



EDUCATION



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Will free money make people get lazy or creative?

H&M come up with new Curvy Fit denims made with women in South Africa in mind

JPM: Dar will be ultramodern city



Dr John Magufuli, who is seeking re-election as President on the ruling CCM's ticket in the upcoming General Election, addresses a campaign rally at Dar es Salaam's Benjamin Mkapa Stadium yesterday. Photo: State House

By Henry Mwangonde

CM presidential candidate Dr John Magufuli has outlined a five-year plan to transform Dar es Salaam into a modern city through the betterment of infrastructure and the improvement of social services.

Addressing a mammoth rally at the city's Benjamin Mkapa Stadium yesterday, Dr Magufuli said a lot has happened in the last five years, including reducing traffic congestion, even if the work is yet to be completed.

Dr Magufuli listed a number of projects which he said if completed in the next five years will change the commercial capital to become one among four leading cities in Africa.

The main issue will be finalizing the construction of the remaining phases of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along main roads like Kilwa, Mandela and Bagamoyo leading to Mbagala, Tegeta and other areas on the outskirts of the city.

The government will finalize the construction of all feeder roads, improve provision of social services such as health, water and education to transform lives of city dwellers, he stated.

"We want to make Dar es Salaam a great city where all services are accessed easily, and on this aspect we will improve transport within the city,

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Mental health breakdown cases rising sharply - MNH

● 2019/2020 showed 4,000 more cases than 2018/2019 at Muhimbili

By Getrude Mbago

MORE men, including young ones, succumb to mental health breakdowns in comparison to women by proportion of the population, experts have said.

Psychiatrists at the Muhimbili National Hospital (MNH) made this assertion yesterday in Dar es Salaam, ahead of marking World Mental Health Day today, whose theme is 'Move for Mental Health: Let's Invest.'

The number of patients with mental health problems who received treatment at the facility increased from 29,166 in 2018/19 to 33,287 in the year 2019/20.

MNH mental health specialist,

Dr Fileuka Ngakongwa, said that men suffering mental disorders were high in numbers, reaching 18,535 compared to women whose victims stood at 10,631 for the same period.

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VPO sets environment goals for blue economy

By Guardian Reporter

AS Tanzania seeks to unlock its largely untapped blue economy, an initial study has cautioned that planned large scale investments along and within water bodies risk engendering an environmental disaster.

The issue was raised at a meeting to review the Preliminary Blue Economy Assessment Report in Morogoro at mid-week, where participants from the Vice President's Office, United Nations agencies and various conserva-



tion non-governmental organisations advised that measures must be taken to ensure that development projects do not destroy marine life and related ecosystems.

Emelda Teikwa, a senior legal officer for environmental issues in the Vice President's Office, said in reaction to queries raised that the government was focused on sustainable conservation of the coastal environment in evaluating each activity proposed in

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World Bank: Africa's GDP to fall by 3.3 pct this year

WASHINGTON

ECONOMIC growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is forecasted to be negative at -3.3 percent for 2020 compared to the 2.4 percent of 2019 due to COVID-19 disruptions, according to analysis released yesterday by the World Bank.

The report, Africa's Pulse, says the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a large toll on economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa, putting a decade of hard-won economic progress at risk. "Economic activity in the region is expected to contract by 3.3 percent in 2020, confirming the prediction that sub-Saharan Africa would suffer its first recession in a quarter-century in 2020. By the end of 2021, the region's real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita will likely regress to its level in 2007," says the latest World Bank's regional economic analysis



Mental health breakdown cases rising sharply - MNH

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Commenting on why many men suffer mental disorders and at younger age by comparison, Dr Ngakongwa said the reason was greater levels of stress, poverty "as well keeping things in mind for a long time."

She further cited insecurity in areas that people live and work, genetic predisposition and diseases such as malaria, headache, meningitis and AIDS-related headaches as factors leading to mental disorders.

"There is emerging evidence that mental ill-health is strongly associated with poverty and social deprivation. People with mental disability may be impoverished by increased health expenditure, loss of employment, reduced productivity and stigma," she stated.

She urged Tanzanians to conduct regular mental checkups so as to be sure of their health development.

Describing typical symptoms of mental disorder as insomnia, excessive alcohol consumption, excessive nervousness as well as urinating in bed.

The Department of Psychiatry and Mental Health at Muhimbili National Hospital provides health care for patients with mental health problems, suffering from psychological, addiction and psychiatric disorders, with admission or as outpatients.

Apart from medical interventions which are provided to patients, MNH provides psychosocial interventions like psychotherapies (individual, family or group), occupational therapy, resolving social problems and mental rehabilitation services, the specialist noted.

She cited improvement of health systems at the hospital as a major factor enabling more patients to be treated, fast tracking their recovery process.

She also highlighted improvement of biological, psychological, social and occupational therapies as among factors explaining the surge of patients seeking help at the hospital.

WHO Regional Director for Africa Dr Matshidiso Moeti said in a World Mental Health Day message that increased domestic and international financing for rising cases of mental health problems was vital.

Increased investment is urgently needed since globally, one in four people will be affected by a mental disorder at some point in their lives, while in Africa government expenditure per capita on mental health is less than 10 US cents, she said.

"Most mental health services are paid for directly by patients and their careers. For low-income households and other vulnerable groups, the cost of this essential care can cause financial hardship. In working together to attain universal health coverage, we must ensure people affected by mental health problems are not left behind," she urged.

The director said the COVID-19 pandemic has brought out more

than ever how mental health is integral to overall well-being. Restrictions on movement and gathering, job losses, deaths of loved ones and widespread COVID-19 infections have ignited fear, anxiety and depression. There are reports of upsurges in intimate partner violence and suicides, the statement underlined.

Mental health needs in the African region are significant because 15 African countries are among the top 30 globally for suicide per 100,000 people. Although many countries have developed national mental health policies, the availability of services is often limited to specialized institutions in capital cities, the UN agency noted.

Globally there are nine mental health workers per 100,000 people whereas in the African region, this falls to 0.9, and among this workforce one third are non-professional workers, meaning there is a severe shortage of psychiatrists and psychologists in African countries.

The director noted however that some countries are making progress, such as Cape Verde, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda where governments moved to decentralizing mental health services, moving away from institution-based care and strengthening care at primary health and community levels.

"At WHO we are working with governments to review mental health legislation and related policies, and to build capacities using the MH-Gap approach, a task sharing strategy where primary health care workers are trained and then supervised in managing common mental disorders," she pointed out.

In the context of COVID-19, WHO is working with governments and partners to include mental health care as part of continuity of essential health services, providing psychosocial skills training for first responders, she said.

In a survey led by WHO and UNICEF in East and Southern Africa, responders cited depression and anxiety, especially when working in high-risk settings or without personal protective equipment. In response, WHO developed a guide for responders to be able to recognize signs of distress in themselves, their colleagues and those with whom they interact. The guide provides self-help techniques and tips on listening, de-escalating tense situations and referrals, the director noted.

A global survey led by WHO on mental health and COVID-19 between June and August 27 covering 28 African countries indicated that mental health and psychosocial support was included in the national COVID-19 response plan, she said.

But only 17 countries had funding for the planned activities, which reaffirms the importance of this year's theme of investing in mental health, she added.



The ruling CCM's presidential running mate, Vice President Samia Suluhu Hassan, addresses residents of Magula Sitalike village in Katavi Region yesterday while on her way to Rukwa Region for a series of General Election campaign rallies. Photo: VPO.

JPM: Dar will be ultramodern city

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he stated.

He said he has been in office for five years but still has the capacity to serve the country, noting that this time he has a package of projects meant for the city of Dar es Salaam specifically.

"Dar es Salaam will have flyovers all over because we want to totally end transportation woes in the city. This is the new city that we want to see," he declared.

He said the party's manifesto has a lot in place especially on improving security in

the city, promising voters to expect 'miracles' in the next five years.

The provision of universal healthcare was among his priorities, as the city population is projected to reach 10m by 2030 in which case the city needs good planning and it needs to be done now, he emphasized.

Illustrating, he said the city's contribution to the national economy reaches about 90 percent of total revenues, in which case a lot needs to be done so that the city can produce more.

Dr Magufuli said the city contributed 20trn/- in 2017, 22trn/- in 2018 and 23.9 trn/- in 2019 to the national economy, an unquestionable indication of its importance to the economic wellbeing of the country.

He said the government had in the last five years managed to end insecurity, especially bank robberies which were threatening lives in Dar es Salaam.

On infrastructure, the candidate said his government constructed 200 kilometers of roads within Dar es Salaam aimed at

reducing congestion, at a cost of 660bn/-.

The amount includes construction of flyovers and bridges which to a large extent have helped to reduce congestion, he elaborated.

On health he said his government has spent a lot in improving services in major hospitals within Dar es Salaam, including purchasing improved equipment and drug supplies for more satisfactory hospital services, he added.



Handeni district Queen Sendiga, the opposition Alliance for Democratic Change's candidate for the Tanzanian Presidency in the upcoming General Election, addresses a campaign rally at Ngunja village in Tandahimba District, Mtwara Region, yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

World Bank: Africa's GDP to fall by 3.3 pct this year

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Africa's Pulse: Charting the Road to Recovery.

The bi-annual analysis discusses the near-term economic outlook for sub-Saharan Africa.

Sub-Saharan Africa's real GDP is projected to pick up to 2.1 percent in 2021, which is below the rate achieved in 2019, assuming new COVID-19 cases will continue to slow across the region and new outbreaks will not lead to national lockdowns, it affirms.

The findings show that in Africa, COVID-19 could push up to 40m people into extreme poverty, erasing at least five years of progress in fighting poverty.

"Similarly, COVID-19 could set back progress in building human capital, as school closures will affect nearly 253 million students, potentially causing losses in learning," says the review.

The economic contraction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will spread broadly across countries in sub-Saharan Africa this year, it further noted.

"Growth fell sharply in the second quarter of 2020 across countries, especially in Nigeria (6.1 percent year-on-year) and South Africa (17.1 percent). The decline in growth is expected to be larger in East and Southern Africa than West and Central Africa, partly because of the stronger output contractions in South Africa and Angola," the report declares.

The World Bank analysis noted that successful COVID-19 containment measures come with a high economic cost, as has been seen across the globe.

Albert Zeufack, World Bank chief economist for Africa regions said that the road to recovery may be long, and it may be steep, "but prioritizing policy actions and investments that address the challenge of creating more, better and inclusive jobs will pave the way for a faster, stronger and inclusive recovery for African countries."

The report notes that the road to recovery will also require massive investments across countries, as well as financial support from the international community, and recommends a bold reform agenda that includes policies that create fiscal space, along with policies to speed up job creation.

Hafez Ghanem, World Bank Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa said that although the pandemic is not over and the persistence and spread of the virus is uncertain, African governments have started putting in place policies and programs to support an inclusive and sustainable post-pandemic recovery.

"Countries are putting in place policies and programs that help create jobs and accelerate economic transformation to reduce the economic impact of the pandemic now, and build the capabilities needed to ensure inclusive economic growth in the future," he added.

VPO sets environment goals for blue economy

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heralding the blue economy.

She stated that Tanzania has a coastline of more than 1,000 kilometers and approximately 64,000 kilometers of lakes and rivers that needs to be harnessed for economic growth.

"Among other things, the goal of the Vice President's Office is to ensure that as we move towards the blue economy, environmental protection is considered and that is why we are emphasizing marine ecosystems by involving communities that use these resources," she elaborated.

Teikwa noted that the report prepared by VPO in collaboration with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) looks at what Tanzania can do towards the blue economy and improve these sectors to make a significant contribution to the national economy and conserving the environment.

environment.

On her part, the WWF project coordinator for marine and coastal affairs, Dr Modesta Medard expressed satisfaction on how stakeholders in the maritime economy were being involved.

She urged that VPO set out agencies and activities where the use of marine resources is involved "so that partners can see how to attract investors in those sectors."

"The issue of the blue economy affects many people, for example fishing, transport or tourism. If given priority, lives of the people will change for the better. We are asking for example how algae farmers will benefit. We must evaluate oil and gas extraction, and in doing so we will grow the economy," she said.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) project specialist Abbasi Kitogo said

there are challenges in the maritime economy as the country is benefiting little from the economy of this sector.

The draft report would enable them to look at ways to improve and find a sustainable national strategy to strengthen the industry, he declared.

"We in UNDP are working with the Office of the Vice President as well as the WWF in building institutional, policy and social capacity in ensuring these resources are used properly," he specified.

The Blue Economy is the breadth of activities related to land use and resources around major water bodies and their role in economic growth, covering activities such as fisheries, tourism and maritime transport for improved livelihoods and jobs, while preserving the health of lake and ocean ecosystems.



Among other things, the goal of the Vice President's Office is to ensure that as we move towards the blue economy, environmental protection is considered and that is why we are emphasizing marine ecosystems by involving communities that use these resources

Rights activists call for abolition of death penalty

By Correspondent Zuweni Shame

HUMAN Rights activists have called on the government to abolish death penalty as the sentence is inhuman and degrading which also violates the fundamental right to life.

They made the call in Dar es Salaam yesterday when speaking during the commemoration of 18th World Day against death penalty, organised by Legal and

Human Rights Centre in partnership with Children Education Society.

Ambassador of the Kingdom of Belgium to Tanzania, Peter Van Acker, said that executing a person is an act of violence committed by the state, thereby reducing itself to the same level as the perpetrator of the crime in which enforcement is brutality to all who are involved in the process.

Van Acker said that academic studies are generally in agreement that the death penalty does not have any deterrent value and its worse still is the inherent danger that this punishment can be imposed on an innocent person.

"There are cases where people have been mistakenly convicted because of improper confessions, false identifications, suppression or fabrica-

tion of evidence or even being poorly defended" said the Ambassador adding that,

"Furthermore, it is a punishment which has negative effects on other innocent people especially vulnerable dependents of the executed person as well as other family members and friends".

He said that Tanzania is the de facto abolitionist, having carried out its last execution

in 1994, hence it's about the government should translate the humanity of its people and leaders in humanity of its laws.

"Therefore, I would like to call on the Tanzanian government to respect the decision of the African court on human and people's rights issued last year to remove the mandatory nature of imposition of the death sentence" he said.

In November 2019, African

court of human and people's rights ordered Tanzania to take necessary measures to remove the mandatory nature of imposition the death penalties to the prisoners who have murder cases and sentenced to death or hanged.

Van Acker said that African court on human and people's rights found that's section 197 of the penal code does not compel the convicted person

to provide mitigation evidence and the trial court is left with no other option that to impose the death sentence to the convicted person and this would respect the discretionary powers of the countries' judicial power and leave room for a more humane sentencing.

LHRC executive director, Advocate, AnaHengahas called upon coming member of coming parliaments member to

TCU opens second window of application for varsity studies

By Getrude Mbago

TANZANIA Commission for Universities (TCU) has opened the second window of application for university studies, saying that a total of 90,572 candidates have applied in the first window.

According to TCU executive secretary Prof Charles Kihampa, the second window will commence officially from October 12 and will go up to October 18, this year.

Addressing journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday Kihampa (pictured) urged form six leavers and others who missed in the first phase to send their applications to the respective universities.

He said that among those who have applied in the first round, 60,621 candidates have already been confirmed and enrolled in their respective universities.

"We have witnessed an increase of applicants in this year's first window of 90,572 compared to the last year



where there were 83,197 applicants in the same window. In total, we have 157,961 universities opportunities for this year, so all eligible applicants are welcomed to utilize the second window to send their applications," he said.

Prof Kihampa wanted those who have sent applicants and enrolled in multiple universities to ensure that they confirm only to one varsity before October 18, this year.

He further warned the applicants and the general public to avoid being misled by some dishonest people who claim to provide services on how to join higher education institutions in Tanzania. "We have three groups of people who are eligible to apply for higher studies and these are form six leavers, ordinary diploma and those with foundation courses from the Open University of Tanzania (OUT). All information on how to apply and minimum requirements are available in the TCU website and respective varsities," Prof Kihampa said.

He reminded that those with certificates obtained from foreign countries should submit their certificates to the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) or National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) so as to obtain certification on their qualifications before applying.



The French Ambassador to Tanzania, Frédéric Clavier (2nd-R), briefs journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday on three agroecology conferences scheduled to be held in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Morogoro next week. He is with his Belgian counterpart, Peter Van Acker (L); the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation's representative in Tanzania, Stephen Kargbo (2nd-L); and French agronomist and agroecologist Prof Marc Dufumier. Photo: John Badi

FAO, French and Belgium embassies coordinate meetings on agroecology

By Francis Kajubi

FRENCH and Belgium embassies have teamed up with the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of Tanzania to coordinate three conferences on agro ecology to be held next week in Dar es Salaam, Arusha and Morogoro regions.

Addressing journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the ambassador of France to Tanzania, Frédéric Clavier said the conferences will together government officials with agro ecology stakeholders to exhibit and exchange best cases on how agro-ecology is at the core of sustainable development through its multi-dimensional impact.

"The conferences aims at engaging the universities of Nelson Mandela in Arusha and SUA in Morogoro and stakeholders, including the government at central and local levels, the development partners, the civil society, the private sector, and the media, to discuss on agroecology and set a common wayforward" Clavier.

According to him, to achieve the targeted objective, the three confer-

ences will underline the opportunity for the government of Tanzania to scale up agroecology for increased productivity, in quantity and quality, while ensuring resilience and sustainability for achieving Food sovereignty, security and safety, poverty reduction, and enhancing the green and resilient economy. Director of the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) in Tanzania, Stephen Kargbo, said that the conferences will focus on four thematic areas first being food sovereignty, security and safety that aims at achieving a national, resilient and sustainable production of safe food throughout the seasons through agroecology innovative practices and technologies.

The second is resilience to climate change and environmental conservation aiming at discussing how to reduce vulnerabilities to climate variability include crop diversification, maintaining local genetic diversity, animal integration, soil organic management, water conservation and harvesting to make grassroots communities more resilient to climate change and extreme

weather patterns, including prolonged drought periods and heavy rainfall, rising sea levels and cyclones.

"Livelihood improvement and innovation aiming at discussing the importance of improving the livelihoods of grassroots communities and contributing to the innovation agenda and economic reliability targeting at strengthening opportunities within the growing market of organic food consumption are other two areas of discussion that the conferences will go through" said Kargbo.

The ambassador of Belgium Peter Van Acker said his embassy supports agroecology through its Kilimo Endelevu programme implemented by Iles de Paix and financed by the Belgian government at a budget of €1,864,504, the project duration is 5 years (2017-2021) implemented in Karatu District.

"The programme aims at making sure that farmers are supported for the improvement of their productive activities and boost their revenues. About 6,650 family farmers reached by promotion activities for sustainable family farming," said Van Acker.

Govt forms task force to control aggressive animals

By Guardian Correspondent,

Dodoma

MINISTER for Natural Resources and Tourism Dr Hamis Kigwangala has ordered the establishment of a special task force to prevent aggressive wild animals from killing people and destroying properties.

He also directed authorities to ensure that the preparation of the electronic database of wild and destructive animals is completed before the end of the 2020/21 financial year.

The minister made the directives here during the launch of the four-year special National Strategy which is aimed to address challenges between wild animals and

communities.

He also directed that the process of allocating corridors and wildlife areas be expedited so as to control the interaction of the animal ways.

"So Tanzania National Parks (TANAPA), Ngorogoro Conservation Area Authority (NCAA), Tanzania Wildlife Authority (TAWA) and Tanzania Forest Services (TFS) should sit down and set aside enough budget to implement the strategy," he said.

He also urged the ministries of Agriculture as well as that of Livestock and Fisheries to cooperate with the ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism in preparing best land use plans so as to fight challenges facing the sector.

"We will also cooperate with

the ministry of Education, Science and Technology so as to incorporate issues concerning wildlife challenges in school curricula and thus enable children in pre-school, primary and secondary to have a broader awareness on the matter," he said.

For his part, director of wildlife department Dr Maurius Msuha said that the strategy's major objective is to reduce the number of conflicts rising between wild animals, authorities and the communities living near protected areas.

"In the implementation of the strategy communities will be educated on proper ways and measures to take when wild animals invade their areas so as to reduce harm, inva-

sion of wild animals in human settlements causes several impacts which include deaths, casualties, disability, loss of properties such as crops, livestock and others," he said.

Notice of Closure

IT IS HEREBY NOTIFIED THAT at the Extra Ordinary General meeting of KARIMJEE CONSULTANTS LIMITED held on the 23rd day of December 2019, a special resolution was unanimously passed by the Members to close the company as it has become dormant. If anyone has any claim or interest against the company, they are advised to contact the company at the below address within 7 days of this notice.

Karimjee Attorneys
P.O. Box 76421
Dar es Salaam

115839301

TUMAINI SAVINGS AND CREDIT SOCIETY LTD



JOB OPPORTUNITY

Tumaini SACCOS is a member based financial institution registered under COOPERATIVE SOCIETY ACT, with the main objective of giving loans to members in accordance to Loan Policy. Tumaini SACCOS is based in Arusha, is seeking to recruit suitably qualified candidate for the vacant positions of SACCOS MANAGER

POSITION: SACCOS MANAGER

REPORTS: SACCOS CHAIRPERSON

GENERAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Responsible in insuring that SACCOS resources including Asset, and personnel are utilized properly, for maximum output. Responsible in exploring potentials that will contribute to SACCOS's sustainability and growth.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Ensure organization climate where resources are identified, deployed, and exploited efficiently and effectively, through coordination of efforts and resources (Personnel, Capital, and information)
2. Ensure existence, updates, of SACCOS Vision, Mission, Policies, and Strategies that will facilitate attainment of SACCOS objectives
3. Supervise and direct resources to portfolio growth
4. Oversee, on time monthly, quarterly, and annual reports
5. Advise the Board on Investment decisions
6. To prepare and serve as Board Secretary, responsible in preparing, and keeping Board minutes on timely basis
7. To network with other stakeholders in issues relating to innovations, capacity building, legal, and Technology adoption
8. Champion in all matters relating to Product innovations and marketing of existing and new product
9. In collaboration with Board chair, undertake all human resource issues including staff motivation, create discipline atmosphere to SACCOS staff and capacity building to staff and members
10. Resource person in Policy, and bylaw amendments
11. Oversee all compliance issues and ensure that are done timely
12. Represent Tumaini SACCOS to external forums/networking
13. Carry out any other duties as may be assigned by the Board of Directors

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS and ABILITIES REQUIRED

A holder of Master's Degree in Business admiration, Cooperative Management, Finance or Microfinance, from recognized institution

- Chartered Public Accounting (CPA) will be an added advantage
- Mature Christian person committed to Christian values; including integrity and honesty.
- Ability to work with only occasional supervision.
- Proved Leadership skills
- Negotiation skills
- Training skills
- Creative ability
- Experience with personal computers using Microsoft Office including Excel, PowerPoint and Word.

Experience

- Minimum three years' experience in managing SACCOS
- Experience working with loan trucking software

Employment will be granted upon successful completion of all applicable checks, including last working history and Christian maturity. Only successful applications will be contacted regarding interviews. If you do not receive any feedback on your application, please consider yourself unsuccessful.

All interested Candidates are required to send application letters, with CV to:

CHAIR PERSON
TUMAINI SACCOS,
BOX 6070, ARUSHA.

Applications should be received not later than 30/10/2020 Official hours.

215839301

1,388 elders in Kahama District receive health insurance cards

By Guardian Correspondent, Kahama

AT least 1,388 elders in Kahama District, Shinyanga Region have been registered and given health insurance cards, a move which enables them to access free and quality health services through the public-private health insurance scheme called 'improved Community Health Fund (iCHF) iCHF.

iCHF was launched in November 2014 with the aim to increase access to quality healthcare for people in the informal sector, mostly rural and low-income groups. iCHF is a voluntary, district-owned health insurance scheme, built on a strong partnership between the National Health Insurance Fund (NHIF), the district councils (local government), public and private healthcare facilities.

A member of the Kahama District Monitoring Committee, Ruth Sodoka said this here when presenting a report at the meeting which aimed to discuss challenges facing elders in the district.

According to her, majority of elders are going through hard time to get quality services especially when they fall ill, a situation which affects them greatly.

"Kahama Town Council has a to-

tal of 6,792 elders whereby 2,793 are women and 3,999 men. Among them, 1,388 have been given the iCHF and 303 elders have free medical cards. This number is still low, we are calling for stakeholders, development partners, individuals, and religious institutions to extend their support to this group," she said.

Anderson Lyimo, secretary of the elders' council commended the Kahama town council for supporting 1200 elders with the iCHF cards, Mito ya Barka church which supported 70 elders and other good Samaritan funded 118 elders.

For his part, Kahama District executive director Ushetu Matomola said that the iCHF scheme is essential to enable as many people as possible, particularly those from the informal sector to be reached with health insurance services.

He assured that the government will continue improving systems to ensure that elders receive quality health services near to them.

According to him, in recognizing the importance of health service to people, the government has seen it necessary to implement the improved community health fund as a step towards health insurance to all people.



Representatives of various government departments and other public agencies, including the Tanzania Revenue Authority, take notes at Tarakea border point in Rombo District while making a verification of a consignment of reportedly smuggled mobile phones on Thursday. Photo: Correspondent Getrude Mpezya

Tanzania and China pledge to develop strategic relationship

By Correspondent Nelson Kessy

TANZANIA and China have agreed to develop strategic relations in order to form the core values of friendly cooperation and solidarity in managing the interests and development of the respective countries.

Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Prof Palamagamba Kabudi said in Dar es Salaam yesterday when he met with Chinese ambassador to Tanzania, Wang Ke.

Prof. Kabudi said that the discussions were also aimed to recognise the 55th year since the signing of the Friendship Treaty in 1965 that laid the foundation for strong relations and emphasized there is a need for other countries to respect each other and to refrain from encroaching on internal freedom under the pretext of human rights, democracy or anything else.

"This year is critical to the bilateral relationship between Tanzania and China, as we cel-

brate 55 years since the signing of the Friendship Treaty in 1965. This treaty formed the core values of our friendly cooperation and solidarity. In every respect, this is a significant milestone of our long historical and all-weather friendship. A friendship that upholds the ethos of mutual respect, sovereign equality and non-interference in each other's internal affairs," Prof. Kabudi said.

