentric march to the 1986 final, in that year when Terry Venables was coach and Guardiola a ball boy living 50 metres away from Camp Nou in the original La Masia, captivated his heart and soul.

That was when, just a callow teenager, he first understood that a scintilla of bad luck, dropping your guard for a second, meant this competition would slap you in the face, nick your wallet and blame you for the altercation when the authorities are called. Anyone who thinks he forgot that lesson at any stage in the subsequent decades is misguided.

For example, City's coach was a Camp Nou ball boy on the famous night when Barcelona, 3-0 down to the "unknowns" of Goteborg in the semifinal, won the home game 3-0 then went through to the final on penalties. Guardiola ran onto the pitch to try to congratulate midfielder Victor Munoz, to gaze adoringly at Venables.

Those nights brand your soul, they reconfigure your ambition.

Spain's champions, if you recall, were then bored into a stalemate by the stultifying Steaua Bucharest tactics in one of the two or three worst European Cup finals in history. They failed to convert a single penalty during the shootout. Such experiences scar your mindset, and trauma inspires a lifelong dedication to "putting things right."

Six years later, Guardiola won the competition in his club's first return to the summit.

He was still only 21, still only really beginning to ensure that the central midfield pivot position in Johan Cruyff's Dream Team absolutely belonged to him. Nevertheless, his prematch interview was about showing a winning arrogance, about never allowing a fear of failing to inhibit an outright assault on winning. He knew, even then, before Ronald Koeman's thunderous winner against Sampdoria, that this trophy is a slippery fish -- snatch at it and it's gone.

Long before he was a professional player, Guardiola had been preparing to do battle with the quixotic, Machiavellian European Cup. He feels now as he did then: Talent, budget and desire are simply insufficient; you need luck, you need grisly amounts of character and belief, and even then this is a test that can lure you in with the promise of a kiss only to knock your teeth out.

Recall the first season he defended this trophy. Barcelona were holders, they had a great coach, a deluxe squad ... and they were out by November, having been 2-0 up at

home to CSKA Moscow but sunk 2-3 by full-time. It was a monstrous, monstrous embarrassment.

This doesn't need to be a chronological list of Guardiola's love-hate affair with the world's greatest club competition, but without savouring some of the venom and veneration this trophy has brought him, it's hard to truly understand its place in his psyche.

Take the trouble to watch back Barcelona's brutal destruction by AC Milan in the 1994 Champions League final, a humiliation that cost Andoni Zubizarreta his Camp Nou future and brought the end for Cruyff, and once you've savoured the quality of the Rossoneri finishing, there's something else that leaps out.

There is Guardiola, irritated and increasingly in disbelief as teammate after teammate plays ill-judged, ill-delivered passes that expose the Catalans' notoriously porous defending. When you add his teammates' outright technical errors into the mix, you can see the man who is now City manager turning to remonstrate, helpless against a tidal wave of Milanese chutzpah as Fabio Capello's understrength team routed them.

When he left Barca in 2001, which coach did Guardiola actively seek out in order to learn from? Capello, then at Roma.

Do not, under any circumstances, fail to take in how much these experiences at the summit of European football meant to him, influenced him.

The remainder of his playing career still held all the rough and tumble that informs his managerial approach to the Champions League. Which memory is most brutal? It's hard to pick.

The 1998-99 season, when Barcelona's centenary would be celebrated via the final being hosted at Camp Nou? His campaign was ravaged by a brutal injury, which initially was badly diagnosed and led to dark and unfounded rumours about what might be wrong. He was fit to play just once, against Brondby, in a group so tightly contested that if Barcelona had scored just one more goal, either at home or away to Manchester United, they instead of Ferguson's team would have gone through.

There would have been no Treble for the English club, and Guardiola would have perhaps had a shot at winning his yearned-for second European title at the Catalan temple of the Camp Nou. Imagine his agony in watching, helplessly.

Comprehensively thrashed in the semifinal, with Real Madrid waiting in the Paris final, by Valencia in Guardiola's last Champions League season wearing Barcelona colours (1999-00)? Hammered 3-0 at home by Real Madrid (who else?) in his only Champions League appearance for Roma?

Falling romantically and hopelessly in love with this tournament while still an impressionable teenager has carried an emotional and professional cost from then until now.

His victories? They show other

sides of the Janus face.

How, please tell me, could a Barcelona side so stricken, so anaemic the previous season march to Spanish football's first-ever Treble in 2008-09, during Guardiola's first season as a senior coach? Throw in the details that Andres Iniesta was 60 percent fit, was ordered by his physio not to shoot at goal or his thigh muscle would ping apart; that Thierry Henry told me, "I don't know how I played that night"; that Eric Abidal and Dani Alves were suspended; that Yaya Toure played out of position at centre-back; that Ferguson, for the first time in his life, declared that his team "was beaten" after just nine minutes.