China's support to Tanzania, according to Prof. Kabudi has

been immeasurable.

"China has provided a helping hand to Tanzania in implementing various projects in all fields including health, defence and security, agriculture, infrastructure, education and industrial sectors. These projects have enormously contributed to the development and well-being of Tanzanians, clearly attesting to the mutual respect and friendship that happily exists between our two countries," he said.

Prof. Kabudi added that China

remains Tanzania's largest trading partner, with 19.3 per cent of Tanzania's imports in 2017/2018 originating from China. China is also Tanzania's largest source of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) with investment stock of over 700 projects valued at USD 7.1 billion and creating over eighty-seven thousand (87,000) jobs.

Wang Ke said China has always been a faithful and good friend for Tanzania and that the 55th anniversary of the friendship of the two countries is a

good example and they will always continue to respect and cherish that friendship.

She said: "We really cherish the cooperation between Tanzania and China. It is built on strong and unshakeable foundations. The two countries work hand in hand to promote each other."

She added that China would continue to reiterate its commitment to strengthen the excellent bilateral relations that still exist between the two countries.

The relationship between Tan-

zania and China began in the 1960s when these two countries initiated diplomatic relations on 9 December 1961. China went shoulder to shoulder with Tanzania and helped us in many aspects from political, military and development levels.

On another development, the minister also met and discussed bilateral matters with Finnish ambassador to Tanzania Ritta Swan as well as High Commissioner of Canada in Tanzania, Pamela O'Donnell.



Itale John (L), a student at Dar es Salaam's Benjamin Mkapa Secondary School, makes a presentation during a panel discussion held in the city on Thursday as part to the commemoration of the International Day of the Girl Child (October 11). The Day focuses attention on the need to address the challenges girls face and to promote girls' empowerment and the fulfilment of their rights as humans. Others are C-Sema CEO Kiiya JK (R), Welfare Consultant managing director Veronica John (2nd-R) and Global Peace Foundation Tanzania project manager Irene Ishengoma. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Work diligently, Kigaigai tells Bunge, PMO officials

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

OFFICIALS from the National Assembly and Prime Ministers' office have been asked to work diligently and ensure that formulated plans, policies and laws respond to real challenges confronting Tanzanians in their respective areas.

Clerk of the National Assembly, Stephen Kigaigai made the call here when speaking at five-day training for policy analysis and application of researches to officials in the Parliament and Prime Minister's office organised by REPOA.

"As officials, we're required to understand our positions and support the government in scaling up plans, policies and laws so that they address people's challenges," he said.

According to him, among the parliament's responsibilities are to advise the government on different policies and laws formulation as well as discussing and approving national economic plans, budgets and act as a government's watchdog on various development issues.

Kigaigai urged officials of the two institutions to work for the benefit of all Tanzanians, hence formulated policies should be people-centred.

"What you formulate should reflect challenges facing people in their respective areas," he said, describing the training as key tool that increases awareness on various issues that will help them to advise government authorities.

Executive director of the country's top think-tank (REPOA) Dr Donald Mmari described his organisation as an independent research institution, which creates and utilises knowledge to facilitate socio-economic development.

He said that REPOA has been working in doing policy researches, empowering researchers and disseminate findings to users-policy and decision makers.

"We're determined to produce high quality research, provides training, facilitates knowledge-sharing and promotes the use of accurate information in policy development," he said.

Dr Mmari said that the country's think tank compliments government's effort of making the country realize Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

He said the aim will be achieved by working together with various stakeholders when preparing priority areas for their researches simultaneously with having in place a programme for facilitating researchers and users of the research findings.

Provide digital finance literacy, banks urged

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

FINANCIAL institutions in the country have been urged to increase investment in the provision of digital finance literacy in order to break the existing knowledge gap and enhance development of the banking sector.

Enhancement of digital financial awareness to the public will help to expand the access to financial services as well as encouraging digital banking services to all customers in urban and rural areas.

Bank of Tanzania Deputy Governor Dr Bernard Kibese challenged the banking institutions to understand that financial education is important to increase the public understanding on financial management, importance of investing, but also to have an idea of where to get the capital for business.

He made the remarks on Tuesday in Dar es Salaam during the ceremony to launch the Nikofiti campaign, designed to stimulate digital financial literacy to the public.

The campaign, championed together by

Tanzania Bankers Association (TBA) and Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FSDT) is scheduled to run for six months across the country to enhance effective awareness of digital financial services to the public.

"The financial knowledge will give room for the public to get use of digital banking services which in turn will simplify banking operations and facilitate quick access of banking services to customers," Dr Kibese emphasised.

"If we want to prosper in this middle econ-

omy, we need to increase the coverage of people who understand digital financial services who will contribute to expand operation of the sector," he explained.

The governor added that, currently, speed of investment in infrastructures for provision of financial services doesn't correlate with the initiative to break the digital knowledge gap to the public who are expected to be customers. According to Dr Kibese the Bank of Tanzania (BoT) has now mandated the financial institutions across the country to estab-

lish a special department to deal with public education on financial literacy.

"We have mandated all financial institutions through the Consumer Protection Act to set special plans to enhance financial literacy to the public," he explained.

For his part executive director for Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FSDT) Sosthenes Kewe said the financial capability campaign which aims to educate the citizens Tz how best to use digital mechanisms to access financial services.

East Africa losing revenue owing to low investments in value addition

By Guardian Reporter

THE East African Community (EAC) is losing revenue due to low investments in value addition of horticulture and leather produced in the region, according to a report released by East African Business Council (EABC).

The regional private business body said that the region provides a good resource base for the production of hides and skins, having approximately 188.1 million livestock.

"Despite East Africa currently having a monthly demand of about 600,000 pairs of industrial shoes, production is only about 60,000 shoes per month," says the report on building the leather, fruits and vegetable value chains in the EAC that was launched virtually.

The findings show that the economic bloc mostly processes leather up to the wet blue stage with minimal transformation to finished leather implying in effect lost opportunity of close to US\$3.2 billion in the last four years through exports of semi-processed goods.

Peter Mathuki, CEO of EABC said the leather industry has stagnated due to

the high presence of imported used footwear as well as synthetic shoes.

"These imports are priced way below the production costs of local producers, thus reducing the market for a sector that is still not getting adequate financing," he said.

The findings indicate that there is also a huge opportunity for increasing economic growth in the horticulture sector as exports of manufactured goods remain limited.

According to the report by EABC, most farmers have limited finances for capital investment and purchase of modern inputs while lack of processing facilities close to the sources of the produce has also deterred the region from fully exploiting the potential of the sector.

The analysis indicates that appropriate infrastructure for marketing and proper post-harvest handling can tremendously reduce losses that horticulture farmers face in the region.

The report recommends EAC partner states to abolish import tariffs and Value Added Tax on imported seeds and seedlings plus other inputs in order to boost the competitiveness of horticultural farmers.



George Lugata (R), Vodacom Tanzania's head of sales, distribution, shops and customer service, introduces a 'Smart Kitochi' mobile phone shortly before gifting it to Jovith Muhandiki (L) - one of the mobile phone service provider's long-term customers. It was at yesterday's launch of a Voda Shop at Mikochei in Dar es Salaam. Looking on (C) is the firm's commercial director, Linda Riwa. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Babati poultry farmers advised to vaccinate chickens for Newcastle disease prevention

By Guardian Correspondent, Babati

POULTRY farmers in Babati District, Manyara Region have been urged to vaccinate their chickens appropriately so as to prevent them from the Newcastle disease that has plagued the population.

Newcastle disease is an infection of domestic poultry and oth-

er bird species with virulent Newcastle disease virus (NDV). It is a worldwide problem that presents primarily as an acute respiratory disease, but depression, nervous manifestations, or diarrhea may be the predominant clinical form.

Livestock senior expert Dr Godfrey Kayombo said many farmers were failing to protect chicks from diseases because they were not

vaccinating them soon after they were hatched.

Dr Kayombo told The Guardian in an interview that if farmers will apply vaccination as advised by experts, the deaths of mature chickens will be reduced greatly thus increasing income to the farmers. Kayombo noted that there were several types of poultry vaccination but farmers

should ensure that they seek experts' advice before vaccinating their chickens.

"Conducting vaccination in every four months will guarantee safety of the chickens from diseases. So it is high time now that poultry farmers should change their minds and embark on commercial poultry farming so as to benefit more

and improve their lives," he said.

According to him, Newcastle disease is not only confined to chickens but also ducks, turkeys, pigeons and other birds.

He also wanted farmers to stop using tap water during vaccination but rather use the recommended or special water recommended by experts.

If they are forced to use the tap water they have to make sure that the water is boiled. The veteran noted that household poultry is vital in reducing poverty; however, the high incidence of diseases is one of the major constraints to smallholder poultry production.

"Newcastle disease is one of the most serious epizootic

poultry diseases, it occurs every year and kills a number of unvaccinated rural family poultry flocks. Experts have been working hard to ensure that farmers benefit from their activity by training them on best practices. Once Newcastle enters somewhere, it kills over 90 percent of the chickens and other birds," he explained.

Govt certifies 100 ICT experts

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

THE government has registered and certified 100 experts in the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as part of the strategy to encourage the development of the industrial sector in the country.

The achievement is the result of the government investment in infrastructures like learning institutions to groom the expert of ICT.

The Minister for Works, Transport and Communications Eng Isack Kamwelwe said that, it is with no doubt that as a country we have all the reasons to set up proper infrastructures for the development of the ICT sector in order to facilitate changes in technology to develop the industrial sector.

"Today, the world is adapting to a digital communication influenced by technological advancement, therefore as the country is determined to achieve an industrial economy, we highly need the experts who can encourage the development of industry through technology," the minister said during the opening ceremony of the 4th Tanzania Annual ICT Conference which commenced on Wednesday in Dar es Salaam.

"We have also encouraged investment in ICT whereby so far there are 20 companies that have been certified to own network facilities and more than 87 companies have been certified to operate application services," he detailed.

Themed; "towards the 4th Industrial Revolution: current practices, challenges and opportunities" three-day conference supported by the Financial Sector Deepening Trust (FSDT) brought on board more than 50 participants from private and public institutions and organisations to discuss the future of ICT in relation to industrial development in the country.

According to the minister, to date, about 94 percent of areas across the country have been covered with access to communications being the result of the government initiatives.

"Nevertheless, the set-up of communication infrastructures has enabled to increase the number of internet users from 3.56 million people in 2005 to 23 million people by 2017," he elaborated.

However, the collective efforts are highly recommended to make sure that highly improved internet communications services are made accessible to citizens at a friend cost.

The minister said that within this five years, applications of ICT in general has doubled, the government has invested a lot in the electronic payments infrastructures through the established government electronic payment gateway (GePG); Tanzania electronic Purchase systems (TANePS); the Telecom Traffic Monitoring System (TTMS); electronic office (e-office), government mail system and many other electronic systems.

He challenged stakeholders in the ICT industry that, still there are a lot of untapped opportunities that need to be developed to simplify access to social and economic services both from private and public institutions.



Work on a drainage system in progress along in Dar es Salaam's Tandale suburb yesterday. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

65bn/- project to spare over 60,000 households water woes

By Blandina Semwaiko, TUDARCO

OVER 60,000 households in five wards of the Kinondoni District in Dar es Salaam are set to benefit from a 65bn/- water project, which involves construction of a big water-tank to supply clean water to the population.

Gilbert Masawe, the Dar es Salaam Water and Sewerage Authority (DAWASA) regional manager for Kawe said that the project implementation which commenced last month will take 24 months to its completion.

In an interview, Masawe said the water tank with capacity to carry 6 million litres

of water will be built at Tegeta A area in Goba ward and a booster station to supply water will also be built at Wazo area.

According to Masawe, with the construction of the tank, residents who have been grappling for years to get clean water will be able to access the service daily.

He named the beneficiary wards as Mbezi Juu, Goba, Wazo, Makongo Juu, Bunju and some parts of Bagamoyo District in Coast Region.

"These areas have been facing water challenges for many years, and the situation was due to some of them being located in mountainous areas. So these have been plagued by severe water shortages due to

the fact that it was difficult for the water to rise from the existing pumps to those areas. But this project has considered all these locations and their challenges," he said.

The regional manager urged residents in Mbezi Juu ward, Kinondoni municipality to be patient as the ongoing project will soon address water scarcity in the area.

A resident of Mbezi Mtoni Street in the Mbezi Juu ward Peter Haybei, described the water scarcity as an obstacle for their development.

According to him, despite hardship of life, the residents are forced to purchase one bucket of water from 150/- to 500/- which is a high amount for a normal person

to afford every day.

"I know this is not the right price, because DAWASA has allowed people to sell water at 50/- per bucket but there are some people who are selling the liquid at an unreasonable process thus affecting lives of majority of poor people," he added.

Reports show that, only 50 percent of Tanzania's population has access to an improved source of safe water, and only 34 percent of Tanzania's population has access to improved sanitation. Under these circumstances, the poor, particularly women and girls spend a significant amount of time travelling some distance to collect water.

TBS unveils legalised cosmetics list

By Correspondent Felix Andrew

THE Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) has issued online lists of legalised cosmetics, which can be sold in Tanzanian markets so as to protect the health of consumers.

Speaking in Dar es Salaam yesterday, the Quality Assurance Officer of Tanzania Bureau of Standards, Mboni Mwampeta, asked cosmetics traders to visit the website in order to get a list of the products that are required to stay in the markets.

She was speaking after impromptu inspection conducted at Magomeni area in the city where they found a number of prohibited cosmetics being sold in the market.

She said during the exercise they found outlawed cosmetics still sold in the market.

"We also found cosmetic products written in Arabic language which are not used in the East African market. Languages to be used in packaging materials are Kiswahili, English and French," she said, while others have unknown ingredients or do not show expiry dates.

She urged traders to visit TBS website which has detailed information on all cosmetics which are supposed to exist in the market.

The official asked food and cosmetics importers to register their products with the bureau that would enable them to avoid penalties.

For her part, the TBS Marketing Of-

ficer Debora Haule, said during the exercise they confiscated 100 kilograms of samples of various cosmetics including those expired and with poison.

Asked what the organisation is doing to enable traders avoid such banned products; she said they first conduct public education and engage various stakeholders in its prevention.

Expounding, she noted that such cosmetics have health consequences like cancer to their users.

According to her, the exercise was a continuation of the ongoing inspection countrywide to crackdown business in poisonous cosmetic products in the local market.



We also found cosmetic products written in Arabic language which are not used in the East African market. Languages to be used in packaging materials are Kiswahili, English and French,



Agriculture deputy minister Hussein Bashe (C) cuts a ribbon to relaunch the Kahama Cooperative Union (KACU) cotton ginny in Kahama town on Thursday. Others include Shinyanga regional commissioner Zainab Tellack (3rd-R) and the union's chairman, Emmanuel Charahani (4th-L). Photo: Correspondent Shaban Njia

No Vacancies! Southern Africa has highest unemployment rate in Africa

By Special Correspondent

PERSISTENTLY high levels of youth unemployment in Southern Africa pose a threat to regional peace and stability, a new report by the African Development Bank (AfDB) shows.

Titled "Coping with the COVID-19 pandemic", the report found that compared with other regions, "Southern Africa has the highest unemployment levels, averaging 12.5 percent be-

tween 2011 and 2019, followed by North Africa averaging 11.8 percent over the same period."

Warning that increasing levels of unemployment do not bode well for the region's peace and stability, the AfDB says: "In terms of youth unemployment, more countries are struggling. Nine out of the 13 countries experienced double digit youth unemployment levels, with the worst-affected countries being South Africa (53.2 percent),

Eswatini (47.4 percent), Namibia (44.8 percent), Botswana (37.5 percent), and Lesotho (33 percent). Youth unemployment rates were generally double the average levels."

Madagascar had the least youth unemployment in 2019; while Zambia, Madagascar, Malawi, Lesotho and Mozambique significantly reduced youth unemployment between 2011 and 2019, the report says.

"Countries that experienced

an increase in youth unemployment include Namibia, Mauritius, South Africa, Botswana and Angola," says the AfDB.

"Overall, the high level of unemployment, especially among the youth, is due to inadequate skills, skills mismatch, limited economic diversification, and low absorption capacity of industries, growth models driven by capital intensive sectors—diamonds in Botswana, a lack of functional institutions, slow

economic growth, and a lack of pro-employment macro-economic policies."

The AfDB recommends employment creation be mainstreamed in all national (fiscal, monetary and economic blueprints) and sectoral policies.

"However, in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, unemployment is likely to escalate especially in the hardest hit sectors such as tourism and hospitality, entertainment, retail and

trade and agriculture, where most of the people in the region are employed," the report states.

It says SMEs and the informal economy in general - big employers in several SADC countries - have been negatively affected by national lockdowns and slowdown in business activity occasioned by the pandemic.

"Without government support, the majority of workers are at risk of losing jobs, thus, compounding the unemployment

statistics," the report notes.

According to the report, poverty and inequality were twin challenges demanding the attention of the Southern Africa region.

"High unemployment rates," the researchers say, "have also contributed to huge income inequalities and pose questions on the role of developmental policies in the region in reducing unemployment and promoting structural transformation."

Coronavirus crisis is forcing us to refocus priorities, says AfDB

By Special Correspondent

THE African Development Bank (AfDB) hosted an online seminar as part of the fourth annual Global Infrastructure Forum, drawing together representatives of government, the private sector and multilateral development institutions to discuss strengthening infrastructure development in the COVID-19 pandemic era.

Held on Wednesday, the bank's workshop, titled: Infrastructure Project Preparation: Ensuring Sustainability and Resilience Post COVID-19, took the form of a panel discussion on the critical roles that government, multilateral lenders and the private sector can play in building much-needed infrastructure in an economic climate made more challenging by the ongoing pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic has sharpened Africa's already urgent need for added infrastructure spending. The African Development Bank estimates Africa's infrastructure financing needs at up to \$170 billion a year by 2025, with an estimated financing gap of as much as \$108 billion a year.

The webinar panel comprised Lamine Lo, Director, Financing and PPPs in the Ministry of Economic Planning and Cooperation, Senegal; Solomon Quaynor, Bank Vice President, Private Sector, Infrastructure & Industrialisation; Jerome Haegeli, Group Chief Economist and Managing Director, Swiss Re, and Dr Srinivas Sampath, Chief of the PPP Thematic Group, Asian Development Bank.

Quaynor noted that African countries typically lack the fiscal space of wealthier ones to cushion the pandemic's impacts. He also noted that the pandemic posed a challenge also for institutions like the African Development Bank. "We're going to have to innovate, come up with better project preparation approaches, we're going to have to design risk mitigation instruments because a lot of private sector would not be willing to take the risk of government obligations without a counter-guarantee."

The follow-up question and answer session led to a wide-ranging discussion that offered the panelists an opportunity to showcase some of the innovations that are being rolled out and share their projections. Topics included climate change, infrastructure recycling and leveraging pension funds and sovereign wealth funds to develop infrastructure.

In response to a question about government's role in creating an enabling environment, Lamine Lo laid out Senegal's priorities post COVID-19, listing the health sector, agriculture, education and pharmaceutical sector. "Why these sectors? It is driven by lessons learned from COVID-19 but it is also driven by the need to build an economy which is sustainable."

Underscoring the longer-term nature of climate change impacts, Haegeli observed that; "COVID-19 is a human tragedy, it's the deepest recession of our lifetimes, but it has an expiry date, climate change and biodiversity don't, that's why I think there's even more upside to act."

There was consensus among the panelists that MDIs, including the African Development Bank and Asian Development Bank, have a critical role to play in preparing projects for investment, tapping new sources of financing and supporting the recycling of assets.



Letshego Bank managing director Andrew Tarimo has an audience with customers and staff at a Customer Service Week function held in Dar es Salaam on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

EU donates 900,000 Covid-19 test kits to African Union

By Special Correspondent, Addis Ababa

THE European Union (EU) has donated 900,000 Covid-19 test kits to the African Union (AU) in a major boost to the African continent's anti-COVID-19 efforts.

Speaking at the Covid-19 test kits donation ceremony here on Thursday, Josep Borrell, EU High Representative, said the test kits donation is an important expression of solidarity to Africa's fight against the pandemic.

The 900,000 Covid-19 test kits are the third and last batch of the 1.4 million Covid-19 test kits donated by the EU's largest economy, Germany.

The kits were delivered through an EU Humanitarian Air Bridge Flight as part of the EU's global response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Today's Covid-19 test kit donation is an important expression of the EU's role in the fight against the pandemic," said Borrell.

"The pandemic will affect the entire global community. It's a

common enemy, it's an enemy we can all defeat together with a global approach and with cross-border coordination. Solidarity and cooperation are the keywords with this battle. They are at the heart of our response in this crisis. In this crisis, nobody will be safe until everyone is safe," said Borrell.

The AU Deputy Chairperson, Thomas Kwesi Quartey commended the EU for the donation of a large batch of Covid-19 test kits, essential to increase the still comparatively low continental testing

capacity.

"Today we received a very large consignment of Covid-19 testing materials, Personal Protective Equipments (PPEs), medical equipments, logistics from the EU, mainly from the German contribution," Quartey said.

"We're grateful for the logistical ability of our capital country Ethiopia and also of the ability of Ethiopian Airlines to distribute evenly Covid-19 test kits to other countries," further said Quartey.

Africa's largest airline company,

Ethiopian Airlines has since early this year transported several rounds of large Covid-19 medical supplies from various entities including the Chinese government, private Chinese institutions, and various European nations to scores of countries in the African continent.

Ethiopian Airlines has also transported Covid-19 medical supplies to Middle Eastern and South American destinations, playing an essential role in the global anti-Covid-19 efforts.



Patrick Pang, manager of the Aggrey Branch (Dar es Salaam) of TPB Bank, feeds a cake to customer Edna Mshanga (R) at a Customer Service Week event on Thursday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Positive death penalty decision undermined by continued executions

By Special Correspondent

IN the year since the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights gave fresh impetus to the global campaign for the abolition of the death penalty by declaring the mandatory death penalty "unfair" and a "failure in due process", at least four countries - Botswana, Egypt, Somalia and South Sudan - have carried out executions, Amnesty International said yesterday.

On 28 November 2019, the African Human Rights Court ruled in a landmark judgment that mandatory imposition of the death penalty was patently unfair, because it denied the convicted person the right to be heard and present mitigating circumstances. In considering the case, brought by Tanzanian death row convict Ally Rajabu against the government of Tanzania, the court further ruled that the mandatory death sentence fails to follow due process and breaches fair trial standards, by hindering courts from determining proportionate punishment for the facts of the alleged crimes.

"The African Human Rights Court broke new ground in highlighting the inherent unfairness of sentencing people to death without granting them the most basic requirement of a fair trial," said Netsanet Belay, Amnesty International's Director for Research and Policy.

"But nearly a year later, Tanzania has yet to implement the judgment. And even more concerning, Botswana, Egypt, Somalia and South Sudan have since carried out executions. As the abolitionist movement commemorates the World Day Against the Death Penalty, we urge all member states of the African Union that still retain the death penalty in their laws to abol-

ish the punishment; and pending abolition to immediately establish an official moratorium on executions, and commute, without delay, all death sentences to prison terms."

The African Human Rights Court also found that hanging as a method of execution amounts to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment because of the inherent suffering involved.

Amnesty International opposes the death penalty in all cases without exception, regardless of the nature or circumstances of the crime; guilt, innocence or other characteristics of the individual; or the method used by the state to carry out the execution. It violates the right to life as proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is the ultimate cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment.

Significant progress towards abolition of the death penalty has been recorded in Africa in the last four decades. While no African country had abolished the death penalty for all crimes 40 years ago, 20 of them have done it to date. Of the remaining countries that retain the death penalty in their laws, 17 are abolitionist in practice; they have not executed anyone in the past 10 years and are believed to have a policy or established practice of not carrying out executions.

"All countries that still retain the death penalty in their laws must respect the right to effective legal representation pending the full abolition of the death penalty. Effective legal representation is an essential safeguard against the death penalty; it is a means of protecting the human rights of people facing the death penalty, particularly their right to fair trial and right to life," said Netsanet Belay.

OPEC Fund approves US\$20m for SMEs in East Africa

By Special Correspondent,

Kampala

THE OPEC Fund for International Development has signed a US\$20 million term loan in favour of East African Development Bank (EADB). EADB will use the loan to support small- and medium-size enterprises

(SMEs) and infrastructure projects in East Africa.

EADB is an important regional development institution for delivering key development objectives across the East Africa region. It enjoys a high level of commitment from member states Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania and Rwanda, as well as a diverse shareholder base

that includes multilateral and bilateral development institutions and international financial institutions.

SMEs account for more than half of EADB's portfolio. They play an important part in development, driving economic growth and employment opportunities in East Africa and in developing countries more gen-

erally. The bank is expanding its resource mobilisation activities to meet the growing financing needs of SMEs.

"We are very pleased to support private sector development in East Africa, which goes to the core of our mandate," said OPEC Fund Director-General Dr Abdulhamid Alkhalifa. "We have partnered with EADB since 2001 and we appreciate the opportunity to

strengthen our relationship. SMEs are critical to achieving progress toward Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 on decent work and economic growth. Efficient infrastructure, as part of SDG 9, improves access to social services, reduces business and production costs, supports trade, and will ultimately provide East Africa with a more competitive business environment."

Vivienne Yeda, the Director General of EADB, said: "We are pleased to receive a line of credit of US\$20 million from the OPEC Fund dedicated to financing SMEs and infrastructure projects in EADB member countries. We appreciate the confidence placed in the EADB by the OPEC Fund. By financing SMEs, we expect to promote enterprises that generate employment opportunities, social economic develop-

ment and consequently promote regional integration. The SME sector is a critical pillar for sustainable economic growth as it is the backbone of the EADB member countries' economies."

This is the third loan the OPEC Fund has provided to EADB in support of SMEs. In 2001, the organisation approved US\$10 million, followed by a further US\$15 million in 2013.

Burundian refugee speaks of her struggle with mental health issue

By Chiza Consolata

MY name is Chiza Consolata. I am 48 years old. I am a Burundian refugee and a wife with nine children.