All the years as a player when winning this silverware looked harder than climbing Kilimanjaro blindfold with a piano strapped to your back, and Guardiola strolls to a maiden Champions League win as a coach with the odds not only stacked against him but sneering, too.

Why, against his better judgement, did he listen to his Bayern players, adjust his playing system to their wishes only to see Real Madrid romp, gleefully, to a 4-0 win in Bavaria to reach the 2014 final? With biographer Marti Perarnau present, Guardiola told his assistants: "I got it wrong, man. I got it totally wrong. It's a monumental f---up. A total mess. The biggest f---up of my life as a coach."

Why did Iceland's Eyjafjallajokull volcano explode just in time to ensure that Guardiola's Barcelona, arguably a better side than Inter Milan that year, had to travel across Mediterranean Europe by coach instead of flying, thus costing them energy, concentration and competitive sharpness in the San Siro? Why the missed penalties from Thomas Muller in 2016 against Atletico Madrid in the semifinal, and Sergio Aguero last season in that ultra-dramatic thriller in which Tottenham eliminated City thanks to a wrongly awarded goal for Fernando Llorente?

Why, why, why? Yes, for those who appreciate the irony, I am mimicking Jose Mourinho's "por que, por que, por que" in the 2011 semifinal when raging against Pepe's sending off after Madrid lost 0-2 at home to Guardiola's Barcelona.

This competition isn't choosy. It's not just Guardiola who gets treated like a loved son one moment, then an unwanted trespasser the next. But perhaps he suffers more than most. More because he so cherishes clambering to the top of this particular pantheon, more because circumstances do seem to conspire against him more regularly than most -- perhaps everyone.

Why, as his City side put together such a robust, grown-up, intense performance to win at the Bernabeu in February, did the world suddenly get shut down by a viral pandemic?

Is it personal? No. It's just the eternal state of war and peace that exists between Guardiola and the Cup With The Big Ears. He is its hostage, we are mere witnesses.

But it's a transfixing spectator sport.

VPL set to resume on June 13

SPORT

Pep Guardiola and the European Cup: It's complicated

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

VODACOM Premier League, First Division League (FDL) and Second Division League (SDL) are expected to resume on June 13 after a two-month break brought about by the coronavirus outbreak.

Tanzania Premier League Board (TPLB) disclosed yesterday the fixture for the rest of the competitions' games will be released on Sunday.

The TPLB Chief Executive Officer, Almasi Kasongo, stated a recent meeting which brought together the board, Tanzania Football Federation (TFF), National Sports Council, Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, and Ministry of Information, Culture, Arts and Sports, agreed that the competitions should resume on June 13.



Mainland Premier League's Mbeya City FC players prepare for training at Sokoine Stadium in Mbeya recently. PHOTO: COURTESY OF MBEYA CITY FC

He stated the meeting as well insisted all health precautions are to be duly followed by the participating sides.

"We know all clubs are lately attending training, we had looked into the appropriate day the sides should start playing the games, which were put on hold," Kasongo disclosed.

"After discussions and a review of the technical report, the June 13 was seen as ideal day for the resumption of the competitions."

"I should therefore officially announce the date for the competitions' restart."

The TPLB official said the competitions' full fixture will be

issued out on Sunday in an effort to see to it each club receives it early on.

"We will present fixture for all leagues in a bid to see to it the sides go for better preparations, other stakeholders including the media, regional football associations and fans should as well get it," he disclosed.

Kasongo stated the announcement of the date has turned out to be huge relief to domestic soccer fanatics that had been anxiously waiting for the restart of the tournaments.

The TPLB has unveiled the date for the domestic competitions' restart after President John Magufuli had issued permission

for resumption of sporting activities.

The sporting events had been on an indefinite suspension, as directed by the government, in an effort to fight the coronavirus pandemic.

The Premier League, FDL and SDL sides are lately featuring in intensive training to prepare for their respective tournaments, which will be played in two centers.

The rest of the domestic top flight duels and this season's Azam Sports Federation Cup have been slated to take place in Dar es Salaam, Mwanza will host the FDL and SDL's remaining encounters.

Dar es Salaam's Azam Complex, National Stadium and Uhuru Stadium are the venues for the domestic top flight games.

The FDL and SDL duels will be played at Mwanza's CCM Kirumba Stadium and Nyamagana Stadium.

Simba SC are enjoying the driver's seat in the top flight after collecting 71 points, Azam FC holds the second spot after posting 54 points, three points above third-placed Yanga.