My husband and I moved to the outskirts of Bujumbura, Burundi to seek a new life. I went to visit my brother for a couple of days in Bujumbura. Apparently, I came to learn that unknown people were following my movements.

This day, my brother was shot to death at his home; it was a devastating moment. I went back home to my husband and came to learn that the same people went to look for me there when I was away. It was during the worst moment of the civil war.

We decided to seek for refuge in another village. In the dark hours, we were invaded and attacked by unknown persons. I came to realise, they were the same people that had come after me, after having been released by the authorities. One of my children, a 14-year-old, escaped to Dar es Salaam after witnessing the violence and the unsettled lifestyle.

At this moment, I was emotionally drained and the situation was taking its toll on us. These were signs that we could no longer tolerate or run further risks. In October 2015, my husband and I escaped to Tanzania.

We arrived in Nyarugusu refugee camp in north-west Tanzania along with my eight children. The camp life seemed to be better than where I was coming from. Until the moment I came to learn that my neighbor in the camp had an affiliation with the armed groups in Burundi, and also worked with my deceased brother. One day as I was walking with my friends from the church, my neighbor confronted me saying that I was manipulating the situation of my disabled child so that we could receive extra support from the refugee agency.

My neighbour teamed up with his husband to mistreat my children and my husband: my child was beaten up on the neck until he fainted and got robbed of his playing cards; my children were beaten when seeking for water around the camp. Furthermore, they attempted to harass my husband by instigating crime cases so that my husband gets arrested.

Given the fact that my neighbour was going back and forth to Burundi, I realised there was an agenda behind their maltreatment. I decided not to report them with any of the cases, because I felt powerless and hopeless. With the support of the organisations in Nyarugusu camp, we were trans-

ferred to the Nduta camp later in 2016.

The day of my departure I was threatened by my neighbour; she said to me "It does not matter which camp you go to, I will come after you wherever you go." Indeed, the search to frustrate us did not just end there. During the first couple of months of my stay in Nduta camp, we encountered another invasion and attack on our new home. Threats were constantly thrown at us.

At this point, my energy, my emotions, my dreams, my whole being were completely shut down. My thoughts were immensely tangled. I believed that my creation differed from other human beings, because, the situation did not look promising or close to ending.

Given the fact that I owe no one a penny, a life or nothing, it did not make sense for me to live, especially leaving behind my assets in Burundi. I started isolating myself from people; I was quickly angered when my children made noises, and I would strike them with a wood stick.

I felt hopeless and worthless. In the midst of the distress, I received news about my child being arrested in Dar es Salaam. Yet, my other child decided to go back to Nyarugusu to pursue her nursing studies who was later raped in the outskirts while collecting firewood. I was in deep pain not being able to take care of my children as I should. My mind was shattered and devastated. Slowly, my other children lost interest to study: one engaged herself secretly in an illegal marriage. My children behaviour was deteriorating. It was so painful to see how the situation impacted my children. I was tired; everything was out of shape and place. In my society, mental health condition is perceived as being cursed, evil spirited and insane.

I was named as a mad person, sick in the head and alike. People were frightened and claimed that I could throw stones towards them. My children have been filled with fear by some people due to my condition, simply because they lacked knowledge or awareness about mental issues.

This day, I woke up at the Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) health facility in Nduta camp where I had slept for three days unconsciously. With the support of the doctors at MSF, I started treatment and counselling immediately. I was diagnosed with major depressive disorder. I was weak to follow my medications; my children and my husband were giving me much-needed support. I remember taking the whole package of pills for consuming them all at once; luckily my child prevented me and gave me a proper dose.



Erick Rweikiza (R), chairman of the Association of Real Estate Agents in Tanzania, speaks at the opening of customer care training for AREA agents in Dar es Salaam earlier this week. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

Africa strives to contain wildlife poaching worsened by Covid-19

By Special Correspondent, Kampala

As the world grapples with COVID-19, conservationists in Africa are striving to contain rising wildlife poaching, which has been worsened by the pandemic.

When the pandemic hit the continent about seven months ago, many countries closed their borders and limited domestic movement. This brought the tourism sector, a key foreign exchange earner to many economies, to a grinding halt.

"The biggest impact of COVID-19 on conservation was the shutdown of the tourism industry," Kaddu Sebunya, chief executive officer of African Wildlife Foundation (AWF), one of the oldest conservation agencies on the continent said.

"Over 30 million Africans that benefited directly from the tourism industry lost their livelihood overnight," Kaddu said, noting

that national park services lost almost 50 percent of the revenues they use to protect wildlife while private conservancies lost all their revenues due to the shutdown.

In Uganda, according to Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA), a state-run conservation agency, poaching during the pandemic has gone up.

In Bwindi Impenetrable National Park, home to more than half of the world's population of mountain gorillas, poaching cases have risen from about eight suspects arrested in a whole year to eight suspects arrested in just a few months.

In June, the country lost a popular silverback gorilla, which was killed by a poacher as he went into Bwindi Impenetrable National Park to hunt for duikers and a bush pig.

Many other parts of Africa, according to Kaddu, face a similar situation whereby some who de-

rived their livelihood from tourism have resorted to poaching.

"Because of the reduction in tourism, people were laid off, patrols in the park reduced. What that means is that the bad guys are waiting to recruit these people into poaching," said Kaddu. "We have seen a surge in poaching, not because these are bad people but because they have lost their livelihood."

Countries have put up countermeasures to stop the surge in poaching. In Ugandan national parks, foot-patrols have been increased; Other places have started community initiatives where scouts patrol the parks.

"I have just come back from Serengeti (a national park in Tanzania)," Kaddu said. "I have seen community scouts still patrolling national parks without pay."

The AWF, through its Africa Response Fund to COVID, has also supported patrols, giving food ra-

tions and equipment to rangers.

While the pandemic has had a negative impact on conservation in terms of falling revenues from tourism, there has also been good news, Kaddu said.

"There are some good stories. Wildlife thrived everywhere we work during the COVID pandemic," he said. "The number of wildlife is increasing, and that tells us that when you leave wildlife alone, it thrives."

Since July 22, Uganda has registered the birth of eight mountain gorillas, seven in Bwindi Impenetrable National Park and another in Mgahinga Gorilla National Park, on the border with Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Conservationists are optimistic that as countries continue to ease COVID-19 restrictions and open up their economies, tourism will resume, bringing in revenue that can be used to protect wildlife.

The Guardian

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SATURDAY 10 OCTOBER 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995

Day of the Girl Child should focus on need to address challenges girls face

INTERNATIONAL Day of the Girl Child is an international observance day declared by the United Nations; it is also called the Day of Girls and the International Day of the Girl. October 11, 2012, was the first Day of the Girl Child. The observation supports more opportunity for girls and increases awareness of gender inequality faced by girls worldwide based upon their gender. This inequality includes areas such as access to education, nutrition, legal rights, medical care, and protection from discrimination, violence against women and forced child marriage. The celebration of the day also reflects the successful emergence of girls and young women as a distinct cohort in development policy, programming, campaigning and research.

International Day of the Girl increases awareness of issues faced by girls around the world. Many global development plans do not include or consider girls, and their issues become invisible. More than 62 million girls around the world had no access to education, as of 2014, according to USAID. Worldwide and collectively, girls ages 5 to 14 spend more than 160 million hours more on household chores than boys of the same age do. Globally, one in four girls are married before age 18. On October 11, 2016, Emma Watson, a United Nations Women's Goodwill Ambassador, urged countries and families worldwide to end forced child marriage. Many girls around the world are vulnerable to acts of sexual violence and the perpetrators often go unpunished.

The Day of Girls helps raise awareness not only of the issues that girls face, but also of what is likely to happen when those problems are solved. For example, educating girls helps reduce the rate of child marriage, disease and helps strengthen the economy by helping girls have access to higher paying jobs.

The International Day of Girls initiative

began as a project of Plan International, a non-governmental organisation that operates worldwide. The idea for an international day of observance and celebration grew out of Plan International's 'Because I Am a Girl' campaign, which raises awareness of the importance of nurturing girls globally and in developing countries in particular. Plan International representatives in Canada approached the Canadian federal government to seek the coalition of supporters raised awareness of the initiative internationally. Eventually, Plan International urged the United Nations to become involved.

International Day of Girls was formally proposed as a resolution by Canada in the United Nations General Assembly. Rona Ambrose, Canada's Minister for the Status of Women, sponsored the resolution; a delegation of women and girls made presentations in support of the initiative at the 55th United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. On December 19, 2011, the United Nations General Assembly voted to pass a resolution adopting October 11, 2012 as the inaugural International Day of Girls.

The resolution states that the Day of Girls recognizes the empowerment of and investment in girls, which are critical for economic growth, the achievement of all Sustainable Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty, as well as the meaningful participation of girls in decisions that affect them, are key in breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and recognizing also that empowering girls requires their active participation in decision-making processes and the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families and care providers, as well as boys and men and the wider community.

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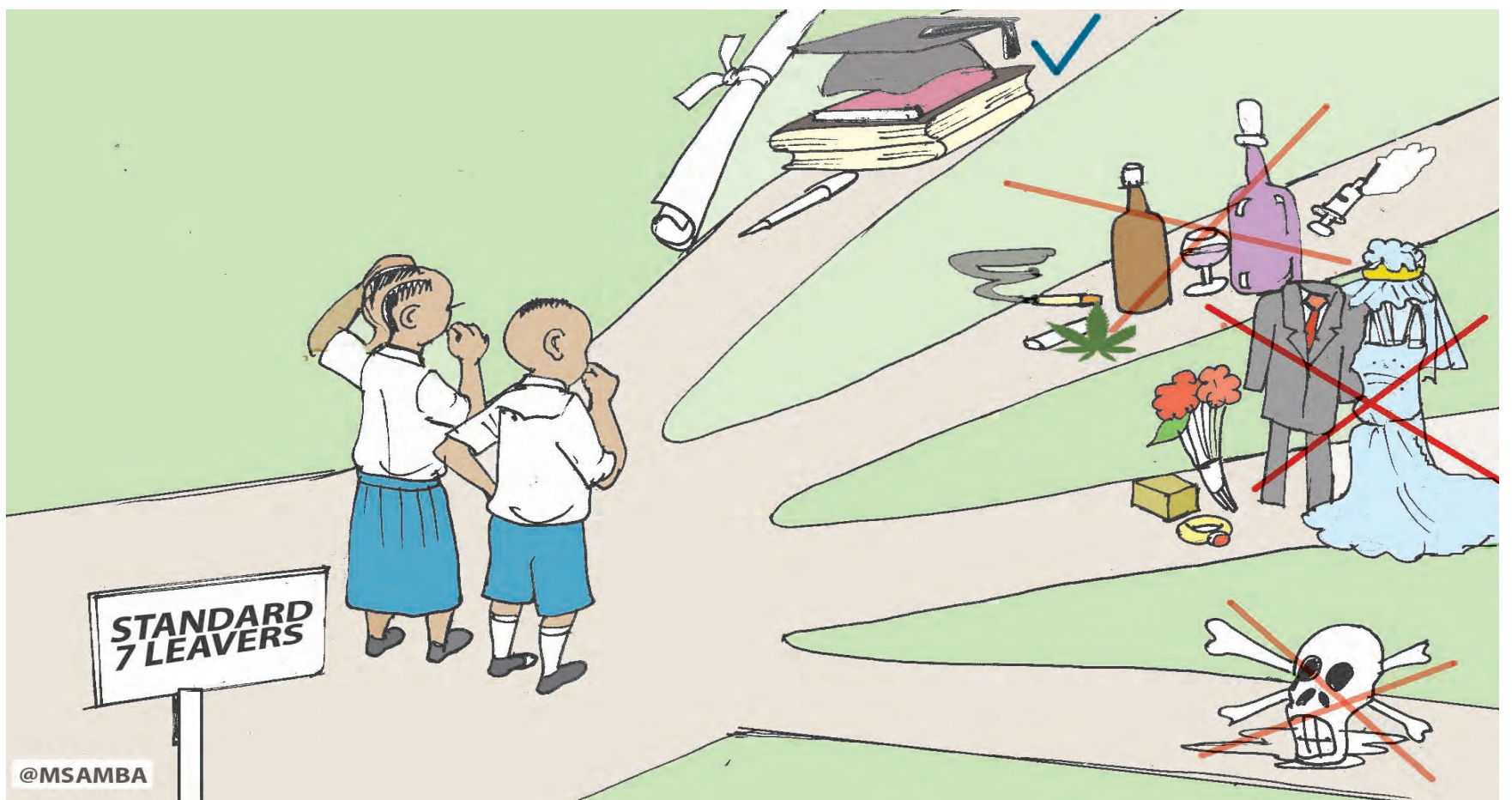
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West Africa: Should ECOWAS intervention force stay?



By Sankulleh Janko And Omar Wally

PRESIDENT Adama Barrow asked ECOWAS to extend the mandate of its military intervention. The regional bloc has obliged. It may be a sign Barrow is expecting trouble over the rejection of a new constitution.

The Gambia's President Adama Barrow has asked the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to extend the mandate of the military intervention it deployed during the country's constitutional crisis in 2017, raising questions over whether he expects issues with the binned new draft constitution that limits presidential terms.

The Economic Community of West African States Mission in The Gambia (ECOMIG) was mobilized during a constitutional crisis sparked by a disputed presidential election in late 2016. Barrow ultimately replaced strongman leader Yahya Jammeh who had refused to step down and became Gambia's president in January 2017.

At an ECOWAS summit in Niger on September 7, the bloc agreed to extend the mission. Barrow had already asked that the mission, which paved the way for his rise to power, to continue its work for one more year, citing the ECOWAS soldiers as a stabilizing presence in country.

"Given the reforms underway and the need to protect the fragile democracy in The Gambia, I avail myself this privilege to request for the extension of the mandate of ECOMIG in The Gambia," he told ECOWAS in June.

However, not all Gambians agree that the mission should stay put. Some are questioning why the country's army cannot step up. Gambian

army spokesman Major Lamin K. Sanyang denied that the army was "dormant," as some citizens are saying.

"The presence of ECOMIG does not make Gambian armed forces dormant," he told DW. "The reason is Gambian armed forces' mandate and that of ECOMIG are totally different."

Is President Barrow feeling unsafe? A provision in the 1997 Constitution mandates the armed forces to protect and defend the territorial integrity and sovereignty of The Gambia against external aggression.

"We are capable of handling the security of The Gambia," explained Sanyang. "So, it means that gradually we will get to the point that the ECOMIG forces at State House will be completely replaced by Gambian sons and daughters in charge of protecting the president."

Reviewing the 1997 Constitution has been a fraught and costly process. Public debate on the draft constitution has coincided with the contentious issue of Barrow's term in office.

Barrow's extension of the ECOMIG came as the draft Constitution -- Constitutional Promulgation Bill -- was presented to lawmakers in the Gambia. On September 22, the National Assembly in Banjul rejected the draft that would have prevented Barrow from holding office beyond two terms.

After two days of intense debate in Parliament, it was Barrow's deputy allies who rejected the draft constitution.

The nation was glued to their television sets as Mariam Jack Denton, the speaker of Parliament read out the votes: "These are the results -- the ayes 31, the noes 23. The votes of

the honorable members supporting the reading of the bill fell short of the threshold of 42 members."

"Back to the drawing board"

The Gambia consulted widely and spent over \$2 million (€1.72 million) on the constitutional review process which was supposed to lead to a referendum if Parliament subsequently adopted the bill. The process was intended to complete The Gambia's transition from a dictatorship to full democracy.

Many Gambians expressed their anger over the outcome, saying their wishes and aspirations for the future of their country were outlined in the bill.

"It's a slap in the face," Momodou Bah, a Banjul resident told DW. "I think it's a progressive constitution. The majority of what we have been advocating for is included."

A younger resident, Essa Barry said the Parliament was "not worth their salt."

"I am disappointed like every other genuine Gambian," he told DW. "This is why people like us should take responsibility and participate in politics."

The Gambia has only one option now, according to Justice Minister and Attorney General Dawda Jallow: "This draft will have to go back to the drawing board and we have a second attempt if you completely reject it and do not allow it to go to the committee for consideration."

New constitution equals full democracy

Sait Matty Jaw, a political science lecturer at the University of the Gambia, said the failure of the bill marks a missed opportunity for the country to transition to true democracy. "Everybody was looking forward

to a new Gambia," he said. "For me, there cannot be a new Gambia without a new constitution."

Gambia is now effectively stuck with the 1997 constitution, he explained: "President Barrow will still have the same power. I don't look at the individual but at the institution that governs them, and right now it is the institution that still gives the president excessive power."

The international community had urged The Gambia to pass the bill, which also included provisions that would have seen the youth and women at the center of political decision making.

Gambian youth express security concerns

Young Gambians in particular have been increasingly concerned about the security situation in the country since the ECOMIG extension was decided.

Oley Faal, who is in her 30s, said she would like the West African forces to leave.

"When I say internal security, I mean they are not responsible for the crime rate," she told DW. "They seem to be responsible for the presidency."

For resident Lamin Tamba, keeping the soldiers in the country makes no sense. "In the state of nation address, President Barrow said Gambian security services are keeping the peace and keeping Gambians safe right now," he told DW. "So why then do we need peacekeepers in The Gambia?"

However, another young Gambian, Malick M. Jarju, thinks ECOMIG needs to remain on. "I think they need to stay beyond 2021," he told DW. "The truth is some of these people are still loyal to the former regime."

Healthy populations are the engine for sustainable growth

ONE in four people in the world will be affected by mental ill health at some point in their lives, according to estimates. Currently, about 450 million people are living with mental disorders. Depression alone is thought to affect more than 300 million people. Approximately one person dies from suicide every 40 seconds, with indications that for every adult who dies, there may be 20 others making suicide attempts.

Country-level mental ill health numbers are even more concerning. Together, China and India account for one third of the global burden of mental illness. Healthy populations are the engine for sustainable growth. When such a large proportion of the population suffers from mental ill health, the negative impact is costly to society.

World Mental Health Day observed on 10th October annually is an international day for global mental health education, awareness and advocacy against social stigma. It was first celebrated in 1992 at the initiative of the World Federation for Mental Health, a global mental health organisation with members and contacts in more than 150 countries. This day, each October, thousands of supporters come to celebrate this annual awareness programme to bring attention to mental illness and its major effects on peoples' lives worldwide. In some countries this day is part of an awareness week.

World Mental Health Day was celebrated for the first time on October 10, 1992 at the initiative of Deputy Secretary General Richard Hunter. Up until 1994, the day had no specific theme other than general promoting mental health advocacy and educating the public.

World Mental Health Day is supported by WHO through raising awareness on mental health issues using its strong relationships with the ministries of health and civil society organisations across the globe. WHO also supports with developing technical and communication material. Mental health is the level of psychological well-being or an absence of mental illness. It is the state of some-

one who is "functioning at a satisfactory level of emotional and behavioural adjustment". From the perspectives of positive psychology or of holism, mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life and to create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental health includes "subjective well-being, perceived self-efficacy, autonomy, competence, inter-generational dependence, and self-actualisation of one's intellectual and emotional potential, among others". The WHO further states that the well-being of an individual is encompassed in the realisation of their abilities, coping with normal stresses of life, productive work, and contribution to their community. Cultural differences, subjective assessments, and competing professional theories all affect how one defines "mental health".

According to the U.K. Surgeon Journal (1999), mental health is the successful performance of the mental function resulting in productive activities, fulfilling relationships with other people, and providing the ability to adapt to change and cope with adversity.

The term mental illness refers collectively to all diagnosable mental disorders--health conditions characterized by alterations in thinking, mood, or behavior associated with distress or impaired functioning. Mental health and mental illness are two continuous concepts. People with optimal mental health can also have a mental illness, and people who have no mental illness can also have poor mental health.

Mental health problems may arise due to stress, loneliness, depression, anxiety, relationship problems, death of a loved one, suicidal thoughts, grief, addiction, ADHD, self-harm, various mood disorders, or other mental illnesses of varying degrees, as well as learning disabilities. Therapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurse practitioners, or family physicians can help manage mental illness with treatments such as therapy, counseling, or medication.

Poor graduands have lost touch with marvellous graduation day

By Gaudensia Mngumi

TRADITIONALLY, graduation day is a moment to brag and celebrate remarkable achievements in the academic circles. It is around this time that one becomes an alumni of a particular university. That is why fresh graduands are so much excited during graduation day.

Because it becomes a moment to say 'asante' when one looks back to see a number of challenges one went through and battled them to arrive safe in that marvellous journey which give a comfort of being awarded a degree certificate.

In recent years, October to December have always been warmth season for fresh graduands from the universities because at this time they will always think about their graduation day.

In 1970s to 1980s that was the time when it was likely to say that graduation day had a meaning. Many graduands thought about their graduation day as something very specially. For those who were coming from the distant villages they pondered a lot who will organise a party for them.

It was so challenging by then because everybody wanted something during the graduation.

In those years fresh graduands sought help from their closer relatives, friends of their fathers, mothers or even friends of their uncles in Dar es Salaam to do a small thing to mark their graduation day.

Things were not like today where every person seems to dodge anything that mentions money.

Today it is hard to fundraise for education or even medication how can one fundraise for graduation party? In fact many are not ready to be bothered hence the idea of having lousy graduation parties currently is dying away natural.

Not like in the past because presently, many graduands have loose hope. They are walking on the streets to search for jobs, many look at them like scums. Their shoes are dusty while their tee-shirts or shirts are stuck on their backs. As they walk in the buildings or offices holding A4 envelopes with their documents, they are received with posters like 'hakuna kazi'.

In the office people avoid graduates,



when they stare at them they feel that they look like persons who will always ask for something small to eat.

Perhaps that is why several have even forgotten about a small diner prepared for their great day.

But in the old good days when Dar es Salaam University was the only 'ivory tower' of the country, graduation day was a 'great and mighty thing.' Fresh graduands always thought and waited with excitement which begun to build inside every cell, organ and finally in the tissues.

In the past some fresh graduands would have even a countdown corner to tick off each day on the calendar that hung on the wall in the bed rooms or in the seating rooms or on the one that the graduand make for one use.

The fresh graduands went crazy when the time to pick up black gradu-

ation gowns, the cap and hoods came.

There were always high spirits with feelings that is it me that I am going to graduate at the UDSM, in that country one and only university?

That was the time to sleep with the great academic outfit. The happiness filled the hearts of the fresh graduands who have many thoughts about the ceremony and the things which will follow thereafter.

Some imagined themselves dressed in that magic academic gown; their pictures will be taken and hung on the walls in their homes in villages or in towns for everybody to view, including the visitors, relatives and young girls and boys each day.

The graduation day was the time when parents, guardians, relatives and friends came to Dar es Salaam to attend the ceremony at UDSM Engineering Grounds.

Some brought with them roosters, turkeys, goats, yams, sugar canes and any eatables from the villages. It was the moment when the

mothers of the graduands cried for happiness when they saw their own daughters and sons in hoods, caps and the marvellous academic outfits. They shade tears. They didn't believe when they saw the children from their own wombs being awarded degrees.

Graduation day was full of excitement everything turned unusual, parents, guardians and relatives of the graduands crisscrossed the Hill -UDSM. It was the time to see the cafeteria by then there were two centers the Harvard for the high class students who considered themselves as the people coming from the up markets areas and Manzese for low class, those are bygone.

Some took time to visit the then ultra modern UDSM library, the great Nkurumall Hall, accommodation halls like hall six, Dug Hamascold and Hall Three for girls.

During that great day graduands were always in good look, boys in sharp suits while girls dressed in party wears at all time they 'blinged'

in smart and bling bling outlooks.

It was the time to iron properly their parents, guardians and relatives cloths so that they appear smart for that great and mighty day.

Everybody would like to see that parents and guardians arrived early and seat under the shade. They should arrive early so that they seat in front to be able to hear the names of their beloved one when read or called by the Vice Chancellor. When the graduated heard their names read they felt like flush of heat spread throughout their bodies while they continued to wipe their perspiring foreheads with white handkerchiefs.

But today we don't have those lovely moments. Several graduates do thousands unsuccessful interviews.

There are some allegations that some are told to 'give tea' to the panelists, leave money for processing the shortlists while girls are asked for sexual favours commonly known as 'rushwa ya ngono'.

All these have made today's graduands to almost give up the hope of getting a job as well as to celebrate their graduation ceremony, much sorry, 'pole sana' to our graduands.

More funding needed for mental health response plans in Africa

By Correspondent Crispin Gerald

AS Tanzania joins the World to commemorate World Mental Health Day today, the World Health Organisation (WHO) Africa Region has underscored the need for the government to increase funding for mental health response plans.

The new WHO survey shows that critical funding gaps are halting and disrupting crucial mental health services in Africa, as demand for these services rise amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

Globally, one in four people will be affected by a mental disorder at some point in their lives, and in the WHO African Region, government expenditure per capita on mental health is less than 10 cents.

The theme for this year's celebration of World Mental Health Day is "Move for Mental Health: Let's Invest" to advocate for increased international and domestic financing for mental health and well-being.

"Most mental health services are paid for directly by patients and their careers. For low-income households and other vulnerable groups, the cost of this essential care can cause financial hardship," said Dr Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa. In working together to attain universal health coverage, we must ensure people affected by mental health issues are not left behind.

She added that, the Covid-19 pandemic has brought out more than ever, how mental health is integral to overall well-being. Restrictions on movement and gathering, job losses, deaths of loved ones, and widespread Covid-19 infections have led to fear, anxiety and depression. There are reports of upsurges in intimate partner violence and suicides.

Mental health needs in the African Region are significant. Fifteen African countries are among the top 30 globally for suicide per 100,000 people. Although many countries have developed national mental health policies, the availability of services is often limited to specialized institutions in capital cities.

Globally there are nine mental health workers per 100,000 people. In the African Region,

this falls to 0.9, and among this workforce one third are non-professional workers, meaning there is a severe shortage of psychiatrists and psychologists in African countries.

"Some countries are making progress, such as Cabo Verde, Kenya, Mozambique, Rwanda and Uganda where governments have committed to decentralizing mental health services, moving away from institution-based care, and strengthening care at primary health and community levels, said Dr Moeti.

"At WHO we are working with governments to review mental health legislation and related policies, and to build capacities using the MH-Gap approach, a task sharing strategy where primary health care workers are trained and then supervised in managing common mental disorders," she detailed.

Zimbabwe was selected to be part of the World Health Organization (WHO) director-general's Special Initiative for Mental Health to strengthen these services. A national assessment of the mental health services was carried out in 2019 and virtual consultations to develop a plan of action have so far engaged over 100 stakeholders.

In the context of Covid-19, we are working with governments and partners to include mental health care as part of continuity of essential health services, and we are providing psychosocial skills training for first responders.

In a survey led by WHO and UNICEF in East and Southern Africa, responders reported depression and anxiety, especially when working in high-risk settings or without personal protective equipment.

According to Dr Moeti, in response, they have developed a guide for responders to be able to recognize signs of distress in themselves, their colleagues and those they interact with. The guide provides self-help techniques, and tips on listening, de-escalating tense situations, and referrals.

In a global survey led by WHO on mental health and Covid-19 between June and August, 27 of 28 African countries that responded, indicated mental health and psychosocial support was included in the national Covid-19 response plan, but only 17 had funding for the planned



activities. This reaffirms the importance of this year's theme of investing in mental health.

"Of the countries responding in the African region, 37 percent reported that their Covid-19 mental health response plans are partially funded and a further 37 percent reported having no funds at all," she said.

"Isolation, loss of income, the deaths of loved ones and a barrage of information on the dangers of this new virus can stir up stress levels and trigger mental health conditions or exacerbate existing ones," said Dr Moeti.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has shown, more than ever, how mental health is integral to health and well-being and must be an essential part of health services during outbreaks and emergencies."

African countries account for 15 of the top 30 countries globally for suicide per 100 000 people. While there is scant data on how Covid-19 is increasing mental health conditions on the African continent, one study in South Africa found that 10-20 percent of the 220 people

surveyed reported potent experiences of anxiety and fear as a result of the pandemic.

Another survey of 12 000 women in low-income communities in Uganda and Zambia found an increase in persistent stress, anxiety and depression.

In Africa, substance use disorder services were the mental health services facing the biggest disruptions. The main causes for the disruptions were due to patients failing to turn up, travel restrictions hindering access to health facilities and a decrease in patient volume due to cancellations of elective care.

"While at the global level, up to 70 percent of countries have responded to the challenges posed by Covid-19 with telemedicine, in Africa governments have set up counselling helplines and increased training for key health responders in basic psychosocial skills, director said.

With increasing pressure on health systems and rising demand, stretched and chronically underfunded mental health services are under increasing strain.

"Covid-19 is adding to a long-simmering mental health care crisis in Africa. Leaders must urgently invest in life-saving mental health care services," said Dr Moeti.

In closing, I call on governments, partners and communities to promote social interventions, such as strengthening peer support, re-integrating long-stay patients into communities, and equipping caregivers with the knowledge and resources to better support people with mental disorders.

I call on employers to invest in staff well-being programmes and training in psychological first aid.

There are basic steps we can all take to improve our mental health: getting plenty of sleep, eating healthy food, avoiding alcohol, exercising, socializing, and developing strategies to manage stress and anxiety. I ask every person to invest in your mental health and well-being, and to be supportive of those around you.

Handeni parliamentary candidate pulls people to his forestry farm

By Beatrice Philemon

HANDENI residents will start to earn income and save the district from the effects of climate change and desertification in village lands after embarking on a new tree planting campaign, with support from the government and other stakeholders engaged in forestry.

Right now, the CCM parliamentary candidate for Handeni constituency has embarked on a campaign aimed at encouraging people to plant trees in their localities as an alternative source of income plus reducing deforestation. Wanton tree felling has ended up destroying village forest cover and water sources in those localities.

The candidate has conducted an awareness campaign in various wards and suburbs of the town, where he is asking each household to allocate one acre of land for tree planting, while conserving remaining forest land on their village land. Trees help villagers in the need for charcoal making, timber production and other aspects.

Handeni district has 91 villages in 21 wards and 770 groups of households, with up to 90 percent of local communities depending on forests for fuelwood, charcoal business and construction materials for domestic needs and sale.

This is a new campaign designed to support government efforts to serve about 17.6m hectares of unreserved forests, approximately 80 per cent of around 22m hectares of forest cover located in village lands. This will also help Handeni residents obtain ade-

quate water from increasingly threatened sources.

The parliamentary candidate, John Sallu made these observations recently when briefing officials of the Tanzania Forest Conservation Group (TFCG) and journalists who visited his five acres of farm forestry.

The visit was aimed at showing various tree species grown for demonstration for Handeni residents to obtain tree species suitable for timber production, fruit farming and other needs.

The farm has tree species from as far away as Brazil, Australia, South Africa and Zimbabwe, where the research is intended to show which tree species is suited for the district's environment and its particular economic use.

An acre of mature trees can enable villagers to earn 20m/- depending on what kind of tree species the farm contains.

He decided to embark on this campaign after noticing that forest conservation and tree planting help people earn income, reduce deforestation in the village lands, thus contributing to economic development and combat climate change in the area.

Trees grown on farms can help the rural poor combat hunger and malnutrition, improve soil fertility, harvest fruits, leaves, nuts and spices, vital components of a balanced diet, particularly in times of food shortages.

"Leaders must support the government's efforts and people to protect our forests, reducing deforestation to save our country from the effects of climate change and desertification. People benefit from what they plant



CCM Parliamentary Candidate for Handeni constituency, John Sallu (in green shirt) shows Tanzania Forest Conservation (TFCG)'s Advocacy and Communications officer, Revocatus Njau one of the tree species that has been grown in his farm for research. Photo: Beatrice Philemon

and conserve in their localities," he said. Under this campaign, the communities will be given tree seedlings to plant on farms and other areas to reduce poverty, hunger and deforestation in village lands.

He promised to work in partnership with different stakeholders to provide tree seedlings, help people to visit his forestry farm, as seeing is believing. "I want them to learn from what I did in my farm and then put into practice in other areas or on farms," he said.

The campaign will focus on villagers living near the forest since the focus is to make Handeni green in like manner as Mafinga in the Southern Highlands, he said, noting that this requires the participation and involvement of most people in the district.

Trees will help the villagers create funds for medical treatment when they are elderly or in referral hospitals elsewhere, so it is time for Handeni residents to embark on the tree campaign, he further noted. "And as MP I will help them to meet what they need for tree planting and forest conservation to protect our water sources."

"I will also work in partnership with other stakeholders including TFCG, MJUMITA and MCDI to enable villages to develop sustainable management and harvesting plans in their areas as well as encouraging sustainable harvesting in village forests." Elaborating on the water problem, he said if he is elected he will take measures to ensure water and forests are prioritized.

Water is important for sustainable

development while access to clean and safe water is the main challenge facing local communities in the district, he said.

"As you know water is required for domestic use, farming, industrial production, irrigation, hydropower production, tree planting and even in tourism for wildlife," he says, remarking that 91 villages there face water scarcity.

Women and other vulnerable groups are more affected, walking long distances to fetch water for domestic use.

For his part, (TFCG) Advocacy and Communications officer Revocatus Njau said that in a bid to protect unreserved forests, TFCG in collaboration with the Community Forest Conservation Network of Tanzania (MJUMITA) have embarked on a new campaign for forest reserves for all villages. This is being done in three zones to mobilize villagers allocate areas of village land as forest reserve, take full ownership and management and seek formalization of occupancy of those reserves.

The campaign is being conducted in the Southern Highlands zone, the Northern Zone and the southern regions through a two years project, Forest Justice in Tanzania, supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID).

The campaign theme is "Every Village with forest resources on its land has a right to establish and sustainably manage its own Village Land Forest Reserve," and has so far been conducted in Madebe, Kang'ata, Kitumbi villages in Handeni district, Mihima village in Lindi district, etc.

Even in mild cases, Covid-19 could damage the heart

By Dana G Smith

EARLY on in the coronavirus pandemic, it became clear that a large percentage of the deaths caused by Covid-19 were related to cardiovascular problems.

In March, a study revealed that more than 25 per cent of people hospitalised for the novel coronavirus had signs of heart damage, and nearly one-third of those people had no underlying cardiovascular disease.

A more recent evaluation of autopsies performed on people who died from Covid-19 found inflammation and injury to the heart in 86 per cent of cases.

Perhaps even more alarming is that evidence of heart damage has not only been reported in serious cases of Covid-19 but also in mild or asymptomatic ones.

One study looking at college athletes who had tested positive for the virus but had mild or even no symptoms found signs of inflammation in cardiac MRI scans in 15 per cent of the athletes.

Researchers from Germany meanwhile found that 78 per cent of people who had recovered from Covid-19 showed similar abnormalities on MRI scans of their hearts taken two months later.

These findings have caused some experts to raise the question of whether Covid-19 should be categorised as a disease of the heart as well as a respiratory infection, and if everyone who tests positive for the virus should be screened for cardiovascular complications.

However, other scientists and clinicians have pushed back, saying that panic over the effect of the virus on the heart, especially in mild cases, is premature.

An abnormal MRI could mean myocarditis

At the root of the debate is whether or not the abnormal cardiac MRIs in people with mild or asymptomatic Covid-19 are evidence of cardiovascular damage that could cause serious complications, including heart failure or arrhythmias (irregular heartbeats).

One interpretation of the abnormalities seen in the scans is that they are evidence of myocarditis - inflammation of the heart cells caused by the body's immune response to a viral infection.

In many cases, myocarditis resolves on its own without any lingering issues. However, in approximately 1 per cent of people, it can cause sudden death, typically prompted by vigorous exercise. Clinicians have virtually no way of telling which way a case will go.

"Based on what we know from other viruses, myocarditis could potentially be deadly. It is one of the most significant causes of sudden cardiac death in athletes," says Saurabh Rajpal, MD, a cardiologist at Ohio State University who published the study on cardiac abnormalities in college athletes.

Rajpal adds: "I want to be clear that we're not saying that Covid can do that, but we have that knowledge from other viral myocarditis... Most of these cases recover, but a small minority could progress into more severe conditions."

Not everyone is convinced that the scans depict myocarditis, though. The MRIs show changes that are often seen with the inflammatory condition, but not exclusively.

They can indicate other forms of heart damage as well, such as genetic cardiac disorders or inflammatory illnesses like lupus or sarcoidosis (an inflammatory disease that affects multiple organs in the body, but mostly the lungs and lymph glands). The only way to diagnose myocarditis for certain is with a biopsy of heart tissue, which neither of the studies on mild Covid-19 cases did.

"All of my pathology friends would say that the studies do not fit a pathologic definition of myocarditis because there is no pathology. I think that's one simple answer," says Leslie Cooper, MD, chair of the Department of Cardiovascular Medicine at the Mayo Clinic in Florida and founder of the Myocarditis Foundation.



"The more complicated answer, which is, I think, more accurate, is to say that amongst the disorders that cause these imaging features in the heart, myocarditis is one," adds Cooper.

The real question, Cooper says, is whether the abnormal scans - whatever their cause - lead to serious clinical problems.

In elaboration, Cooper notes further: "Do you have an increased risk of sudden death? If you play sports, will your heart stop? Or will you get cardiomyopathy (diseases of the heart muscle) and heart failure? And that is the critical question that we do not have an answer to."

The issue of whatever it is that doctors see on the scans versus what that actually means for patients is so contentious that last month saw 51 cardiologists and radiologists signing an open letter asking medical professional societies to recommend against cardiac MRI scans for people who tested positive for the novel coronavirus but were asymptomatic.

Many physicians worry that people - and organisations - will make or recommend major life changes based on these scans without knowing whether or not the results are clinically meaningful.

For example, the German cardiac MRI paper is cited as having influenced the Big 10 and the Pac 12 conferences' decisions to not participate in NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association) football this year - a decision both conferences have recently walked back.

A few organisations tentatively

agreed with the letter. In a statement to the medical trade publication MedScape Today, a representative from the American Heart Association said: "The American Heart Association's position on this is that in general we agree that routine cardiac MRI should not be conducted unless in the course of a study." The American College of Cardiology, on the other hand, declined to take a stand.

Adding to the confusion is debate over how novel, and therefore how notable, the abnormal scans really are. It's well known that severe infections from several viruses, including influenza, respiratory syncytial virus and coxsackievirus, can cause myocarditis and other forms of cardiovascular injury.

Higher rates of heart attacks often overlap with particularly bad flu seasons. But no one has looked at whether signs of cardiovascular damage emerge after mild infections with these viruses.

"We don't do MRIs in other illnesses. Say, if you had a bad influenza, for example, we don't routinely do MRI in that setting, so we don't know if you would see this same feature in other similar disorders or in people who were asymptomatic," says Cooper.

It's possible that a typical case of the flu or even a common cold caused by one of the other coronaviruses could temporarily affect the heart without causing any long-term damage. However, there's no research on the matter, simply because scientists and doctors haven't had a reason to look without any symptoms to indicate

that there's a problem with the heart.

Myocarditis not the only cardiovascular concern

This isn't to say that SARS-CoV-2's potential effect on the heart isn't serious; indeed, it absolutely can be. In a recent article in the journal Science, Eric Topol, MD, a cardiologist and director of the Scripps Research Translational Institute, wrote about the myriad ways SARS-CoV-2 affects the heart, directly and indirectly.

"SARS-CoV-2 can lead to myocarditis, necrosis (death) of heart cells, mimicking of a heart attack, arrhythmias, and acute or protracted heart failure (muscle dysfunction)," he writes.

In addition to the rise in arrhythmias and blood clots in people hospitalised for Covid-19, Topol cites an increase in cardiac arrests and sudden deaths outside the hospital in regions hard hit by the novel coronavirus.

There are reports of Covid-19 patients as young as 16 presenting with signs of a heart attack, including abnormal blood tests and electrocardiograms.

There is also mounting evidence that the virus can directly infect heart cells themselves. During autopsies, scientists found the virus in the heart tissue of 24 out of 39 people who died from Covid-19. Two additional studies have shown that SARS-CoV-2 can readily infect, replicate and destroy heart cells in a petri dish.

"Not only does the heart get infected with the virus, but the virus actually replicates in the cardiac cells and makes new infectious particles that can infect other cells," says Bruce Conklin, MD, a senior investigator at

the Gladstone Institutes who led one of the studies.

"The full lifecycle is supported by the cardiac cells, so that's alarming," he adds.

Conklin's laboratory showed that the virus caused a unique form of damage to the heart cells, chopping up the muscle tissue in a very specific way.

"Like if you're cutting carrots and somebody wants to cut them exactly an inch apart for their salad," he says, adding: "As opposed to dicing it up in a random way, which we see in other diseases like genetic cardiomyopathy and some kinds of chemical cardiomyopathies."

The Gladstone scientists found evidence of similar damage in heart tissue from three people who died of Covid-19-related cardiovascular failure.

The question remains, though, whether these cases are the exception or the norm. Despite preliminary data from the studies in asymptomatic college athletes with mild disease, scientists don't know if the virus only infects heart cells in the most advanced, lethal forms of the disease or whether people with mild forms of Covid-19 will experience similar damage.

It's possible that the abnormalities seen on the cardiac MRI scans of people who recovered are evidence of direct infection of the heart, or they could very well be myocarditis. It's also possible that the scans are benign and won't lead to any lasting problems.

An easy way for doctors to assess how serious cardiovascular abnormalities might be is to look for a protein called troponin in the blood. Troponin is only produced when heart muscle cells are dying, like during a heart attack or a serious case of myocarditis. Since heart cells can't regenerate, high troponin levels indicate cardiac cell death and more permanent damage.

In the German cardiac MRI paper, troponin levels were detectable in 71 per cent of people, but significantly elevated in only 5 per cent. None of the athletes in the Ohio State cardiac MRI study had elevated troponin levels, which suggests that there is no permanent damage to the heart.

Another issue up for debate is whether some "mild" Covid-19 infections should really be defined as mild. Right now, that evaluation is made based on a pulmonary scale, but that metric might not provide the full picture.

"I think you could have severe cardiac effects of Covid-19 with mild pulmonary findings," says Conklin, adding: "It could very well be that some of those people whose pulmonary system is fine are having a severe heart issue which needs medical attention."

Mayo Clinic cardiologist Cooper estimates that 15 per cent to 20 per cent of Covid-19 cases, including mild ones on a pulmonary scale, will involve the heart at the time of infection. However, less than 1 per cent of those will be serious enough to cause any lasting cardiovascular complications. Still, with more than 33.5 million people infected with the novel coronavirus, this remains a lot of people.

So what does this mean if you were diagnosed with Covid-19 or think you might have the disease?

According to the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, if you have minimal or no symptoms, avoid exercise for at least two weeks - or until one week after your symptoms have resolved - whichever is longer.

After that, assuming that you have no cardiac issues like chest pain or shortness of breath, you can start to ease back into exercising slowly. But listen to your body, and be prepared for your capacity to look a little different for a while.

Dana G Smith is a senior writer for Elemental, a Medium publication about health and wellness.

Stakeholders push to unlock Africa's agricultural mechanisation potential

By Collins Nnabuife

MAJOR stakeholders in agricultural mechanization have called for the adoption of a value chain approach to mechanization as one of the best

options towards attaining high productivity in agriculture on Africa.

Speaking during a webinar organized by Africa Agricultural Technology Foundation (AATF), the stakeholders that

included experts in agricultural mechanization, agribusiness, digital agriculture, and representatives of global agencies like the World Bank, African Union, the National Agriculture Research Organisation

(NARO) of Uganda, and private sector players agreed that smallholder farmers are key players in the value-chain system that can engender growth and sustainability of Africa's agricultural productivity.

Setting the stage, George Marechera, Business Development Manager at AATF, said mechanization provides an opportunity for smallholder farmers to evolve from subsistence to business. He, however,

added that this can only happen where mechanization is adopted along the agricultural value chain.

According to Marechera, mechanization brings about increased production and reduced

high labor costs to enhance efficient production at low cost and facilitate competitive pricing, promote efficient use of input, and enhance productivity.

Continue reading at the Nigerian Tribune.

Only one in three countries ready to have children safely back in schools in whole of West and Central Africa

DAKAR

UNICEF has called on African countries to prioritize education in their COVID-19 recovery plans to reduce the negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis on children and national economies.

New data from UNICEF on progress and perspectives for the re-opening of schools in West and Central Africa shows that, six months from the onset of the pandemic, which forced all countries across West and Central Africa to close their schools in response to governments' COVID-19 lockdown measures, only seven out of 24 countries in the region - Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Chad, Congo, Equatorial Guinea and Sierra Leone - have been able to get their schools ready and reopen their school doors to welcome their children back to school for the new academic year 2020-2021.

UNICEF calls on the remaining 17 countries to accelerate their efforts to make schools physically ready for safe re-opening, including providing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), making use of available physical spaces for a safer learning environment and using flexible blended learning approaches.

"COVID-19 has halted education for millions of children in West and Central Africa, a region that was already facing many challenges to provide quality education to every child, even in humanitarian contexts," said Marie-Pierre Poirier, UNICEF Regional Director for West and Central Africa.

"We don't have time to waste. With every day that goes by, millions of children and young people unable to safely access learning opportunities are missing out on their right to an education and putting their future at risk."

Before the pandemic, education opportunities for children in West and Central Africa were unequally distributed, with around 41 million children and adolescents out of school - accounting for a third of the world's out-of-school children.

It is critical that all governments ensure that every child, especially the most excluded and marginalized children, includ-

ing girls and children with disability, safely go back to school; and that countries build back better and reach out to children who were left out before the pandemic to include them in learning opportunities.

Opening the school doors to out-of-school children and adolescents by providing alternative accelerated learning pathways is needed to break the burden of inequalities in education and African economies. Maintaining a balance between digital learning and in-school learning will provide the flexibility and safety that children need during this transitional period. This is why it is essential that governments, more than ever before, ensure that the necessary resources, especially teachers, including volunteer teachers, are available for children to continue to learn while keeping safe.

In West and Central Africa, children go to school in some of the most challenging contexts in the world. In the midst of COVID-19, when washing hands with soap is one of the most effective barrier gestures against the pandemic, more than half of all children around the world who lack basic handwashing facilities at their schools are from sub-Saharan Africa. In Guinea-Bissau, only 12 per cent of schools have access to basic handwashing with soap and water, 15 per cent in Niger, 22 per cent in Senegal and 25 per cent in Burkina Faso. In addition, across the region, classes are often overcrowded and there is a lack of trained teachers to support children's learning.

Despite efforts in most countries across the region to partially reopen their schools at the end of the academic year to allow students to complete their final examinations, millions of children were not able to physically return to school.

While schools were closed, several countries developed distance learning opportunities including through radio, television, internet, and paper-based materials. However, these efforts did not reach every child. At least 48 per cent of schoolchildren across the region were unable to access remote learning during school closures. This has widened inequities in access to learning opportunities. West and Central Africa



is also home to several countries facing conflict, violence and other emergencies. By December 2019, schools for 2.1 million children were either closed or non-operational due to insecurity. These illustrate the need for governments to strengthen alternative pathways for quality education that reach all children and ensure continuity of learning.

School closures have negative consequences for children's learning and wellbeing, with children, especially girls from the most marginalized communities, paying the heaviest price. Evidence - including examples from the 2014 Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone - shows that the longer children are out of school, the more likely they are to drop out of school altogether.

When children are out of school, they face a higher risk of recruitment by armed groups, child marriage, early pregnancy and other forms of exploitation and abuse. Since the pandemic began, violence against children has been on the rise. A recent survey in Burkina Faso found that 32 per cent of children in conflict-affected regions perceived an increase in domestic violence against girls and boys as a result of confinement at home.

UNICEF has been working alongside education authorities and communities to support school reopening by providing tools and train-

ing for teachers, improving access to water, hygiene and sanitation in schools, developing catch-up plans for students to regain learning lost and promoting innovations in school health, digital learning and foundational skills, in partnership with World Bank, UNESCO, WFP, WHO and the private sector.

UNICEF celebrates the first steps taken so far in reopening schools and calls on governments to:

Protect funding for education and fight the equity and learning crises by increasing or at least maintaining national commitments to public budgets for education.

Speed up back-to-school planning to prioritize creating safe and inclusive school environments, including for hard-to-reach children; children who were already out of school prior to the pandemic; children, especially girls, who may drop school due to gender-based barriers; and children living in remote areas and in poor households. Improve access to water, sanitation and hygiene services in schools and in communities as a critical means of protecting public health in the context of COVID-19;

Develop strategic partnerships, including with bilateral and multi-lateral organisations, service providers and relevant private sector entities, to prioritize technologies in education,

help bridge the digital divide, build foundational skills for children in resilient and agile education systems.

Use an integrated multi-sectoral approach to school reopening, expanding birth registration, nutrition, water, sanitation and hygiene services, and protection from violence, which are crucial to ensure quality education for all children.

"Now more than ever, governments must reaffirm their commitment to protect education financing and provide the resources needed to build inclusive and resilient education systems. Every school-age child and adolescent in West and Central Africa, including the most vulnerable and out-of-school girls and boys, should be able to access learning opportunities equitably and in safe, healthy, inclusive and protective learning environments," said Poirier.

"To mitigate the risks posed by COVID-19, UNICEF is fully mobilized to support governments to implement different ways of reopening schools while keeping children and communities safe.

This includes reviewing spacing in classrooms or rotating students; increasing hand washing stations and introducing health checks; leveraging outdoor spaces for different school activities; or again, applying blended learning approaches."

Working for gender integration to promote science and technology

By Guardian Correspondent

GENDER disparity in the various walks of life is said to account for the slow development of science and technology and therefore affect the pace to implement sustainable development goals in developing countries.

Africa lags behind other regions in Science, Technology, and Innovation (STI), which constrains the continent's development and the generally-low participation of African women in STI further compounds the problem.

In Tanzania, for example, the gender gap in science, technology and innovation stands at the ratio of 30:70 with women standing at the low end of the scale.

"This is quite a big gap. A similar gap is reflected in education and employment as many girls drop out of school for various reasons including early marriages and pregnancies, cultural issues and unfriendly learning environment for girls," says NemaTindamanyire, the Coordinator of Science Granting Councils Initiative (SGCI).

The science granting councils initiative in sub-Saharan Africa seeks to promote policies that contribute to economic and social development by strengthening the capacities of science granting councils.

The councils are critical in consolidating a country's national system of innovation, and are central to funding and cata-

lysing research and innovation.

It is therefore important to strengthen the capacities of publicly funded science granting councils and related institutions in order to sustain gains in STI development in Africa in general.

The gender gap has however affected the development of science and industrial production in general because there has been little contribution from the small number of women scientists and the industry is mostly dominated by men. The result is that "some of the products in the market are not gender sensitive".

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) also considers access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology as a priority. It also highlights the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work as equally important.

CSW also encourages and supports the education of girls in science, mathematics, new technologies and technical subjects while advocating for women to seek employment in high-growth and high-wage sectors and jobs.

"Acquiring science and technology education and training can empower women in all aspects of their lives," reads part of a report by CSW.

It is for this reason that SGCI project in Tanzania is working to bridge the gender gap and promote inclusivity and sustainabil-



ity through a number of local initiatives.

"Maybe it is too early to measure the support of SGCI in addressing the gender gap in Tanzania but a number of initiatives have been going on. These include providing training on gender integration, conducting special session on gender during SGCI annual meetings and inclusion of gender consideration in the Council's research and innovation grants manual," explains

Tindamanyire. It is important to reduce the gender gap in science, technology and innovation as well as other fields if Tanzania is to accelerate its implementation of sustainable development goals. Gender equality and inclusivity must be reflected in industrial production, agriculture, mining and other sectors of the economy so that women are not left behind.

However SGCI faces various

challenges in promoting gender integration.

One of them is the low number of women engaged in science subjects. "But the biggest challenge is the misguided belief that the fields of science, technology and innovation are designed and meant for men. It is still a problem to change this mindset," says Dr. Amos Nungu, the Director General of Commission for Science and Technology in Tanzania.

However SGCI faces various

challenges in promoting gender integration.