Some of the tournament's outfits have 10 games left, whilst other teams have either nine or eight games remaining.

EATV MONDAY
11:00 DADAZ LIVE
14:00 Wanawake Live (r)
14:30 Bongo Hills
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Cope Coca-Cola (r)
16:30 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELECT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 5SPORTS LIVE
22:30 Bongo Hills

TONIGHT @ 9:00
UJENZI
Tonight on EATV
Find out how using glass blocks from Canghui Traders Limited can improve your home decor
And Tanfix Quality Choice has an innovative solution for wall fungus
It's all on Ujenzi at 9PM

eastafrica RADIO
06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise
88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Relieved Afghanistan looking forward to Australia test - CEO

PERTH

RELIEF and excitement are the overwhelming emotions for Afghanistan after Australia confirmed they would host them for a one-off test in Perth from Nov. 21, the chief executive of the country's cricket board has told Reuters.

Uncertainty loomed over Afghanistan's first ever test against Australia due to travel and other restrictions imposed to curb the spread of the novel coronavirus.

However, Cricket Australia gave the day-night match the green light on Thursday when it announced its summer schedule headlined by a marquee series against India.

"There were rumours that this test match might not go ahead but it is a relief for us and our cricket fans that we have been given a confirmation," Chief Executive Lutfullah Stanikzai told Reuters in an interview.

"The world in general - and the cricketing world in particular - may not be the same after the coronavirus but we have to move on and cricket has to return."

Having had to postpone a tour of Zimbabwe next month due to travel restrictions, the importance of the match against the world's top ranked test team was not lost on the Afghan board.

"It's going to be a fantastic opportunity for our players' development and in general for the development of Afghanistan cricket," Stanikzai said.

"Everyone in the cricket world, especially in test cricket, looks up to Australia. It's going to be a historic and memorable occasion for Afghanistan as a new cricketing nation to play Australia in a test match."

The test newcomers, who were awarded the coveted red-ball status in 2017, will not be completely unknown quantities to Australian cricket fans.

Players such as Rashid Khan and Mujeeb Ur Rahman have become fan-favourites in Australia's Big Bash League with their fearless hitting and economical spin-bowling.

While there may still be restrictions that affect how many fans, if any, can watch the test at the 60,000-seater Perth Stadium, Stanikzai said it was important to see the big picture.

"The important thing is that the fans get an opportunity to see Afghanistan playing against Australia. Although it might be different, there might not be any spectators and so on ...

"We are hoping that by November the situation will improve and we will see good cricket between both countries."

Afghanistan have played four tests to date, losing to India and West Indies and beating Ireland and Bangladesh.

REUTERS



Azam FC defender, Yakubu Mohamed (R), blocks Simba forward, Meddie Kagere, in a recent Mainland Premier League clash, played in Dar es Salaam.

Simba SC to take on Azam FC in ASFC last eight

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

VODACOM Premier League defending champions Simba SC are expected to lock horns with Azam FC in the quarterfinal stage of this season's Azam Sports Federation Cup (ASFC).

The stage's draw, which was supervised by the Tanzania Football Federation (TFF) and the competition's sponsors in Dar es Salaam yesterday, saw the other quarterfinalists, Yanga, set a date with Kagera Sugar in one of the other clashes.

The ASFC last eight's surprise package, Tanga's Sahare All Stars that battles it out

in the First Division League (FDL), will confront domestic top flight club, Ndanda FC.

In the last of the event's quarterfinal encounters, Namungo FC will lock horns with Alliance FC in all all-Premier League affair.

Simba will be taking on Azam FC for the third time in a competitive game.

The two teams have locked horns in two clashes in the Vodacom Premier League, with Simba winning both.

In the top flight's first phase match between the two squads, Simba edged Azam FC 1-0 and the second phase duel

ended with Simba posting 3-2 victory.

Yanga will be confronting Kagera Sugar for the second time in a competitive encounter.

Kagera Sugar walloped Yanga 3-0 in the Premier League's first phase match between the two clubs.

The two clubs have yet to face each other in the top flight's second phase.

In the first of the Federation Cup's semi-finals, winners of the Simba against Azam FC encounter will lock horns with winners of the game pitting Yanga against Kagera Sugar.

For that matter, there is great chance the

domestic soccer powerhouses will face each other in the ASFC semi-finals if the two clubs will post victory in the last eight stage.

Namungo FC has seemingly been handed an easy route to the competition's semi-finals and possibly final.

Should the Lindi-based club bundle Alliance FC out of the Federation Cup quarterfinals and book a place in the semi-finals, they will lock horns with winners of the match between Sahare All Stars and Ndanda FC.