The government is keen to promote gender equality and inclusivity through various policies as a means of implementing the 2030 Agenda. These include the formulation of the Women and Gender Development Policy of 2000 and the National Strategy for Gender Development 2008. The government has also introduced gender desks in every ministry and offers special support to women aspiring to study Science, Technology,

Engineering and Mathematics in various universities (STEM). But in order to be effective, policy actions for sustainability must redress the disproportionate impact on women and girls of economic, social and environmental shocks and stresses. Women should be viewed as central actors in moving towards sustainability. In this case, linking gender equality and sustainable development should be on the spotlight as it is important to build up women's capabilities to create better synergies between gender equality and sustainable development outcomes.

The SGCI in Tanzania also encourages the private sector, NGOs and other non-state actors to put in place special arrangements and consideration to women in order to scale up gender inclusiveness and accelerate the pace of sustainable development. This may include priority opportunities for employment, reducing the salary gap between men and women holding similar posts or doing similar jobs and providing women with preferential opportunities for professional advancement especially in the fields of science, technology and innovation.

"Women are a minority gender so they must be given some incentives in education and employment if we are to close the existing gap. More incentives should be directed in the areas of science and technology in order to speed up economic and social development," says Ms. Tindamanyire.

The most complicated vaccine campaign in history

By Sarah Zhang

ON the day that a Covid-19 vaccine is approved, a vast logistics operation will need to awaken. Millions of doses must travel hundreds of kilometres from manufacturers to hospitals, doctors' offices and pharmacies - which, in turn, must store, track and eventually get the vaccines to people all across the United States.

The US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, along with state and local health departments, coordinates this process. These agencies distributed flu vaccines during the 2009 H1N1 pandemic this way, and they manage childhood vaccines every day. However, the Covid-19 vaccine will be a whole new challenge.

"The COVID situation is significantly different and more complex than anything that we have had to deal with in the past," says Kris Ehresmann, an infectious-disease director at the Minnesota Department of Health in the US.

The two leading vaccine candidates in the US - one developed by Moderna and the other by a collaboration between Pfizer and the German company BioNTech - have progressed so quickly to clinical trials precisely because they are the fastest to make and manufacture.

These vaccines rely on a novel vaccine technology whose advantage is speed, but whose downside is extreme physical fragility. They have to be frozen - in Pfizer/BioNTech's case, at an ultracold -94 degrees Fahrenheit (-70 degrees Celsius), colder than most freezers - which will limit how and where they can be shipped.

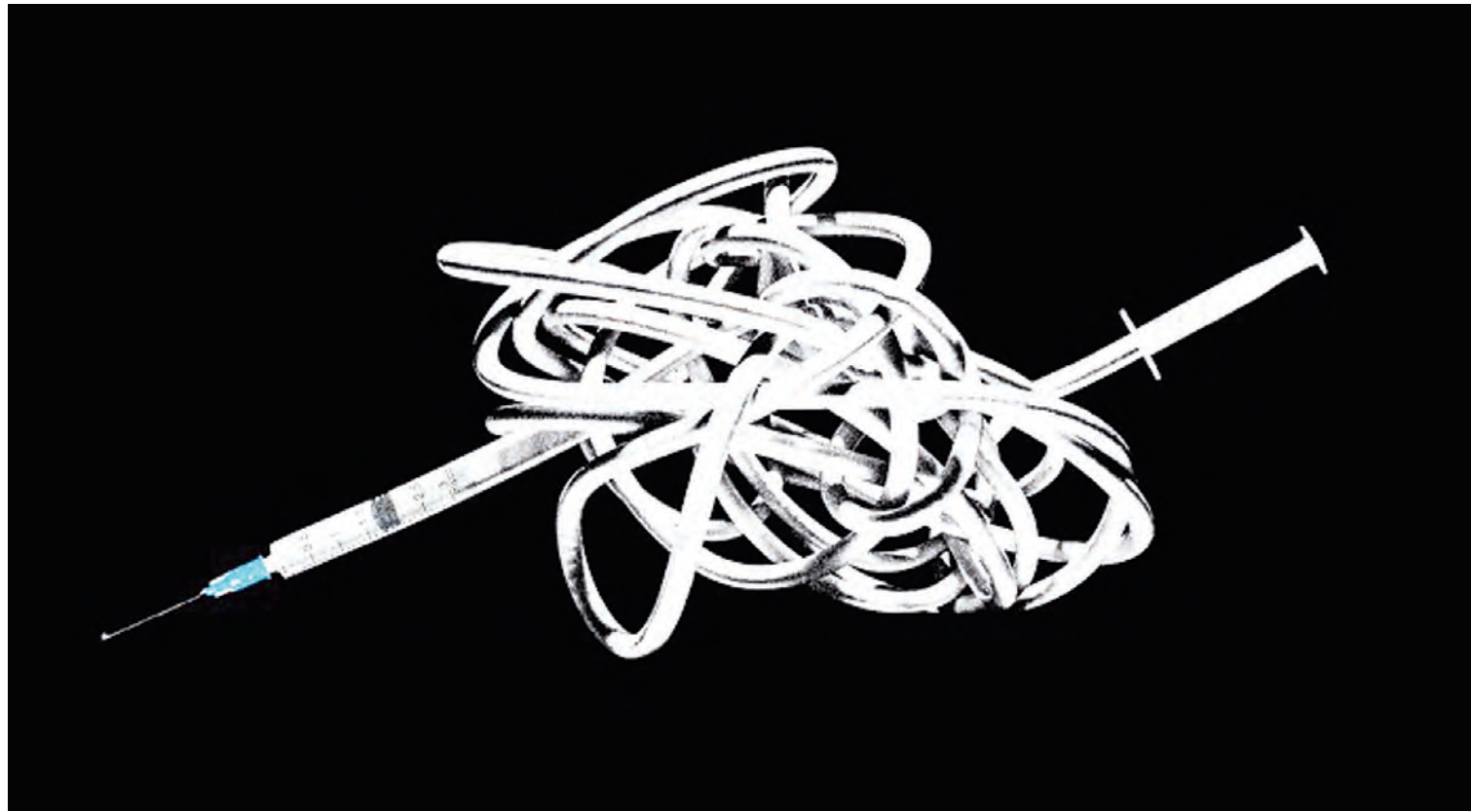
The ways these vaccines are formulated (without added preservatives) and packaged (in vials that hold doses for multiple people) also make them easier to develop and manufacture quickly but harder to administer on the ground.

In other words, speed is coming at the expense of convenience. "For this first generation of vaccines, we won't trade off safety. We don't want to trade off effectiveness," says Kelly Moore, the associate director of immunisation education at the Minnesota-based Immunisation Action Coalition (IAC) - which, incidentally, distributes information about vaccines and the diseases they prevent.

So instead, the US is planning for a vaccine that requires brutally complicated logistics. Public-health departments in states, territories and major cities are currently drawing up vaccine plans for the end of this month (October).

It's still unclear whether these vaccines are safe and effective - and it's extremely unlikely that data will be available by the end of the month. But the departments are getting ready.

Many are already stretched thin by the ongoing pandemic, and they are now helping plan, as Moore puts it, "the largest, most complex vaccination programme ever attempted in



A tangled pile of tubing with a syringe attached to one end, and a plunger on the other end. Photo: The Atlantic

history".

Both leading vaccine candidates deploy a new, long-promised technology. Their core is a piece of mRNA, genetic material that in this case encodes for the spike protein - the bit of the coronavirus that helps it enter human cells. The vaccine induces cells to take up the mRNA and make the spike protein and, hopefully, stimulates an immune response.

By using mRNA, vaccine makers do not need to produce viral proteins or grow viruses, the methods used in more traditional vaccines and that add time to the manufacturing process.

This is why Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech have been able to get their vaccines into clinical trials so quickly. Moderna went from a genetic sequence of the coronavirus to the first shot in an arm in a record 63 days.

To get a naked strand of mRNA inside a cell, scientists have learned to encase it in a package called a lipid nanoparticle. mRNA itself is an inherently unstable molecule, but it's the lipid nanoparticles that are most sensitive to heat.

"If you get the vaccine cold enough, there's a temperature at which lipids and the lipid structure stop moving, essentially. And you have to be below that for it to be stable," says Drew Weissman, who studies mRNA vaccines at the University of Pennsylvania and whose lab works with BioNTech.

Keep the vaccine at too high a temperature for too long, and these lipid nanoparticles simply degrade. The vaccines by both Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech have to be shipped frozen at -4 degrees and -94 degrees Fahrenheit, respectively. Once thawed, Moderna's vaccine can then last for 14 days at normal fridge temperatures, and Pfizer's for five days.

The freezer temperature required by Moderna's vaccine makes the vaccine difficult to ship, while the ultra-

cold temperature required by Pfizer and BioNTech's vaccine is nearly impossible to maintain outside a large hospital or academic centre with specialised freezers.

Accordingly, Pfizer has devised "thermal shippers" that, unopened, can keep the vaccines frozen for up to ten days; once opened for the first time, they have to be replenished with dry ice within 24 hours - and thereafter every five days.

These shippers are supposed to be opened no more than twice a day to take out vials, and must be closed within one minute. The real catch, though, is that these shippers hold, at a minimum, 975 doses of the Covid-19 vaccine.

A large hospital in a city could deal with that volume, but in rural areas, a 975-dose shipment will need to be broken up into smaller ones - all while making sure that the vials stay ultracold.

"The other potential would be only shipping that vaccine to our more urban areas, but then we're leaving out a lot of people who are health-care workers in rural areas or at high risk in rural areas," says Molly Howell, North Dakota's immunisation programme manager.

To get the vaccine out to those places, her department is looking into buying frozen-transport coolers and potentially a dry-ice machine.

If North Dakota is allocated, for example, 2,000 doses, the state will have to open the thermal shipper, repack smaller allotments in dry ice, and physically drive them to rural clinics across the state. The vaccines are too precious to risk shipping conventionally.

The storage and handling requirements for these vaccines are especially stringent, but they're also especially uncertain. In time, it may turn out that these mRNA vaccines can be stored at

higher temperatures or can be reformulated to be stored at higher temperatures, as other vaccines have been.

Scientists are actively trying to create more stable lipid nanoparticles, and Pfizer says it is working on a freeze-dried version of its vaccine that can be kept in normal freezers.

These incremental improvements in storage are a normal part of the vaccine-development process, but they take time. For example, Kathleen Neuzil, a vaccine researcher at the University of Maryland, points out that the flu vaccine FluMist initially needed to be frozen but can now be stored at normal fridge temperatures.

Neuzil is also an investigator on the Pfizer/BioNTech-vaccine trial. In the August CDC meeting where Pfizer unveiled the thermal shipper, a CDC official interjected to tell stakeholders not to go out and buy freezers in anticipation of a vaccine. The agency was exploring other storage solutions, and the requirements could change.

And in fact, between that August meeting and the publication of the CDC's vaccine-distribution playbook last month (September), the number of days Pfizer and BioNTech's vaccine could be stored at fridge temperature increased from one to five. The vaccine is so new that even its manufacturer is still figuring out its minimum storage requirements.

It sounds absurdly simple, but how the mRNA vaccines are packaged also imposes logistical challenges. Currently, they're in multidose vials that have to be used or discarded within six hours of opening.

Moderna's vaccine comes in ten-dose vials; Pfizer and BioNTech's in five-dose vials. Unused doses can degrade over time at high temperatures and - which could be all the more dangerous - can become contaminated with bacteria, because the vaccines lack preservatives.

Both the multidose vials and the lack of preservatives help get a vaccine out faster, says Moore, explaining that experts have been worrying about a shortage of glass for vaccine vials, and preservatives add complexity that can slow down vaccine development.

Vaccine providers in the US are unaccustomed to giving multidose, unpreserved vaccines, though. Administering the vaccines will therefore require scheduling appointments with extra care in order to minimise waste, but also discarding unused doses if needed for safety.

When multidose vaccines are used outside the US, according to Moore, who chairs a World Health Organisation immunisation committee, some waste is built into the vaccination programme.

"It's okay to open a vial for one baby," she says, noting that this is because a programme that doesn't waste any doses is probably erring on the side of turning people away. But this mindset might seem counterintuitive, especially while Covid-19 vaccines remain scarce.

Lastly, both the vaccines by both Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech vaccines require two doses per person over time, and the second dose has to come from the same manufacturer as the first dose. It also has to be administered exactly 28 days, for Moderna's, or 21 days, for Pfizer and BioNTech's, after the first dose - in both cases longer than the vaccines can be stored in the fridge.

All of this means that having the right number of vaccines for the right people will require extensive and careful record keeping.

Individual states maintain electronic immunisation registries that track residents who have gotten which vaccines. What needs to be reported to the registries varies from state to state - with many vaccine providers, such as pharmacies and pediatrician's offices, directly connecting their records to the registry.

But doctors who don't routinely give vaccinations, such as those who see adults, might not be connected - which could mean manually inputting the data for every patient into the immunisation registry.

Moore says new connections to the system can also take weeks or months to establish, given the complexity of electronic health records.

The CDC is rolling out a new Vaccine Administration Management System (VAMS) to supplement existing state registries, and it is expected to offer features such as scheduling and supply management. But VAMS has also added confusion, says Rebecca Coyle, the executive director of the American Immunisation Registry Association.

One issue is that VAMS requires collecting identifiable information that some states are not allowed to share from their existing immunisation registries. If that's not reconciled, vaccine providers might have to spend hours manually inputting patient data into the new system.

"There's a lot of clarification that still needs to happen," Coyle says, adding: "The clock has started with states to finalise their response plans, and yet there are giant chunks of information that are missing."

The two-dose requirement for these vaccines also runs up against the problem of human nature - in that people forget. They can't get off work. They can't find child care. They might even move.

"That's just normal human behaviour outside of Covid," says Azra Behlmi, a senior director at the healthcare-services firm Vizient.

The CDC is planning to send physical vaccination-record cards for each patient along with vaccine supplies when states order their doses. It is also encouraging public-health departments and hospitals to send reminders about a second dose.

This is important because even a full course of a vaccine may offer only partial protection against Covid-19, and one dose is likely to offer even less.

If a vaccine is fast-tracked through an emergency use authorisation rather than formally licensed by the US Food and Drug Administration, that too could create bureaucratic hurdles.

For instance, Medicare doesn't cover the costs of emergency-use drugs. So, while the government intends to pay the cost of the vaccine and of supplies like syringes, hospitals would be on the hook for storage, scheduling, record keeping and paying staff to actually give the injections.

"Hospitals are not happy about that - at all," Behlmi says. A fix will likely have to come from Congress.

Another worry for hospitals has to do with having to juggle multiple vaccines that are not interchangeable, especially after more become available in the future.

"What they're concerned about is: I get a vaccine now in November, and then another manufacturer launches in January, and then another manufacturer in March, and three more launch in May," Behlmi says.

Immunisation registries can record who got which vaccine, but hospitals and clinics will still have to decide which ones to stock and how much of each.

One vaccine might be more effective, but another one easier to store. A third might be most effective in older people, while a fourth could have the advantage of requiring only a single dose. The more vaccines there are on the market, the harder vaccine management becomes.

In fact, with dozens of vaccines currently in clinical trials, the US will very likely have multiple Covid-19 vaccines from multiple manufacturers next year.

Two other vaccines are just behind the mRNA ones by Moderna and Pfizer/BioNTech's - in Phase III clinical trials in the US. One of those is made by AstraZeneca and the other by Johnson & Johnson, and both insert the genetic code for the coronavirus spike protein into a harmless virus.

These vaccines take slightly longer to manufacture, because they require growing viruses, and they are also a relatively new technology. But they do not have to be frozen, and Johnson & Johnson's can be given in just a single dose.

Close behind these two are more traditional vaccines that use proteins purified from the virus, which will likely have traditional storage requirements.

Of course, clinical trials still need to be completed before scientists can know whether any of these vaccines is safe and effective.

"Which vaccine or vaccines will prove the safest and the most effective and the most deployable? I think we don't know yet. And that's why having redundancy is good," says Dan Barouch, a vaccine researcher at Harvard. His lab is a collaborator on Johnson & Johnson's vaccine.

In the short run, speed is a crucial factor. But in the long run, these other characteristics - safety, effectiveness and ease of use - will determine which vaccines get widely distributed.

Julie Swann, who studies supply chains at North Carolina State University and who worked with the CDC during the 2009 flu pandemic, says she's disappointed that the US has put its weight behind these mRNA vaccines.

She is concerned that they rely on new technology, their handling imposes extra requirements on states and vaccine providers, and it will be even harder to use them in developing countries.

"There's no way we can use this in some countries around the world," she notes.

There is good news, though - that more deployable vaccines are moving fast through the pipeline too. The race to a vaccine has dominated hopes for an end to the pandemic. But the first Covid-19 vaccine may not ultimately be the most important Covid-19 vaccine.

Sarah Zhang is a staff writer at The Atlantic, which covers politics, culture, business, science, technology, health, education and global affairs.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 143 00--

WORD-FIT

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

3 letters: EVE, TUG, ZEN,
4 letters: MEAT, MENU, AFAR,
5 letters: FRESH, VOICE, STAGE, ELOPE, BELOW, TUBER, ADOWA
6 letters: ARDENT, FRANCE, ENDURE, RAY GUN, ENAMEL, EATERY,
7 letters: MEGABIT
8 letters: OSSIFIED,
9 letters: RING OUZEL, HONEY MOON,

CROSSWORD

1 Paramount Hehe leader
5 a native of Ghana
8 Longest river in Africa
9 short knife with a pointed and edged blade
11 an Island
12 kinds of foods we habitually eat
14 a reef or rocky Island
15 a military commander during Ottoman Empire
17 not harmed
20 return on Equity
21 obtain fraudulently

CLUES: Down
1 Somalia's capital
2 a long complicated dispute
3 large marine mammal
4 suffer from hunger
6 Populous country in Africa
7 Unskilled
10 say something to obtain details
13 People who trades goods
15 accept
16 relating to the earth
18 Informations
19 a way in which something occurs

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BUSINESS

CROSSROADS

Will free money make people get lazy or creative?

By Andreas Kluth

Researchers conducting studies on a universal basic income model are hoping to discover if it is an ideal policy tool to use during a pandemic-induced recession

To make good policy, you should have at least a vague notion of what you're talking about. But when it comes to perhaps the biggest reform proposal around, we just don't. I'm talking about a Universal Basic Income, a system of unconditional cash payments to everybody in a given jurisdiction.

The case for a UBI runs as follows: It would reduce poverty, make people healthier and give them more dignity. It would also ease the transition of workers who lose their jobs to robots or artificial intelligence, so they can retrain for different careers. In general, it lets people bridge periods out of work or in bad jobs so they can invest in their own skills and re-enter the workforce at a higher level.

To get out of a dead-end job, say, they might take a "sabbatical" for adult education. Or they could temporarily contribute in other valuable ways, for instance by homeschooling their children or caring for elderly parents. Moreover, because a UBI would replace most or (as I would like) all legacy welfare systems, its cost needn't be prohibitive.

Now the case against a UBI: It would devalue work as such and reward sloth. Without an existential need to work, why bother? A UBI would create a new and permanently dependent underclass, a lumpenproletariat of the Fourth Industrial Revolution. And to provide the nectar that feeds these UBI drones, all those diligent worker bees who still have jobs would have to pay unacceptably high taxes.

This clash between clichés is what the debate has deteriorated to. But how, in fact, would most human beings respond to "free" money? We haven't the faintest idea. Lots of people have tried to find out, of course. Starting with Canada in the 1970s, various local, regional and national governments around the world have run experiments. So far, however, these haven't yielded much useful information. Sometimes a new government took office and halted a research project or changed its parameters beyond recognition. Or the study was designed poorly.

UBI geeks were particularly disappointed that a Finnish project that began in 2017 was first changed, then stopped after only two years. It, too, wasn't very well thought out – 2,000 Finns who were initially unemployed received a modest €560 a month and were compared against another group

who continued to receive means-tested unemployment benefits.

To see the macroeconomic effect of a UBI, of course, you want to test it on a representative slice of the whole population, not just the jobless. Nonetheless, as imperfect as the Finnish study was, it did debunk one assumption of UBI opponents. Getting unconditional payouts not only increased the well-being of the participating Finns but also made them slightly more likely to find jobs. In short, they got healthier but not lazier.

Now there's excitement about another research project getting started in Germany. It might finally get the parameters right. Almost 2 million people from all walks of life have already applied to take part. Starting in November, social scientists will select two groups. One, consisting of 120 people, will get €1,200 a month, starting next spring and lasting three years. They'll be compared against a control group of 1,380 who will be monitored but won't get any cash.

The twist in this experiment is that the organisers will look for "statistical twins." So if among the 120 there's a 25-year-old pianist who lives in an urban metropolis, has five years of higher education and good health, she'll have a doppelgänger in the control group. So will the 40-year-old plumber from the countryside, the gig worker delivering Amazon packages, and so on.

By comparing these statistical twins over several years, says Juergen Schupp, the sociologist who leads the project, it should be possible to single out just the effects of the payments on people's lives. Eventually, they'll even compare hair samples for clues about stress hormones. As usual in science, the results won't necessarily prove a positive – that a UBI turns us into entrepreneurs, for example. But they should be able to falsify bad arguments – that a UBI makes us lazy, perhaps.

Even this project, of course, won't try to answer every question. Which existing welfare services would a UBI replace? Would it extend even to migrants and temporary residents? How would it be financed?

But it's a step in the right direction, and a reminder that policymakers in poor and rich countries alike need to keep an open mind. We are indeed in the midst of a digital transformation that will destroy many old jobs and create many new ones, and we need structures that help people adapt.

And, as the year 2020 reminded us all, every now and then something like a pandemic-induced recession comes along, against which a UBI just might be an ideal policy tool. It would certainly help if we could answer some of the big questions.



A couple counts money. Universal basic income lets people bridge periods out of work or in bad jobs so they can invest in their own skills and re-enter the workforce at a higher level.

INFLUENCER

Miss Muslimah USA 2020 winner Zehra Abukar hopes to empower her 'sisters'

NEW YORK

The festive beats of Don Omar's hit Latin American track Danza Kuduro fades, and the DJ gets a drum roll going as guests eagerly wait to hear the evening's big announcement. "It is my honour to announce the next queen of the Miss Muslimah pageant USA. The winner of the fourth Miss Muslimah USA, is... Zehra Abukar!"

A hijab-wearing Somali refugee, Abukar, 23, lived in Turkey for seven years before moving to the US in 2014. Last Thursday, she represented her state of Maine in the fourth annual Miss Muslimah USA pageant, which is the brainchild of modest clothing designer Maghrib Shahid, a black Muslim from Ohio.

Celebrating beauty and modesty

Far from your typical beauty contest, Miss Muslimah USA celebrates women of the Islamic faith sans the skin-baring propensity typical of pageantry culture.

This year, the pageant welcomed 15 contestants, between the ages of 17 and 30, and culminated in a competition for the crown at a banquet-style dinner where each contestant walked down a red carpet in an abaya, a burkini and a special occasion dress, in addition to a talent show. The latter included recitations from the Quran, spoken-word poetry and, in Abukar's case, a traditional Somali dance.

Modest fashion has been gaining momentum globally, with hijab-wearing Muslim models such as Halima Aden, Ikram Abdi Omar and Mariah Idrissi starring as the diverse faces of the movement. However, some conservative critics are against the idea of Muslim women appearing on public platforms such as runways, magazines and social media, holding patriarchal beliefs that they should stay out of the spotlight.

Initiatives such as Miss Mus-



Winner of the fourth Miss Muslimah pageant USA, Zehra Abukar.

limah USA, on the other hand, encourage Muslim women in the US to flaunt their faith with pride, and promote the idea that modesty and modernity are by no means mutually exclusive.

A fashionable frame of mind "When it comes to Muslim women, a lot of us have this idea of oversized clothes and covering from head to toe. I love to dress up and look good. I want people to identify me as a Muslim, so I love wearing clothes that represent my people in the best way possible," Abukar tells The National.

An aspiring fashion designer, Abukar sews most of her clothes herself, and her favourite silhouette to experiment with is that of the abaya. "When you hear the word abaya, the first thing that comes to your mind is a black garment. I love black, it's my favourite colour. But when it comes to abayas, I love wearing bright colours [instead of] the typical black ones," she says.

Accordingly, for the abaya segment of Miss Muslimah USA, Abukar made herself a salmon

pink kimono-style abaya with a metallic gold weave, large pockets and a gold rope belt. For the swimwear segment, she wore a grey burkini decorated with a stripe of teal, from online fast-fashion retailer Shein. For her final outfit change, Abukar wore a sparkling navy blue gown. "It was sleeveless when I bought it. I fixed it and added the sleeves myself," she says.

Abukar was bestowed with a majestic bouquet of red roses upon being crowned at the end of the evening. With the flowers juxtaposed against her navy gown, she was a vision in red, white and blue, coincidentally and somewhat ironically the colours of the American flag. Taking place in a country that has had its share of racist and Islamophobic incidents, the Miss Muslimah USA pageant can be seen as a symbol of diversity, inclusivity, feminism and religious tolerance. It's also an event for America's multicultural Muslim community to come together as one and celebrate their women.

"I felt like a winner just by coming here," says Abukar. "I

live in a city where I don't experience all this, I don't see a lot of sisters, and that was overwhelming, that totality and that sisterhood was beyond beautiful."

Even as events across the globe are getting cancelled or digitalised due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Miss Muslimah USA went on as planned in downtown Detroit in the state of Michigan, where Muslims make up almost 3 per cent of the population.

"I have a mission, to empower and uplift Muslim women while promoting modesty and inner beauty," says Shahid, the pageant's founder. "If we give up and stop, I know many others will give up. We can't take any days off because it is imperative to keep spreading our message. The Miss Muslimah USA pageant inspires women to raise their heads and push through, knowing that they have a platform to change misconceptions for a better future for our youth."

Some might say the representation of Muslim women in the US has improved over the past

decade, with women such as Aden and congresswoman Ilhan Omar shattering glass ceilings in the fields of fashion and politics. But Abukar believes the country still has a long way to go. "Yes, we're doing better than a few years ago, but we are not there yet. We need to work harder. We need to focus on our similarities, not on our differences," she says. The pageant winner also emphasises the plurality of the community and says not every Muslim woman wishes to lead her life according to societal norms dictated by culture.

"Islam is the most beautiful religion. If you go back to when the Prophet Mohammed was alive, there were female entrepreneurs and businesswomen, but people today are mixing up the religion of Islam with their cultures. Nowhere in the Quran does it say that women should just stay home, cook, clean and give birth to kids. It's a beautiful thing to do, it's many women's dream, but not everyone fits into that box," she says.

Inspiration in many forms Abukar's role model is Edna Adan Ismail, a victim of female genital mutilation as a child in Somaliland who studied to become a nurse and midwife to help save other young women from the same fate. Ismail was reportedly the first Somali girl to study in the UK, the first Somali girl to drive, and Somaliland's first registered female nurse and midwife.

"I want Muslim women to have a voice, a choice and a career that they love," Abukar had said in an audition video, explaining that if she were to win the Miss Muslimah USA title, she would use her position to help create a non-profit organisation aiding and advising Muslim women who seek to learn English and start their own businesses.

DIVERSITY

H&M come up with new Curvy Fit denims made with women in South Africa in mind

JOHANNESBURG

Fashion isn't fun for everyone. Shopping isn't fun for everyone. As an industry that has for years, beat its chest about its exclusivity, fashion found itself excluding many. It is only recently – in our collective buzz of consciousness and self-empowerment – that fashion's legacy of exclusion is being gradually corrected.

However, to this day, there are still several stores and boutiques that leave many women feeling like an afterthought to the fashion industry due to the lack of size options beyond a Large or a 42. In some cases, the Large realistically fits a person who is no bigger than a 34.

More disappointing for plus size and curvy women, is the fact that when retailers do offer their sizes, the styles available do little to no justice to the word, essentially adding to the 'mummyfication' of fat women. And then add fat tax (rise per size) to that.

In a 2018 W24 article, Marisa Crous spoke to Lesego 'Thickleeyonce' Legobane, who co-owns LeeBex Fashion, about debunking the myth that "fat girls can't and shouldn't wear tight clothes." In this article, Thickleeyonce revealed that one of the reasons that birthed LeeBex was the fact that most plus size brands make clothes that are too sophisticated, mature and modest. "LeeBex



South African models in curvy fit denim by H&M.

does the opposite – the brand is about making fashionable, trendy outfits for big girls," said Thickleeyonce.

Fashion's struggle with inclusivity has spanned decades. For far too long, women who didn't fit into sample clothing sizes have had difficulty walking into a store and leaving with something they can wear.

H&M South Africa now adds to the list of retailers offering ranges that make practical

sense for the South African woman's body. We've long complained about jeans that gape at the waist – well, H&M is introducing a new product to its denim range this October, the Curvy Fit Denim, which launched in all South African stores on 8 October 2020.

The campaign, produced locally, features three South African women who embrace their bodies and reflect an authentic representation of

women around the world; singer, songwriter and performer Zoë Modiga, digital creator LeChelle Aldrige, and MC and digital creator Nandipha Mqoco.

Designed with less gapping at the waist, and more room through the hip and thigh regions, the Curvy Fit denim range is seemingly created with the South African woman's figure and wallet in mind (the range costs between R249 and 629). Offered in seven different shades, the partially eco-friendly Curvy Fit Denims are available in EU sizes 34 to 46, and three different styles, namely: super-skinny high waist, push-up jeggings regular waist fit, and a straight-cut high waist.

A size 24 fashionista who describes herself as "fat and proud" has launched her own plus-sized clothing line, where the models are her customers, rather than professionals. After years of struggling with her frame, Jo set up her own brand, Topsy. Ever since European retailers entered our malls, their vanity sizing has been the root of much personal body image misgivings. Could this be one of the first corrective measures then? According to H&M South Africa's Country Manager, Caroline Nelson, it

seems so, as she reveals that "[H&M] customers required a denim product that is more accessible for a diverse range of body shapes." The Swedish retailer also reveals that it aims to provide an inclusive product offering in all their concepts, as well as a wider range of sizes by increasing size curves as of early 2021.

Also in an ongoing bid to be more inclusive to all the women of South Africa is Ackermans which extended its sizing across all women's product lines to offer up to size 50 this September, making it one of the few value retailers in the country to do so. Womenswear Buying Manager at Ackermans, Donna McPherson, said: "We are now offering a wider range of sizes in all outerwear and sleepwear lines with more fashionable and affordable options for women."

"South African women come in all shapes and sizes, which is something to be celebrated. This expansion will allow us to provide more choice to customers, in line with our promise to continuously strive to add value to their lives," she adds. The extended product lines include basic tees, fashion tops, dresses, denim, skirts and sleepwear.

ENTERPRISING

Winning of hearts and minds even as a pandemic strikes hard

CAPE TOWN

Honesty and engaging with communities to allay fears, often sparked by fake news, were the driving forces behind the communication strategy aligned with South Africa's Covid-19 crisis management policy, Claudia Shilumani, CEO of the Centre for Communication Impact told delegates at the African Brand Summit held in Cape Town.

She is part of the Risk Communication and Community Engagement Technical Working Group, which was set up as one of the eight pillars of the country's Covid-19 preparedness and response plan based on the World Health Organi-

sation (WHO) guidelines. "The guiding principles were that we have to communicate real-time information to the public in an honest manner. If you look at the guidelines, which were extrapolated from the WHO, it talks about the unknowns, and what is being done to allay the fears among the populace."

Shilumani emphasised community participation in the process. "Communities have a lot to give. They have assets, they also have a lot of misconceptions. There is a lot of discourse that goes on around the epidemic, whether people perceive themselves as being at risk or they feel like they are not being impacted. So those are the kinds of things you are listening to on the ground, it informs on how you ar-



Claudia Shilumani, CEO, Centre for Communication Impact

ticulate your messages and disseminate such messages."

She said that even before the first Covid-19 case was announced on 5 March, the communication machine kicked into gear. "Once we heard that there is Covid-19 around the world, we started preparing ourselves, because we knew that it was just a matter of time. Considering the mode of spread of the epidemic, we had a risk communication plan in place."

Shortly after that, a cohort of Afri-

can students were repatriated from Wuhan, China were quarantined at The Ranch resort in Polokwane, and this raised a lot of fear in the community. "We mounted a strategy that included community radio stations around that area. So about 10 were engaged for people to understand that they are not in any way at risk by the quarantine," Shilumani said.

Changing behaviour

Although the primary focus at the beginning of the country's response

to the pandemic was clinical, that a secondary behavioural approach was needed, she said. "We had a clinical advisory committee chaired by Professor Salim Abdool Karim, but a lot of us who are communicators out there were thinking: 'I wish they would give us an opportunity because we know where this is going.'"

"In my experience from the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone, we were only able to win the war when we took Ebola response to the communities. We empowered the communities to take charge of their health outcomes. So we knew that eventually we had to move away from the clinical paradigm.

"And this is where the power of honesty comes in. Our (health) minister (Zweli Mkize) has always been very honest when he doesn't know something he will publicly go and say: 'We don't know'. I personally, as a public health expert, learned a lot from our minister, because as a doctor he could articulate medical issues and as a minister he was very honest in how he communicated.

"Then he came back in July, and said: 'We need a way to help communities to move forward'. This was acknowledging that he, as a doctor, had reached his limit of knowledge. He said that his ministerial committee, which was more clinical, now needed the second part, which is the behavioural side of things and went on to establish the ministerial advisory committee of social and behavioural change communication. And that is where we are right now, we are guided by the committee," she said.

HEALTH WATCH

How exercising women cut risk of heart disease despite old age

NAIROBI

The risk of cardiovascular diseases for instance, which refer to a range of ailments affecting the heart and blood vessels, tend to increase as people grow older. A major contributor to the enhanced risk is the loss of muscle strength, which happens gradually as people age.

To minimise the risk of such complications during old age, health experts urge people to take up physical activity and ensure that their exercise regimes incorporate strength-training workouts during their younger years. Strength exercises are activities that make muscles work harder than usual. This increases people's muscle strength, size, power and endurance.

The activities involve using one's body weight or working against a resistance. It is recommended that people try to do two sessions or more, of muscle strengthening exercises weekly. Examples of such workouts include lifting weights, working with resistance bands, climbing stairs, hill walking, cycling, dance, push-ups, sit-ups and squats.

These strength exercises are extremely important for women as research indicates that in their old age, it becomes difficult for their muscles to develop small blood vessels, known as capillaries, which offer protection against cardiovascular diseases.

According to a new study published in the Journal of Physiology, capillaries in the muscles of women after menopause are less able to grow compared to young women. "This means exercising before menopause is all the more important for women in order to develop blood vessels in muscles, and thus the ability to develop muscle strength," noted the researchers.

Recent studies have shown that there are some substantial differences in the way the blood vessels, which influence susceptibility to conditions like heart disease and stroke, are affected by aging and physical activity between women and men. This is a difference, which to a large extent is related to the female sex hormone, oestrogen.

The hormone is protective of the heart and blood vessels in women for about half of their lives. However, at menopause, there is an abrupt permanent loss of oestrogen, leading to a decline in the health of their blood vessels. During the study, researchers from the University of Copenhagen studied older women (over 60 years old) and young ones (around 25 years old) ones.

The women were subjected to eight weeks of cycling training. And they performed the activity three times per week at moderate to high intensity. Results showed that when the aged women completed the exercises, they did not achieve an increase in the number of capillaries (small blood vessels) in their thigh's skeletal muscles.

This is in contrast to what has been repeatedly shown in young and older men. The number of capillaries in skeletal muscles can change a lot and is mainly affected by how much the muscles are used, such as during exercise.

Aging is known to lead to a loss of capillaries in the muscle. Past research has shown that in elderly men, this effect can be counteracted by a physically active lifestyle. But this new study suggests that women do not attain capillary growth as readily during old age, after menopause.

Yet, capillaries in skeletal muscles are very important for proper body functioning, physical capacity and general health. Their loss can affect the body's ability to regulate blood sugar, thereby leading to the development of type 2 diabetes and other conditions that increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases in older women.

ACTIVISM

Social media and the fight against poor service delivery

KIGALI

Rwanda is this week marking Customer Service Week with a call for companies to internally collaborate in an effort to serve their clients better. Rwanda has had challenges with service delivery, prompting the government to invest in training and raising awareness on the importance of keeping customers happy.

And, as competition continues to grow within the private sector, companies are also making good customer service an integral part of their strategies. One player that is putting companies and organisations on alert is social media. Most notably Twitter.

With the growth of the smartphone market and a generation connected Rwandans, social media is growing in popularity and users are now using the platform to complain or appreciate the service they get. According to experts, this trend is only expected to increase as more Rwandans become active on different platforms.

Anais Mutesi, a businesswoman who deals in clothing, told The New Times that clients resort to posting complaints on social media because companies do not take their concerns seriously whenever they bring them

forward.

"Whoever is not happy with the service from a given institution decides to share the issue with social media community as the only option for them to at least get the desired feedback," Mutesi said explaining that once a complaint is raised on social media, they take it more seriously. This, Mutesi added, has made social media influential in tackling bad service.

"The majority of complaints raised on social media had been addressed because companies want to protect their reputation," she added. Fiona Kamikazi Rutagengwa, one of the popular social media influencers in Rwanda, explains that the power of social media is in the ability to expose what is going on within a specific institution.

"Social media has helped a lot in service delivery because it keeps the concerned business and institutions in check. They don't want to be exposed for bad service," Kamikazi said, adding that from her experience, whenever she posts something especially on Twitter, it draws the attention of her 26.8k followers who tend to react and their engagement sparks the intervention of organisations or their stakeholders.

Ensuring excellent cus-



Social media is increasingly being recognised as a valuable means of enhancing service delivery.

tomers service requires Public Relations professionals to regularly monitor social media platforms to identify complaints, perceptions, and mentions and attend to them. The Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC), Rwanda's water provider is one of the institutions that receive numerous complaints on social media regarding the inconsistent flow of water to homes.

Richard Dan Iraguha, the Head of Public Relations and Communications at WASAC, told The New Times that, in the digital era, his institution does not wait for people to come to the office but rather uses social media to attend to concerns raised and respond

to them right away.

For Iraguha, social media has reduced bureaucracy, making it faster for organisations to solve customer's concerns. "Companies do not only use social media to provide feedback to their customers, they also use the platforms to provide updates, changes, or announce new services/products," Iraguha added.

He points out that the fact that Rwandans today publicly put out their complaints is proof that they know it is their right to have great service from providers. And, for the institutions that offer great service, their customers will share their experiences, giving the institution or compa-

ny a better image which then translates to new or repeat clients.

Fidèle Mutemberezi Ph.D., an economist, and lecturer at the University of Rwanda calls on service providers to use Customer Service Week to evaluate themselves about the quality of the service they give their customers.

"Service providers need to value their customers and be innovative. The growing competition in the business sector has created room for customers to shift from bad service providers to the companies that make them feel happier and more comfortable," Mutemberezi said.

He emphasizes that the Cus-

SUCCESS

African collective selected as finalist in UNWTO tourism campaign

JOHANNESBURG

The Afrika Yetu campaign has been selected as one of 10 finalists out of 150 submissions to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Inspiration Africa Branding Challenge. The Challenge invited proposals for a campaign that positions Africa as a destination in the minds of international travellers.

The Afrika Yetu campaign proposal is the result of a collaboration of tourism roleplayers from seven African countries, including

Boundless Southern Africa, Zulu Nomad, Big Ambitions, Hallpax, Bon A267 Creative Agency, Airgift, Congo Conservation Company, Love Africa Marketing, Na-Beat Enterprises and tourist guides - Philani Sangweni, Moise Awonlonsou and Ally Jape. Bontle Mohlahlane was appointed as the Art Director of the campaign.

"As the Cradle of Humankind, Africa is the beginning of our human story. The diversity of African culture, creativity, biodiversity and landscapes are the vital attributes of a continent that is

witnessing its youthful population nurture and grow its heritage to ensure a better future in a fast-changing world," explains Roland Vorwerk, convener of the Afrika Yetu team.

Afrika Yetu, 'Our Africa' in Kiswahili, speaks to a deeply rooted culture of collective ownership, of the heritage which is celebrated, the confidence in the narrative that celebrates one of the most diverse continents in the world and the custodianship thereof across the African continent.

Embracing Africa heritage

Telling this story, the Afrika Yetu campaign focuses on curating and sharing the inspiring stories of Africans conserving and embracing their heritage to inspire international travel to the continent. The collective aims to work with and empower partners across Africa to create, collate and curate content that showcases 'Our Heritage. Our Future. Our Africa'.

The user-generated stories showcasing how the people of Africa are embracing their heritage will be amplified worldwide on

platforms of campaign partners such as national tourism organisations and tourism trade, as well as media and social media. "We aim to make it simple for Africans to tell their heritage stories and for our partners to use that content with ease on their respective platforms to amplify the positive messaging about tourism to the continent," says Vorwerk.

The winning proposal of the Challenge will be selected by Jury Members from CNN and UNWTO, and will be announced on 16 October.



Women exercise in a Nairobi street.

MARVELLOUS

Stan, the T-rex, sells for \$32 million at record-breaking auction

NEW YORK

Stan, a remarkably well-preserved Tyrannosaurus rex from more than 67 million years ago, sold at auction on October 6, for \$31.8 million.

The sell smashed the estimated price of \$6m, as well as the record for the maximum price paid at auction for a T-rex; Sotheby's sold a dinosaur named Sue in 1997 for \$8.4 million. Stan's anonymous new owner acquired the skeleton after an "intense 10-minute round of bidding" during a live-streamed physical and online auction at Christie's New York.

Dinosaur hunting The Cretaceous Badlands, which span the US states of Wyoming, Montana and the two Dakotas, has been the discovery site of many fossils, most excavated in vary-

ing stages of decay. However, in the spring of 1987, when amateur palaeontologist Stan Sacrison set out to find dinosaur traces on private land in the area, little did he know that he would stumble upon the hip bones of a Tyrannosaurus rex.

While about 50 T-rex bones have been discovered since 1902, Stan stands out for being a near-complete male fossil skeleton. Three months after Sacrison's chance discovery, a professional team of archaeologists and palaeontologists put in 30,000 man-hours to extract from the host rock 188 individual bones that were then cleaned, preserved and restored.

Conversation starter Today, Stan is about 4 metres tall and 12 metres long with his tail outstretched. His eye sockets are the size of baseballs, which would have allowed keen vision for



Stan, the Tyrannosaurus rex, was bought by an anonymous buyer over the phone.

hunting prey at night, and his skull - one of the most complete T-rex examples - could hold 58 teeth, some as long as 28 centimetres. In 2005, the skull was modelled and tested to recreate a bite force that was strong enough to crush a car.

Stan was found with the fossilised and partially digested remains of a duck-billed Edmontosaurus and a Triceratops, a powerful three-horned dinosaur. Each of the herbivore specimens displayed bite marks on their bones, a clue to Stan's ability to hunt, kill and consume even well-armoured prey.

That is not to say that Stan was indomitable himself. Hatched from an egg, Stan was no larger than a small turkey until the age of 5 and would have required protection from scavengers and his own kind. Between the ages of 6 and 18, though, a T-rex gains an estimated 2.7 kilograms a day.

Even so, as an adult, the fossilised bones indicate that during his lifetime, Stan suffered a broken neck, a punctured rib and vicious puncture wounds to the skull that a rex tooth would neatly fit into. He survived the

injuries, all of which were most likely inflicted by another T-rex. It is not for nothing that the group name for these killers is a "terror of Tyrannosaurs."

"A brand name like no other" "I'll never forget the moment I came face to face with him for the first time, after his remount in Colorado - he looked even larger and more ferocious than I had imagined, a specimen that only further establishes the T-rex's position as the king of dinosaurs," says James Hyslop, head of the travel, science and natural history department at Christie's. "T-rex is a brand name in a way that no other dinosaur is. It sits very naturally against a Picasso, a Jeff Koons or an Andy Warhol."

Stan will continue to be on display in New York until Wednesday, October 21. The skeleton will be visible all day through Christie's floor-to-ceiling gallery windows between Fifth and Sixth Avenue, to offer enthusiasts the chance to see one of the world's most fascinating dinosaurs in a socially distanced setting. Museum-quality educational content will be made available via QR codes.

INSPIRATION

Pretty Little Thing releases dress with built-in face mask

LONDON

With face masks now mandatory across much of the world, it was only a matter of time before they became part of our everyday attire. But one brand has taken that quite literally, launching a dress with a built-in face mask.

Pretty Little Thing, which launched its Middle East site earlier this year, has released a black, high-necked dress that comes up to cover your nose and mouth, with built-in ear bands that mimic the style of a traditional face mask.

The £15 (\$19) mini dress features long sleeves, and is made of a stretchy, jersey fabric. Since its release in late September, the dress has sold out in a number of sizes. Given its popularity, it's unlikely to be the last item with a built-in face mask to appear on the UK-based fast fashion retailer's site.

Lottie Moss, younger sister of supermodel Kate Moss, has been spotted wearing the dress while out and about in London, garnering much attention. Many brands have

been turning their attention to face masks in recent months, scrambling to create fashion-focused versions of the now essential item in the ongoing fight against Covid-19.

In September, Louis Vuitton debuted a visor that doubles up as a clear face shield, while Gucci's bandana-style face coverings, made popular by singer Billie Eilish, have surged in popularity since the start of the pandemic. However, there are questions over how effective the more fashionable face coverings are. Over the weekend, singer Lana Del Rey was criticised for wearing a mesh face mask while meeting fans in Los Angeles.

The musician was attending a signing for her poetry book in a Barnes & Noble store, greeting fans wearing a bejewelled mask over her nose and mouth that featured a number of holes. "I love you sis but please wear a real mask, it gives a bad message," one fan wrote under Del Rey's Instagram video. "Love you love you love you so much but please wear a mask under that one, take care," another wrote.



Pretty Little Thing has launched a face mask dress.

INNOVATION

Cole Haan releases shoes inspired by Slack, eliciting mixed reviews

LONDON

Fashion label Cole Haan has collaborated with messaging app Slack to create a new line of shoes. Called the Slack Generation ZeroGrand, the four limited-edition styles are a reworking of Haan's existing ZeroGrand model, with the sole and sock trim now available in the bright colours of the messaging platform's logo.

Designed in conjunction with the Slack team - via Slack, naturally - the shoes are edged in green, blue, pink or yellow, with a discreet Slack logo on the outside heel.

After being teased online for a few days, with moody, underlit shots, the new designs were officially unveiled on Wednesday, October 7.

The results are not terrible. In an age of increasingly off-kilter collaborations - think of the recent Adidas x Lego line, Ben and Jerry's Nike-inspired ice cream, and edgy designer Telfar teaming up with Uggs - there is perhaps something inevitable about a work app becoming fashion inspiration. In an ever-shifting retail landscape, brands need to constantly evolve to stay relevant and in touch with their digital audience.



<p>ITV</p> <p>MONDAY 05 Oct</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 ITV Top 10 rpt 11:55 Habari za saa 12:00 Al Jazeera News 12:30 Mtego rpt 12:55 Habari za saa 13:00 Mjue Zaidi 13:45 Art and Lifestyle rpt 13:55 Habari za saa 14:10 Telenovela rpt: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 14:55 Habari za saa 15:00 Meza huru 16:30 Watoto Wetu 17:00 The Base 18:00 Jiji Letu 18:10 Aibu yako rpt 18:15 Mapishi 18:45 Kesho leo 19:00 Afya ya Jamii 19:30 Isidingo 20:00 Habari 21:05 Dakika 45 22:15 Telenovela: (Piel Salvaje) Wild Skin 23:00 Habari 23:30 The Base 00:30 Al Jazeera 02:00 DWTV</p> <p>TUESDAY 06 Oct</p> <p>5:30 Uwanja wa Mazoezi 6:00 HABARI 6:40 Kumekucha 7:30 HABARI 8:00 Kumekucha Michezo 8:55 Habari za saa 9:00 Kumekucha Kishindo 9:30 Isidingo 09:55 Habari za saa 10:00 Watoto wetu 10:30 Jungu Kuu rpt 10:55 Habari za saa 11:00 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Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny 14:00 Club 101 (via Capital Radio) 16:00 Series rpt: Itohan 16:30 The Monday Agenda rpt 17:30 Meza huru 19:00 Rev 19:30 Eco@Africa 20:00 Aibu 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</p> <p>Sat 10 Oct</p> <p>08:00 Al Jazeera 09:00 Rev rpt 09:30 Turning the Spotlight rpt 10:00 Culinary delight rpt 10:30 Innovation rpt 11:00 Out n'about rpt 11:30 Sports Gazette rpt 12:00 Usafiri wako rpt 12:30 Eco@Africa 13:00 Business edition rpt 13:30 Korean Drama rpt: Beating again 14:30 Telenovela rpt: (Destino) Destiny 17:15 Tanzania Yetu rpt 17:45 Bundesliga kick off 18:15 Capchat rpt 19:15 Mizengwe 19:30 The Decor 20:00 Korean Drama: The Slingshot 21:00 Out n' About 21:30 Movie: Night Owl 23:00 Series rpt: Grapes of justice 01:00 Al Jazeera</p> <p>Sun 11 Oct</p> <p>08:00 Aljazeera 09:00 In good shape 10:00 Capchat rpt 11:00 Sports Gazette rpt 11:30 Korean Drama 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WORLD

AMERICA'S CHOICE 2020: Trump finishes virus treatment, maps return to campaign trail

WASHINGTON

REPUBLICAN President Donald Trump yesterday prepared to return to the campaign trail with a pair of week-end rallies after his COVID-19 diagnosis sidelined him for a week in the race against Democratic nominee Joe Biden for the White House.

Trump, who announced he had been infected with the coronavirus on Oct 2 and spent three nights in a military hospital receiving treatment, said late on Thursday he was feeling "really good" and, with a doctor's blessing, aimed to campaign in Florida on Saturday and in Pennsylvania on Sunday.

Trump's illness has kept him from



US President Donald Trump (left) and former Vice-President Joe Biden

crisscrossing the country to rally support and raise cash in the final weeks before the Nov 3 election. A return to in-person events would be aimed at convincing voters he is healthy enough to campaign and to govern.

While Trump has released several videos on Twitter, he has not appeared in public since he returned home from the hospital on Monday. Biden has continued to campaign, with events scheduled yesterday in Las Vegas, Nevada.

US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines say people who are severely ill with COVID-19 might need to stay home for up to 20 days after symptoms first appear.

Biden, who has sharply criticized Trump's handling of the pandemic, is beating the Republican in national polls, though that lead is narrower in some of the swing states that may determine the

election's outcome.

White House physician Sean Conley said in a memo released on Thursday that Trump had completed his course of therapy for COVID-19, remained stable since returning home from the hospital and could resume public engagements on Saturday.

Sounding hoarse and occasionally pausing and clearing his throat, Trump told Fox News host Sean Hannity in an interview late on Thursday that he was likely to be tested for the virus on Friday. The White House has declined to say when Trump last tested negative.

"I feel so good," Trump said.

The president is expected to host a "virtual rally" on Friday by appearing on conservative radio host Rush Limbaugh's radio programme.

Agencies

Russia interested in discussing prospects for relations with Denmark – Lavrov

MOSCOW



RUSSIA is interested in considering the reasons for the current chill in bilateral relations with Denmark and assessing the prospects for normalizing the dialogue for the benefit of the peoples of both countries, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said yesterday at a meeting with his Danish counterpart Jeppe Kofod.

"I know that you prepared for today's negotiations carefully, having announced them in the press several times," Lavrov (pictured) said in his opening remarks. "We are likewise interested today in looking at the current state of relations between Russia and Denmark, the reasons for the current complications in them and the prospects for their development in the interests of our peoples, of course."

Russia's top diplomat noted that the meeting in Moscow was a good opportunity to continue the dialogue with his Danish counterpart, which began on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September 2019. **Agencies**

World Bank forecasts sub-Saharan Africa's GDP to contract 3.3 pct in 2020

NAIROBI

ECONOMIC growth in Sub-Saharan Africa is forecast to be negative at -3.3 percent for 2020 compared to the 2.4 percent of 2019 due to COVID-19 disruptions, according to analysis released on Thursday by the World Bank.

The report, Africa's Pulse, says the COVID-19 pandemic has taken a large toll on economic activity in sub-Saharan Africa, putting a decade of hard-won economic progress at risk.

"Economic activity in the region is expected to contract by 3.3 percent in 2020, confirming the prediction that sub-Saharan Africa would suffer its first recession in a quarter-century in 2020.

By the end of 2021, the region's real gross domestic product (GDP) per capita will likely regress to its level in 2007," says the latest World Bank's regional economic analysis Africa's Pulse: Charting the Road to Recovery. The bi-annual analysis discusses the near-term economic outlook for sub-Saharan Africa.

According to the report, sub-Saharan Africa's real GDP is projected to pick up to 2.1 percent in 2021, which is below the rate achieved in 2019, assuming new COVID-19 cases will continue to slow across the region and new outbreaks will not lead to national lockdowns. The findings show that in Africa, COVID-19 could push up to 40 million people into extreme poverty, erasing at least five years of progress in fighting poverty.

"Similarly, COVID-19 could set back progress in building human capital, as school closures will affect nearly 253 million students, potentially causing losses in learning," says the review.

The analysis notes that the economic contraction caused by the COVID-19 pandemic will spread broadly across countries in sub-Saharan Africa this year.

"Growth fell sharply in the second quarter of 2020 across countries, especially in Nigeria (6.1 percent year-on-year) and South Africa (17.1 percent). The decline in growth is expected to be larger in East and Southern Africa than West and Central Africa, partly because of the stronger output contractions in South Africa and Angola," the report says.

According to the World Bank analysis, successful COVID-19 containment measures come with a high economic cost, as has been seen across the globe. "The road to recovery may be long, and it may be steep, but prioritizing policy actions and investments that address the challenge of creating more, better and inclusive jobs will pave the way for a faster, stronger and inclusive recovery for African countries," Albert Zeufack, World Bank chief economist for the Africa regions said.

The report notes that the road to recovery will also require massive investments across countries, as well as financial support from the international community, and recommends a bold reform agenda that includes policies that create fiscal space, along with policies to speed up job creation.

"Although the pandemic is not over and the persistence and spread of the virus is uncertain, African governments have started putting in place policies and programs to support an inclusive and sustainable post-pandemic recovery," Hafez Ghanem, World Bank Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa said. "Countries are putting in place policies and programmes that help create jobs and accelerate economic transformation to reduce the economic impact of the pandemic now, and build the capabilities needed to ensure inclusive economic growth in the future," he added.

Xinhua

Holiday spending highlights China's recovery from COVID

By Yang Yang

CHINA'S economy has recovered with strong growth momentum across diverse industries during the past National Day and Mid-Autumn Festival holiday.

Statistics from the Ministry of Commerce indicate China's sales volume for key retail and catering enterprises reached 1.6 trillion yuan (US\$238.38 billion) from Oct 1 to 8, with the average daily sales volume increasing by 4.9 percent compared with last year's National Day golden week.

To stimulate consumers' enthusiasm to spend, a variety of sales activities were promoted and a large amount of subsidies and vouchers for automobiles, home appliances, and food and beverages were released.

The recovery of consumption drives the growth of the express delivery business. Data from the State Post Bureau of China shows from Oct 1 to 8, the national postal express industry collected 1.82 billion parcels, up 53.42 percent



A visitor to the popular Nanluogu alley wears a mask to protect from the coronavirus in Beijing on Oct 8, 2020. (AP)

year-on-year.

With accelerated integration of online and offline consumption, the country's postal express business has been maintained at a high growth range of above 30 percent since February, when China's express parcel volume grew from negative to positive, the State Post Bureau said.

As people started to leave their

homes under the managed pandemic situation, cinemas welcomed a boom during the past holiday.

As of 11:59 pm Oct 8, the 2020 National Day box office reached 3.92 billion yuan, which was the second-largest National Day box office in China's film industry, according to China's Box Office app of the Office of the National Film

Industry Development Special Fund Management Com

As COVID-19 has come under control in the country, more people have started to resume travel. During the eight-day holiday, the country received a total of 637 million trips by domestic tourists, with domestic tourism revenue reaching 466.56 billion yuan, according to the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

On the last day of the eight-day holiday, the national railways ushered in the peak of return passenger flow. On Oct 8, the national railways expected to see 13 million passenger trips, with 1,234 additional passenger trains, China Railway said.

From Sept 30 to Oct 7, the national railways have transported more than 10 million passengers for eight consecutive days, according to China Railway.

During the eight-day holiday, South China's Hainan recorded 1.04 billion yuan in offshore duty-free shopping, 146,800 tourist trips and 998,900 products, up

148.7 percent, 43.9 percent and 97.2 percent year-on-year, respectively, according to the General Administration of Customs.

Starting from July 1, Hainan increased its annual tax-free shopping quota from 30,000 yuan to 100,000 yuan per person, and the range of duty-free goods has also expanded from 38 categories to 45, with the previous tax-free limit of 8,000 yuan for a single product lifted.

Data from the Civil Aviation Administration of China showed the country witnessed a total of 13.26 million passenger trips in the period of Oct 1-8, with average daily passenger traffic rebounding to 91.07 percent of the National Day holiday in 2019.

The number of actual flights across the country reached 117,327 between Oct 1 and 8, and the average daily flight volume recovered to 89.7 percent of the 2019 National Day holiday, according to the Civil Aviation Administration of China.

Agencies

UN World Food Programme wins 2020 Nobel Peace Prize

OSLO

THE United Nations food agency, the World Food Programme (WFP), won the Nobel Peace Prize yesterday for its efforts to combat hunger and improve conditions for peace in conflict-affected areas.

The Rome-based organization says it helps some 97 million people in about 88 countries each year and that one in nine people worldwide still do not have enough to eat.

"The need for international solidarity and multilateral cooperation is more conspicuous than ever," Chairwoman Berit Reiss-Andersen of the Norwegian Nobel Committee said at a

news conference.

The WFP is a driving force in efforts to prevent the use of hunger as a weapon of war and conflict, with the COVID-19 outbreak further boosting its relevance, she said.

"The coronavirus pandemic has contributed to a strong upsurge in the number of victims of hunger in the world," the Nobel committee said in its citation.

"Until the day we have a medical vaccine, food is the best vaccine against chaos ...

"There is an estimate within the World Food Programme that... there will be 265 million starving people within a year, so of course this is also a call to the



international community not to underfund the World Food Programme."

"Over and above the call of duty"

WFP responded by tweeting its thanks for "recognition of the work of WFP staff who put their lives on the line every day to bring food and assistance

to more than 100 million hungry children, women and men across the world".

At a briefing in Geneva, WFP spokesman Tomson Phiri told reporters: "For WFP this year we have gone over and above the call of duty..."

"Everything went into shutdown following nationwide and global restrictions following COVID-19. The WFP stepped up to the plate, we were able to connect communities. At one point, we were the biggest airline in the world when most if not all commercial airlines had ground to halt."

Dan Smith, director of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, said the Nor-

wegian Nobel Committee had wanted to send a message of both hope and "support for international cooperation".

"Hunger, like climate change, the pandemic and other issues, is a world problem that can only be properly addressed through cooperation.

The World Food Programme is an institution of global cooperation," he told Reuters.

"Unfortunately in too many quarters, especially among the great powers, there is a declining appetite for cooperation," he said, adding that world hunger was increasing again, having declining for several decades until 2016.

Agencies

World shares same future, needs solidarity, cooperation

COVID-19, as the most severe pandemic in the recent century, has brought unprecedented impacts and added new uncertainties to the world. So far, there have been over 35 million infections and 1.03 deaths around the world.

Facing the pandemic, we need courage and joint efforts, as humans share a community of common destiny and global countries must work in solidarity. This is a historic moment concerning the future of human beings, at which countries must contemplate their future directions and make a right choice.

"COVID-19 reminds us that we are living in an interconnected global village with a common stake. All countries are closely connected and we share a com-

mon future," said Chinese President Xi Jinping at the General Debate of the 75th Session of the United Nations (UN) General Assembly. At the most important multilateral stage, he promoted the building of a community with a shared future for mankind, so as to encourage countries to jointly face global challenges and create a better future. The broad mind of China, as well as its sense of responsibility have won wide recognition.

"Where the world should be going" is a question that must be answered, as paths decide future. China warns that unilateralism has no way out, and the world

must adhere to the principle of extensive consultation, joint cooperation and shared benefits. All countries shall safeguard the universal security, share development achievements and control the future of the world.

China has reiterated that countries shall abandon ideological disputes, overcome the traps of civilization clashes, respect each other's choices for development paths and modes, so as to make global diversity a ceaseless power for human progress and a natural state of human civilization.

"No country has the right to dominate global affairs, control the destiny of others, or keep

advantages in development all to itself. Even less should one be allowed to do whatever it likes and be the hegemon, bully or boss of the world." "Cold War mentality, ideological lines or zero-sum game are no solution to a country's own problem, still less an answer to mankind's common challenges."

"No country can gain from others' difficulties or maintain stability by taking advantage of others' troubles. To pursue a beggar-neighbor policy or just watch from a safe distance when others are in danger will eventually land one in the same trouble faced by others."

Xi's remarks have made clear what must be opposed for build-

ing a community with a shared future for mankind, and reinforced the confidence of global countries to pursue solidarity and cooperation.

The world needs the broad view and mind to shoulder the responsibility for the whole mankind, so as to make the cake of common interests larger and share the results of peace and development.

Five years ago, Xi attended the General Debate of the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly, saying the world should build partnerships in which countries treat each other as equals, engage in mutual consultation and show mutual understanding, create a

security environment featuring fairness, justice, joint participation and shared benefits, promote open, innovative and inclusive development that benefits all, increase inter-civilization exchanges to promote harmony, inclusiveness and respect for differences, and build an ecosystem that puts Mother Nature and green development first.

He further proposed to build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security, and common prosperity three years ago in his speech at the UN Office in Geneva. During this year's UN General Assembly, he remarked that the

World Food Programme is an institution of global cooperation," he told Reuters.

"Unfortunately in too many quarters, especially among the great powers, there is a declining appetite for cooperation," he said, adding that world hunger was increasing again, having declining for several decades until 2016.

"Although the pandemic is not over and the persistence and spread of the virus is uncertain, African governments have started putting in place policies and programs to support an inclusive and sustainable post-pandemic recovery," Hafez Ghanem, World Bank Vice President for Eastern and Southern Africa said. "Countries are putting in place policies and programmes that help create jobs and accelerate economic transformation to reduce the economic impact of the pandemic now, and build the capabilities needed to ensure inclusive economic growth in the future," he added.

World Food Programme is an institution of global cooperation," he told Reuters.

"Unfortunately in too many quarters, especially among the great powers, there is a declining appetite for cooperation," he said, adding that world hunger was increasing again, having declining for several decades until 2016.

World Food Programme is an institution of global cooperation," he told Reuters.

COVID-19 pandemic reminds us that we are living in an interconnected global village with a common stake, that economic globalization is an indisputable reality and a historical trend, that humankind should launch a green revolution and move faster to create a green way of development and life, preserve the environment and make Mother Earth a better place for all, and that the global governance system calls for reform and improvement.

UN General-Secretary Antonio Guterres expressed his gratitude for China's firm support for multilateralism and the UN, saying China is completely capable of achieving its own development and making greater contribution to the world. **People's daily**

With pandemic dominating US election, older voters turning away from Trump

NEW YORK

MANY older Americans have turned away from President Donald Trump this year as the coronavirus ravages the country, eroding an important Republican support base that helped propel him into the White House in 2016, Reuters/Ipsos polling data shows.

Trump and his Democratic opponent Joe Biden now split American voters aged 55 years and older almost evenly: 47% say they are voting for Biden on Nov. 3 while 46% back Trump, according to Reuters/Ipsos national surveys in September and October.

That could be an alarming sign for the president, who trails Biden with 25 days to go before the election.

Republicans have relied on the support of older Americans in national elections for years, routinely benefiting from a demographic that consistently shows up in force on Election Day.

Trump won the 55-plus age group by 13 percentage points in 2016, according to exit polls. Mitt Romney, the

Republican presidential nominee in 2012, achieved the same margin.

Reuters/Ipsos state polls also show Biden outperforming Hillary Clinton, the 2016 Democratic presidential nominee, among older voters in a handful of battleground states, where seniors make up an outsized proportion of the electorate.

Winning those states will be critical to the outcome of the 2020 race: whoever takes the most battleground states will be on track to win the Electoral College and the White House.

Biden is beating Trump among older voters in Wisconsin by 10 points and drawing about the same amount of support as Trump is with that demographic in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Florida and Arizona, according to the state polls conducted in mid-September and early October.

Four years ago, Trump won older voters in each of those states by 10 to 29 points.

Half of the older voters in the five battleground states blamed the high number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the country - nearly 7.6 million cases and more than 210,000 deaths - on



"poor leadership and policy decisions from President Trump," the polls show.

Randy Bode, 59, a Republican in Douglas, Arizona, who voted for Trump in 2016, said he was disappointed with Trump's suggestion that people could protect themselves from COVID-19 by drinking bleach.

"He shouldn't be saying the things he's saying" about the coronavirus,

he said. Bode, who is now undecided, is also concerned about Trump's efforts to repeal the Affordable Care Act and how that would leave millions of Americans without health insurance during a health crisis.

"He's had four years to come up with a plan, and he hasn't done it," he said.

A DETERIORATING BASE

Trump's standing with older Ameri-

cans has deteriorated this year as the novel coronavirus swept the country, closing thousands of businesses and overwhelming the health care system that seniors rely on more than others.

Sixty-one percent said this week in a national Reuters/Ipsos poll that they disapprove of the president's handling of the coronavirus, up 12 percentage points from May. And Trump's net approval for his response to the virus dropped among all Americans to its lowest level since Reuters started asking the question in early March.

Among older Americans, 83% were concerned about the threat that the coronavirus poses to their personal health and safety.

"Seniors were much more worried about COVID than younger Americans," said Alex Conant, a Republican strategist whose firm has spotted a similar trend in its polling data.

Trump's campaign has been working to stop the bleeding, and last weekend he dispatched Vice President Mike Pence to campaign at The Villages, the conservative retirement community in central Florida.

Agencies

US could be destabilized following elections, says Russian intelligence chief

MOSCOW

THE upcoming US presidential elections could be potentially be destabilizing for the country, while no one in the world needs more turbulence and uncertainty, Director of the Russian Foreign Intelligence Service Sergei Naryshkin told TASS on Thursday.

"The risks you are mentioning do exist. It is not a secret," he responded to a relevant question.

"We and the whole world in general do not need additional turbulence, no one needs domestic political instability [in the US], considering that the US is a nuclear power. Therefore, we will be hoping for the best," the intelligence chief underlined.

According to Naryshkin, American experts point out that the losing side is highly likely to reject the election results and challenge them. This will, in turn, create more turmoil in society which is already highly agitated now.

"Speaking of our attitude towards these events, we naturally would like to see the US elections to be held fairly, transparently, smoothly and in accordance with all international standards so that the international community can agree with the election results," he concluded.

The 2020 United States elections are scheduled for November 3. Nationwide, American citizens will go to the polls to elect 435 representatives to the House, 35 senators out of 100 to the Senate, and the President and Vice President of the United States.

Incumbent Republican President Donald Trump and Democrat Joe Biden are vying for the highest office in the land. In addition, voters will head to the ballot boxes to decide on 13 US state and territorial governorships, and numerous other local elections will be held. Agencies

WHO decries rising burden of mental illnesses in Africa due to COVID-19

NAIROBI

THE World Health Organization (WHO) on Thursday sounded alarm over a spike in mental ailments in Africa due to COVID-19 related social and economic disruptions.

Matshidiso Moeti, WHO regional director for Africa, said the pandemic had worsened the continent's mental health crisis amid lockdowns, job losses and substance abuse.

"Isolation, loss of income, the deaths of loved ones and a barrage of information about the new virus can stir up stress levels and trigger mental health conditions or exacerbate existing ones," Moeti said in a state-

ment issued in Nairobi. She said the pandemic reaffirmed the importance of investing in resilient mental health systems in the African continent that accounts for 15 out of top 30 countries globally for suicides per 100,000 people.

Moeti said COVID-19 pandemic hampered access to quality mental health care services in Africa amid redeployment of medical personnel, stigma and under-investment in novel treatment options.

She said that substance abuse, gender-based violence and prolonged closure of learning institutions linked to the pandemic worsened the fragility of mental healthcare systems in

Africa. "COVID-19 is adding to a long-simmering mental health care crisis in Africa. Leaders must urgently invest in life-saving mental healthcare services," said Moeti.

According to Moeti, a study carried out in South Africa found that 10 to 20 percent of 220 people surveyed reported mounting fear and anxiety due to the pandemic.

She said that a survey of 12,000 women in low-income communities in Uganda and Zambia found a spike in stress, anxiety and depression amid fear of the coronavirus.

Moeti said that African governments should invest in community-based awareness programs and training of first re-

sponders on basic psychosocial skills, to help reduce the burden of mental ailments in the continent.

"We also need more action to provide better mental health information and education, to boost and expand services, and to enhance social and financial protection for people with mental disorders, including laws to ensure human rights for everyone," said Moeti.

She said that a WHO survey carried out in July and August revealed that 27 out of 28 African countries that responded had included mental health in their COVID-19 response plans. Moeti said that investments in mental health literacy programs are key to

eradicate myths and stereotypes that have undermined roll-out of clinical interventions targeting mentally ill patients.



COVID-19 is adding to a long-simmering mental health care crisis in Africa. Leaders must urgently invest in life-saving mental healthcare services

China's vegetable production brings more sense of contentment to people

CHINA'S annual vegetable production has been maintained at around 700 million tonnes during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) period, and fruit production at around 180 million tonnes, said the country's Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs.

The acceptance rate of non-staple food supplies in the country's regular monitoring was kept above 97 percent, according to the ministry. With more abundant varieties, higher qualities and smoother circulation, the Chinese people's "vegetable baskets" are presenting them more sense of contentment.

In a farm produce market in Hanjiang district, Wuhan, central China's Hubei province, nearly hundreds of vegetables from across the country were put on the shelves, from local red spinach, Sichuan's cabbages to small potatoes from Gansu. Cai Ping, a woman who went to grocery shopping at the market told People's Daily that in the past people could only buy a few varieties, but now they have much more choices.

In Baituhe village of Pengzhou, Sichuan province, green vegetable shoots were thriving in standard greenhouses. "From seed selection and soil grading to management, we are supported by mechanization."

Besides, we also adopted advanced technologies such as dry-land raising and grafting to grow better vegetables," said Chen Fengmao, head of an agricultural



A woman buys vegetables at a grocery shop in Shushan district, Hefei, east China's Anhui province, Sept. 19. File photo

technology company. According to him, his company is able to produce over 50 million vegetable seedlings.

Pengzhou is home to nearly 55,000 hectares of vegetables, supplying more than 2 million tonnes of vegetables in 200 varieties to the whole country. It is a miniature of China's large-scale, standardized and intensive production of vegetables.

According to statistics, China's vegetable output hit 721 million tonnes last year, 5.2 percent higher than the average figure between 2015 and 2018.

All 36 medium and large cities that have adopted the system of city mayors taking responsibility for the "vegetable basket" (non-grain food supply) program have established storage mechanisms for storable vegetables and meats. Thirty-three of them have established information monitoring and alarming system covering the whole industrial chain for veg-

etable, meat, fruit, egg, dairy and aquatic products.

At the entrance of Kunchen Xin'an farm produce market in Jiayue district, Nanjing, east China's Jiangsu province, stands a quick food testing center, where two screens are displaying all information about the quality and sources of agricultural products sold at the market.

"The origin of every kind of vegetables and meat in the market can be traced," said Chen Jianping, manager of the market, adding that they also launch regular sampling inspection over the products to ensure food safety.

During the 13th Five-Year Plan period, the quality and safety of China's agricultural products generally maintained stable growth. The country now has 2,732 testing organizations that sampled and tested nearly 8 million items in the recent 5 years.

China also carries out regular inspection for 111 kinds of daily

agricultural products to test 130 of their indexes, 38 percent more than those in the 12th Five-Year Plan (2011-2015) period. Besides, the number of green food products, organic farm produces and geographical indications agricultural products totaled 48,000, up 63.9 percent from the 12th Five-Year Plan period.

In Shijingshan district of Beijing, all residents can place orders online on grocery shopping sites and get their orders delivered in 30 minutes. This is a result of the close cooperation between farmers and supermarkets, which enabled fresh fruits and vegetables to be put on the tables of consumers within 24 hours after being picked.

During the past 5 years, Chinese provinces and cities have made rational deployment of wholesale and retailing markets to ensure smooth circulation of non-staple food products.

Xiamen, southeast China's Fujian province established a three-level circulation network, with each residential community possessing over 20 outlets.

Guangzhou of south China's Guangdong province established 35 wholesale markets for non-staple food products that saw an annual transaction volume of 8.8 million tonnes.

Now China is home to 4,100 wholesale farm produce markets, including 1,300 with an annual turnover above 100 million yuan (\$14.73 million) each.

People's Daily

US imposes new Iran sanctions that may spook European banks

WASHINGTON

THE United States on Thursday slapped fresh sanctions on Iran's financial sector, targeting 18 banks in an effort to further choke off Iranian revenues as Washington ramps up pressure on Tehran weeks ahead of the US election.

The move freezes any US assets of those blacklisted and generally bars Americans from dealing with them, while extending secondary sanctions to those who do business with them. This means foreign banks risk losing access to the US market and financial system. The Treasury Department said in a statement the prohibitions did not apply to transactions to sell agricultural commodities, food, medicine or medical devices to Iran, saying it understood the need for humanitarian goods.

However, Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif accused the United States of targeting Iran's ability to pay for basic necessities during the COVID-19 pandemic. "US regime wants to blow up our remaining channels to pay for food & medicine," Zarif said on Twitter. "Conspiring to starve a population is a crime against humanity."

Iranian Central Bank governor Abdolnaser Hemmati dismissed the sanctions as political propaganda and played down their practical impact.

"Rather than having any economic effect, the American move



Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif

is for US domestic propaganda and political purposes, and shows the falsity of the human rights and humanitarian claims of US leaders," Hemmati said in a statement.

Analysts said the secondary sanctions may further deter European and other foreign banks from working with Iran, even for permitted humanitarian transactions.

"It's like a punch in the face to the Europeans, who have gone out of their way to indicate to the Americans that they view it as being extremely threatening to humanitarian assistance or humanitarian trade going to Iran," said Elizabeth Rosenberg of the Center for a New American Security think tank.

"They also want ... to make it very difficult for any future president to be able to unwind these measures and engage in nuclear diplomacy," Rosenberg added, alluding to the possibility that Democratic candidate Joe Biden could defeat Republican President Donald Trump in the Nov

3 US election.

Biden, who was vice-president when the Obama administration negotiated the nuclear accord, has said he would rejoin the deal if Iran first resumed compliance with it.

Tensions between Washington and Tehran have soared since Trump unilaterally withdrew in 2018 from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal struck by his predecessor and began re-imposing US sanctions that had been eased under the accord.

The sanctions Trump has reinstated target everything from oil sales to shipping and financial activities. While they exempt food, medicine and other humanitarian supplies, many foreign banks are already deterred from doing business with the Islamic Republic - including for humanitarian deals.

Washington's latest move targeted what the Treasury described as 18 major Iranian banks, which were designated under authorities including US Executive Order 13902, which allows the Treasury Department to target entire sectors of the Iranian economy.

It named them as Amin Investment Bank, Bank Keshavarzi Iran, Bank Maskan, Bank Refah Kargaran, Bank-e Shahr, Eghtesad Novin Bank, Gharzholhasaneh Resalat Bank, Hekmat Iranian Bank, Iran Zamin Bank, Karafarin Bank, Khavarmianeh Bank, Mehr Iran Credit Union Bank, Pasargad Bank, Saman Bank, Sarmayeh Bank, Toosee Taavon Bank, Tourism Bank and Islamic Regional Cooperation Bank. Agencies

China achieves outstanding employment performance during 13th Five-Year Plan period

PURSuing a more proactive employment policy during the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) period, China has maintained continuous stability of employment situation. From 2016 to 2019, over 13 million jobs were created each year.

Huang Xiaohui, 38, is a railway worker who cleans the rail tracks of a section along the Shanghai-Kunming railway. His wife is a co-worker of him.

A few years ago, the couple left their hometown and started working on the rails across China to earn more money for their family. "We can make a total of over 10,000 yuan (\$1,470) per month," Huang told People's Daily. Impacted by COVID-19 this year, the cou-

ple spent a little more time at home, but their passion for work never stops.

Learning that a railway corporation was searching for workers, Huang immediately informed his fellow townsmen to register. "We feel assured to have a job," he said.

According to China's Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security, a total of 53.78 million jobs were created between 2016 and 2019.

By the end of last year, the number of employed people in China stood at 770 million, including over 440 million in urban areas, up 9.5 percent from the end of 2015. The country's unemployment rate has been kept below its goal of 5.5 percent.

During the 13th Five-Year Plan period, a batch of new professions emerged as China upgraded its economy, such as digital managers, virtual reality technicians, internet marketers, and online couriers.

Zhang Jian is one of the many who joined the new professions. As a farmer-turned drone pilot, he told People's Daily that the job not only offers stable income, but also a technique that he likes. Zhang is a villager in Yingchengzi village, Badaling township of Beijing.

He occasionally participated in a drone training organized by local human resources authority and became fascinated. Now, he works as a drone-flying demonstrator and tutor of a

technology company.

The increasingly diversified employment forms are driving continuous optimization of China's employment structure. As of the end of the last year, the employees in first, second and tertiary industries accounted for 25.1 percent, 27.5 percent and 47.4 percent, respectively. The service sector was showing increasing attractiveness.

In Qikang handiwork company based in Hefei, Anhui province, 68 physically disabled technicians were making handicrafts in a neat workshop.

As an original equipment manufacturer, the company has not-so-high requirement on workers' technological

capability and labor intensity, so it's a great job for the physically disabled. "I can make money here every day, and the living condition is also great. I take the company as my home," said Huang Qichuang, a man who works there.

Between 2016 and 2019, a total of 22.09 million unemployed personnel were reemployed in urban areas, and 7.06 residents having difficulty finding work were employed.

Besides, 202,000 households which had no employed member now have at least one member employed each, and 12.13 million impoverished people had secured jobs under assistance.

People's Daily

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Morogoro Municipal Council (MMC) environmental conservation official, Dawson Jeremiah, shows some of statues, placed at at Msamvu roundabout, which represent tourist attractions that are available in the municipality. PHOTO: MICHAEL SIKAPUNDWA

Morogoro sets aside 34m/- for promotion of tourist sites

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL SIKAPUNDWA, MOROGORO

MOROGORO Municipal Council has set aside 34m/- for construction of animals' statues at Msamvu, Masika and town center roundabouts, aiming at boosting promotion of tourist attractions found in the region.

Statues of the big five animals, namely elephant, rhinoceros, buffalo, tiger and lion, placed at Msamvu roundabout, will, for one, provide an introduction to the region's attractions, the municipal revealed.

The Morogoro Municipal Council's environmental conservation official, Dawson Jeremiah, said the region's roundabouts' horticulture is another means for environmental preservation.

"The roundabouts' components will provide information about our game reserves, flora and fauna at Uluguru Mountain, as well as the Uluguru bushshrikes," he said.

Morogoro Municipal Director, Sheila Lukuba, said: "It is an endless initiative aiming

at boosting the region's tourism sector, the sector is one of crucial resources for promoting the region."

"Morogoro is blessed with a historical site for slave routes from Ujiji, Kigoma via Morogoro town to Bagamoyo, Coast Region, which increased income during the colonial era as slave masters were charged for every route they took," she said.

She listed the region's tourist attractions which stand as aesthetic centers as Hululu, Choma and Kibwe waterfalls, Commonwealth graves, the first colonialists' church, and British Overseas Management.

Morogoro resident, Benigna Mgalula, said the region's roundabouts will be part of refreshment centers particularly during wedding functions.

She stated the nature of Morogoro's land supports an amazing garden like the one found at Msamvu roundabout.

"I congratulate the Municipal Director for the efforts to rebuild Morogoro town," she disclosed.

In Paris, Kenin eyes 2nd Slam of year, Swiatek 1st of career

BY HOWARD FENDRICH

A LITTLE more than four years ago in Paris, Iga Swiatek beat Sofia Kenin 6-4, 7-5 in the third round of the French Open junior event.

"I remember I lost. I don't remember how I played," Kenin said when asked about the only encounter between the two. "But definitely I can say I was not as comfortable on clay as I am now, as I started to feel last year. ... Of course, we're both different players now."

Certainly are. And the stakes in their second matchup at Roland Garros are considerably different from that 2016 meeting, too: Kenin, a 21-year-old from Florida, and Swiatek, a 19-year-old from Poland, will face each other Saturday in the French Open women's final.

Swiatek (pronounced shvee-ON'-tek) is No. 54, making her the lowest-ranked woman to get this far at the tournament since the WTA computer rankings began in 1975. She seeks her first Grand Slam title; in six previous appearances, her best showing was the fourth round.

"I mean, I have to figure out what she does. She's had a great two weeks here. She's had some great results, playing some really good tennis," said Kenin,

who eliminated two-time Wimbledon winner Petra Kvitova in the semifinals. "I know that I'm also playing well."

Kenin, who is seeded No. 4, is bidding for her second big trophy of the season, after triumphing at the Australian Open in February, part of a 16-1 mark at the majors in 2020.

Kenin needed to get through three sets to win four of her half-dozen matches in Paris, an indication of some occasional lapses in form, perhaps, but also of her boundless resilience and grit.

"Definitely feisty," is the way she put it. Swiatek's progress through the surprise-filled draw over the past two weeks has been as impressive as can be.

If the chill and rain of the autumnal setting – the French Open was postponed from May-June to September-October because of the coronavirus pandemic – or the lack of loud crowds – only 1,000 fans are allowed on the grounds each day, also on account of COVID-19 concerns – or the dearth of match play – the women's tour returned from a five-month hiatus in August – bothered others, those factors were irrelevant to Swiatek.

Not only hasn't she

dropped a set so far – no woman has won the title in Paris without ceding at least one since Justine Henin back in 2007 – but Swiatek allowed her six opponents to combine for just 23 games in 12 sets.

The lopsided results included 6-1, 6-2 victories over both 2018 champion Simona Halep and 2019 runner-up Marketa Vondrousova, and a 6-3, 6-2 win over 2014 Wimbledon finalist Eugenie Bouchard.

"There's a reason why I was so efficient. Really, I'm staying super-focused," said Swiatek, who travels with a sports psychologist. "I'm, like, not letting my opponents to play their best tennis. So I hope I'm going to do that on Saturday."

She is young enough, remember, that she recently finished high school. Swiatek says she needs to figure out whether to continue to pursue her education or stick to professional tennis.

"Well, right now it's going to be hard to make a decision to go back to studying, because I feel like really I can achieve big things. I just want to focus on that," Swiatek said. "But really, I'm only 19, so a lot can change during a few years. ... Maybe I'm going to be, like, hungry for knowledge."

AP

Parents should promote children's talents-call

BY CORRESPONDENT MICHAEL SIKAPUNDWA, MOROGORO

MOROGORO District Commissioner, Bakari Msulwa, has asked parents in the region to promote their children's talents in sports and culture in a bid to see to it the children are financially independent in the future.

Msulwa made the call when he graced a jogging bonanza which took place at Morogoro Gymkhana Club recently.

The bonanza brought together clubs including Uluguru, Boma, Mazimbu, Mlimani, Kihonda and outfits made up of army officers and Morogoro Municipal officials.

The bonanza's slogan was 'aforestation'. The region's Municipal Council, he said, has set out to see to it each of the region's pupils and their parents are planting trees at the youngsters' respective schools' compounds to conserve the environment.

The Morogoro DC said each of the children has been born with a talent, noting parents should not undermine their children's talents.

He noted the parents should instead assist the children morally and financially so the children can make the most of their talents.

"My son, Rajabu Msulwa, popularly known as 'Dynamic Star', for instance, is a musician, he has composed seven songs and, out of the tracks, four are riding high in music charts in radio stations domestically," Msulwa disclosed.

"When he completed Form Four, he had set out to excel in music and I assisted him to achieve his



Morogoro District Commissioner, Bakari Msulwa (2nd L), speaks after the completion of a jogging bonanza, which took place in the district recently. He stressed on the need for parents to promote their children's talents.

goal, he, though, works in tourism sector in Arusha, he got the post after he had ventured into music," he noted.

A popular domestic artiste, Raymond Mwakyusa 'Rayvanny', who participated in the jogging bonanza, entertained the joggers after the exercises.

The artiste disclosed he is financially stable given his parents assisted him to fully exploit his music talent.

Msulwa moreover stated a special program for promoting the region's children's talents will start after the completion of

the Standard Seven national examinations.

Msulwa disclosed the program will go hand in hand with tree planting initiative. Each of the children, he noted, will plant trees.

"Morogoro Municipal Council has already made tree seedlings available for planting, the seedlings will be found at Sokoine University of Agriculture (SUA), hopefully, we will meet all pupils in our schools for the initiative, our target is to make the region green and control carbon dioxide," he said.

Morogoro Municipal Director, Sheila Lukuba, urged the region's youths to engage in entrepreneurship.

She advised the youths to register their groups in an effort to access loans from the municipal council, otherwise, they will not be able to tackle poverty.

"The municipal council has set aside 700m/- for youths and small scale entrepreneurs' empowerment but legal documents like group registration and project plans should first be considered before accessing the loans," she said.

Hamilton chases F1 record again as Schumacher's son debuts



Drivers arrive in the winners circle after the Russian Formula One Grand Prix, at the Sochi Autodrom circuit, in Sochi, Russia, Sunday, Sept. 27, 2020. Drivers from left, Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain, third place, Mercedes driver Valtteri Bottas of Finland, first place, and Red Bull driver Max Verstappen of the Netherlands, second place. (AP)

NÜRBURG, GERMANY

LEWIS Hamilton's bid to match the Formula One win record held by Michael Schumacher is back on, and he could achieve it in Schumacher's home country of Germany.

Hamilton was chasing a record-equaling 91st win two weeks ago in Russia before his race was ruined by penalties for breaching an obscure rule on where drivers can practice their starts before the race. His Mercedes teammate Valtteri Bottas took the win.

That sets the stage for Hamilton to try again in Germany. He'll have to do it in conditions which would have tested even Schumacher, who was nicknamed "Regenmeister" or Rain Master for his talent on wet tracks. Rain is likely on all three days and temperatures on race day may not reach 10 degrees (50 F).

Formula One is back at the Nürburgring, one of the most storied circuits in the series, for the first

time since 2013. Officially, the German Grand Prix is on hiatus this year, and this race – a late replacement on the coronavirus-affected calendar – is called the Eifel Grand Prix after a nearby mountain range.

As many as 20,000 fans could attend, making it the best attended race of the season apart from the Russian Grand Prix.

NEW GENERATION

It's been eight years since Michael Schumacher's last F1 race, and now his son will officially be part of an F1 race weekend for the first time.

Mick Schumacher, 21, will take over Antonio Giovinazzi's Alfa Romeo for the first practice on Friday. That brings him another step closer to a full F1 drive, possibly even next season. He already has experience of the paddock from racing in Formula Two, where he leads the championship, and doing demonstration runs in his father's old F1 cars before races.

Mick Schumacher has said he sees his father as his idol, but he's been keen to forge his own path. He started out in kart racing under the surname Betsch, his mother's maiden name.

The Schumacher family's life changed forever in December 2013 when Michael and the then-14-year-old Mick were skiing together in the French Alps. Michael Schumacher hit his head on a rock and sustained severe brain injuries which left him requiring constant care. The family is protective of his privacy and provides few details of his condition.

Mick Schumacher's F2 title rival, Callum Hogg, will also drive in his first official F1 session on Friday, borrowing Romain Grosjean's Haas.

GERMANY'S DECLINE

A young Schumacher could be exactly what F1 needs to reignite its popularity in Germany.

When Hamilton and Michael Schumacher last raced together at the Nürburgring in 2011, there

were six Germans on the grid including then-world champion Sebastian Vettel. He will be the only German in Sunday's race.

The likes of Nico Rosberg and Timo Glock have long since moved on, though Nico Hülkenberg lingers on the fringes. He was a two-race replacement when Sergio Perez tested positive for the coronavirus.

Despite Vettel's four titles, he doesn't command the same public profile in Germany that Schumacher did in his prime, and he hasn't been followed into F1 by a wave of young German drivers. If not for the pandemic, there wouldn't be a race in Germany this year.

Only two Germans have made their debut in F1 within the last decade. André Lotterer had a one-race cameo in 2014, and Pascal Wehrlein occasionally showed promise in 2016 and 2017 but is now Lotterer's teammate in electric racing series Formula E.

AP

Pogba: Real Madrid still 'a dream'

LONDON

PAUL Pogba still dreams of playing for Real Madrid one day, with the Manchester United player adding that he has yet to have a discussion with United chairman Ed Woodward about a potential new deal with Old Trafford.

The midfielder opened up on his club future on Thursday during a news conference while on international duty with France. Asked about his current deal at United, which expires in June 2021 but includes a team option for an additional season, he said that he has not been contacted by Woodward.

"A lot was said but not by me. I prefer to focus on my football and my return. No one told me anything," Pogba said. "I haven't spoken with Ed Woodward about an extension or anything. So for now, I am in Manchester and I am thinking about coming back at my best level."

"Then, I think there will be a time where the club will come to me to offer me something or not. For now, nothing has happened. I am just thinking about coming back strongly physically and mentally and put on great performances for my club."

But he didn't hide his desire to still one day play for Real Madrid and Zinedine Zidane.

"Zidane? We all heard, some

things have been said. What do you want me to say? Yes, all the players would like to play for Real Madrid one day. It could be a dream. It is a dream for me. Why not? One day.

"Like I have said, I am at Manchester United and I love my club. I am performing at United, I am enjoying it and I want to do everything I can to bring this club back where it belongs. I will give my best like all my teammates."

Pogba added that he was in great mood after coming on in the second half of France's 7-1 win over Ukraine on Wednesday night, his first international game in 16 months.

The start of the Premier League season has been tough for Pogba and Manchester United, especially following a humiliating 6-1 loss at home against Tottenham Hotspur last weekend.

"We know it is not easy. We had some difficult times. It is difficult at the moment. We are fighting, that is what we need to do. We need to be strong mentally to come back to our best and get to the position we want."

"This club deserves to be at the top. Winning trophies and the league are the club's ambitions. We know it won't be easy but it is still our objective. We are fighting for that."

(Agencies)

Premier League chief pleads for rethink of stadium fan ban

LONDON

PREMIER League chief executive Richard Masters has pleaded with the government to rethink its stadium supporter ban, calling for football to be treated "fairly".

Matches at the end of last season in the English top-flight and the beginning of the new campaign have been played behind closed doors due to the coronavirus crisis.

Plans to pilot a limited return of fans from October 1 were shelved last month due to tighter lockdown measures following a surge in cases of Covid-19 in Britain.

Masters told The Times newspaper that he welcomed the return of audiences to concert venues but said football stadiums should be included.

"It's good news that (concert) venues can run socially distanced events indoors, it gives them a lifeline," he said. "We are starting to see the return of the paying spectator at a ticketed event and we just believe that football should be allowed to do the same."

"We do understand why caution is needed but what we are asking for is consistency from government so that sport is treated as fairly as other activities."

"We are a highly regulated environment. We have the Sports Grounds Safety Authority in place to ensure that supporters are safe at all times and we're outdoors in

a highly stewarded environment. What we really need is clarity for our clubs and supporters and a road map from government."

Masters said Premier League clubs were facing a number of tough challenges including the scrapping of the October return date for fans, expectations to help clubs lower down the pyramid and the frustration of seeing entertainment arenas close to football grounds reopen with no "roadmap" for the return of supporters.

Masters cited the example of the Bundesliga, which has allowed limited number of fans back depending on local virus rates, as one that clubs could potentially follow.

"The government is managing the country around local conditions so we have to be flexible in that respect," he said.

"We have been in regular conversation with our German counterparts and we are aware of how it's working and how it is not working for some clubs where the numbers are higher."

"Like everything, you have to start somewhere and just to do it would be fantastic. Football needs its voice back, even if it is not exclusively across the league, has given German football a massive boost."

AFP

Coronavirus failings could set back Asian football, union boss warns

ASIAN football risks throwing away years of progress if leagues and clubs fail to look after their players during the coronavirus pandemic, the head of the global footballers' union has warned.

Talent pools will dwindle and foreign imports will dry up if players continue to face pay cuts and instability, FIFPro general secretary Jonas Baer-Hoffmann told AFP.

He highlighted the example of Indonesia, saying a "unilateral decision" to slash players' wages by three-quarters had caused "quite severe hardship".

"If it's not a sustainable career, people will simply stop. That's the reality," Baer-Hoffmann said in a phone interview.

"But also I think more broadly there's something at stake in terms of being a desired destination for foreign players," he added.

"These are destinations that

players may be fearful of going to if they can't be certain that they receive their wages, if they can't be certain about clubs respecting their contracts, if they can't be certain about the league operating effectively."

Baer-Hoffmann said players around the world had been thrown into uncertainty by the coronavirus, which closed down most professional sport for months. Footballers needed food hand-outs in some countries, he said.

He added that players "simply cannot afford" the major pay cuts in Indonesia, which come despite the fact that many clubs have "very wealthy owners".

Baer-Hoffmann also criticised the Asian Football Confederation, saying the regional body had failed to respond to the needs of vulnerable players.

AFP

Serbia oust Norway, advances to Euro 2020 playoff finals

GENEVA

SERGEJ Milinkovi-Savic scored twice to lift Serbia into the European Championship playoff finals with a 2-1 extra-time win over Norway on Thursday.

Serbia kept Norway's feared forward Erling Haaland quiet and found its own unlikely threat in the Lazio midfielder who had not previously scored for the national team.

Milinkovi-Savic was on hand to score from close range after a free kick into the penalty area in the 82nd minute, before Norway leveled through Mathias Normann's angled low shot in the 88th.

An exquisite piece of skill won the game in the 102nd, as Milinkovi-Savic tricked Norway goalkeeper Rune Jarstein with a deft, slow chip from the edge of the six-yard box.

Serbia will host Scotland in one of four playoff finals on Nov. 12 that will complete the 24-nation Euro 2020 lineup. Scotland beat Israel in a penalty shootout in Glasgow after a 0-0 draw.

The eight playoff semifinals played Thursday included four nations that will host games at the Euro 2020 tournament.

Hungary and Scotland advanced to stay in contention for getting two home games in the group stage next June. Ireland and Romania were eliminated.

The playoffs involve teams who won their Nations League groups, or had a high placing, two years ago but did not advance to Euro 2020 directly from the traditional qualifying groups last year.

The games were originally scheduled in March before UEFA shut down its competitions and postponed Euro 2020 by one year because of the coronavirus pandemic.

LEAGUE A

Iceland recaptured the feelgood



Spot on: Scotland won their first ever penalty shootout to beat Israel. (Agencies)

spirit of its run to the Euro 2016 quarterfinals in beating visiting Romania 2-1.

Gylfi Sigurdsson scored twice with low, left-foot shots in the first half, before Romania closed the gap with a penalty midway through the second.

Iceland goes to Hungary, which eased to a 3-1 in at Bulgaria, for the top-tier playoff final at the Puskas Stadium in Budapest.

The winner will join the toughest-looking Euro 2020 group, with defending champion Portugal plus the past two World Cup winners, France and Germany. It will be played in Munich and Budapest.

LEAGUE B

Penalty shootouts decided both games, with Northern Ireland winning one and Ireland losing the

other.

Northern Ireland beat Bosnia-Herzegovina 4-3 in the shootout after a 1-1 draw in Sarajevo. Bosnia took the lead through Rade Krunic's goal in the 14th and Niall McGinn leveled in the 53rd.

Slovakia and Ireland were goalless in Bratislava, before the home team won the shootout 4-2.

Northern Ireland will host Slovakia on Nov. 12. The winner enters the group based in Bilbao and Dublin with Spain, Poland and Sweden.

LEAGUE C

Two more tense games went to extra time in Oslo and Glasgow.

Serbia, which played at the 2018 World Cup, was an outlier in the Nations League third tier two years

ago and proved too strong for a young Norwegian team.

Scotland was pressed back for much of a 0-0 draw against Israel, then struck a post from the last attack in extra time.

The Scots scored all five penalties in the shootout, and goalkeeper David Marshall made one save.

Serbia will host the final in Belgrade. The winner on Nov. 12 goes into the London-Glasgow group with England, Croatia and the Czech Republic.

LEAGUE D

Kosovo's quest to reach the European Championship at the first attempt ended with a loss at North Macedonia.

World soccer's newest national team, joining UEFA and FIFA in 2016, was

beaten 2-1 in Skopje with all the goals coming in the first half.

Kosovo trailed to an own goal, leveled though defender Florent Hadegjonaj's 25-meter chip into an unguarded goal, and was beaten by Darko Velkoski's 33rd-minute header.

North Macedonia next travels to Georgia to see which country will make a Euros debut.

Georgia held off Belarus 1-0 after getting a seventh-minute penalty earned and scored by Tornike Okriashvili.

The winner on Nov. 12 will join a Euro 2020 group with the Netherlands, Ukraine and Austria. Games will be played in Amsterdam and Bucharest. AP

How Covid-19 uncertainty affects 2022 World Cup road map- Part II

BY GABRIELE MARCOTTI, SENIOR WRITER, ESPN FC

There are two dates in September 2022 and another two in October 2022, and they've been allocated to regional competitions. In a pinch, you imagine they could be reclaimed to settle final World Cup qualifying issues, even if it means kicking the can down the road with regard to other tournaments.

If worse comes to worst, you can turn home-and-away fixtures into single-leg events; that worked for the Champions League, but World Cup qualifying is an entirely different animal.

You could look at turning some breaks from double-headers into triple-headers, as UEFA are doing with the next two breaks, partly to satisfy TV commitments. Again, it's relatively easy to do in Europe, where distances are small and infrastructure is good. Elsewhere it can be a logistical nightmare, and that's before we get into the player health issue.

"Triple-headers" mean three games in seven days. That's why, incidentally, Italy (34 players) and England (30) called up vastly expanded squads for this upcoming break: if you don't rotate, you face the ire of the club sides.

That matters, because this qualifying cycle will take place against the backdrop of the most congested club calendar in history. Domestic leagues in Europe, where the majority of World Cup players ply their trade, kicked off late because of the spring shutdown and will end early because of the European Championships.

In England, they decided to go ahead and play the Carabao Cup, while going back to a maximum of three substitutes. Five substitutes were introduced post-lockdown to allow for more rotation and lessen the physical burden and risk of injury.

The Premier League voted, by a narrow margin, to go back to three, believing (wrongly, in my opinion) that five subs offers an unfair advantage to bigger clubs. The 2020-21



FIFA president Gianni Infantino has always been bullish about the ability to fit in all the international tournaments and qualifiers around the club schedule, leading up to the 2022 World Cup. But is that realistic? (Agencies)

Premier League season will have the same number of games as 2018-19, but that campaign was nearly 10 percent longer.

You can just about manage it, pandemic permitting. Legislation varies a bit, but so hell-bent are leagues on not rearranging fixtures if a club is hit by a rash of positive COVID-19 tests that, in most cases, as long as you have

13 able-bodied footballers (including youngsters on professional contracts), you won't be granted a postponement.

Why? Because there may be nowhere to put it in the calendar, which is why we've already witnessed the absurd spectacle of Tottenham Hotspur being forced to play three competitive matches (a Carabao Cup last-16 game vs.

Chelsea, a Europa League qualifier vs. Maccabi Haifa and a league game at Man United) in the space of six days before the international break.

We know why this is happening. European clubs are projecting a revenue shortfall of more than \$4 billion over 2019-20 and 2020-21. It could be a little less if fans are allowed back in earlier rather than later (it's based

on a 50% capacity); it could be a little more (or a lot more) if the grounds stay shut or if more sponsors or broadcasters go bust or try to renegotiate their contracts downwards.

Soccer needs to squeeze as much as they can out of their product. In the vast majority of cases, it's not about greed, it's about survival.

There's a sense of "cross your fingers and pack in as much as you can while you still can" pervading the global game. Ordinarily, this is where a columnist might point out alternate solutions and lament the ineptitude or avarice of those in charge.

I'm loathe to do so, partly because the last 10 months have shown us how much of life is beyond our control and partly because I'm not sure what else they could have done that was workable.

This is already a unique season marked by an asterisk. Let's hope that it will be a footnote, and not something that ends up defining the next 18 months.

Gwiji by David Chikoko

Management Made Simple



Pogba: Real Madrid still 'a dream'

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TONIGHT @ 9:00

EATV MONDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
14:00 Wanawake Live (r)
14:30 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Copa Coca-Cola (r)
16:00 Akili & Me (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SBELEK
17:55 Kurasia
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 UJENZI
21:30 SPORTS LIVE
22:30 Bongo Hits

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

eastafrika RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planei Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM DAR ES SALAAM

Himid Mao, Bocco ruled out of Taifa Stars' friendly against Burundi



Taifa Stars' midfielder, Himid Mao.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebi

TANZANIA'S senior national football team, Taifa Stars, will have to do without the services of assistant captain, Himid Mao, and John Bocco in Sunday's international friendly match against Burundi, which will take place at Benjamin Mkapa Stadium in Dar es Salaam, due to various reasons.

Defensive midfielder Mao, who is based in Egypt with ENNPI Club, is yet to be granted permission to join the senior national team.

The ENNPI, who are placed fifth in the Egyptian Premier League table, are chasing a spot in the

lucrative Arab Club Championship.

They are also understood to be worried about missing Mao in their next league assignment against Al Mokawloon Al Arab

on Thursday, if he travels out of Egypt.

And with only two days remaining before Taifa Stars take on Burundi, the former's head coach Etienne Ndayiragije will

now have to get Jonas Mkude a new defensive midfielder partner in Mzimiru Yassin, who has two goals in five appearances for Simba SC.

Ally Msengi, who plies his

trade in the South African Premier Soccer League with Stellenbosch, is another option in defensive midfield.

Ndayiragije confirmed Bocco has been ruled out of the camp due to an injury he sustained while playing for his club, Simba, two weeks ago.

"All players are fit with the exception of John Bocco who is still nursing injuries. We pray for his quick recovery," he disclosed.

"He is a key player who also acts as the captain for the home-based national team players."

Both Taifa Stars and Burundi will be using the friendly as part of preparations for the upcoming 2022 Africa Cup of Nations (AFCON) qualifiers slated for November.

Taifa Stars are expected to lock horns with Tunisia as Burundi tackle Mauritania in back to back matches next month.

After two rounds of matches, Tanzania are placed third in Group J of the qualifiers for 2022 Cameroon AFCON finals with three points, following a home win against Equatorial Guinea and an away loss to Libya.

Tunisia are in first place with six points followed by Libya who are second with three points.

Much as Tanzania have also recorded three points, Libya are ahead of the former on the head-to-head rule while Equatorial Guinea are bottom with no point.

Kurasini Heat now tie 2020 RBA League semis series with ABC

By Nassir Nchimbi, TUDARCO

DAR ES SALAAM's Kurasini Heat Club has successfully turned its fortunes around in the 2020 Regional Basketball Association (RBA) League semi-finals, cruising to 76-68 victory over Army Basketball Club (ABC) in game two of the semi-final series held in the city on Thursday.

Kurasini Heat have, therefore, tied the five-game series to 2-2, forcing the series into the fifth clash which will produce finalists.

Another army side, National Service (JKT) Basketball Club, has already booked a place in the finals.

Kurasini Heat's Mwalimu Herry once again brought his A game into the court as he produced an outstanding performance against ABC.

Herry slotted in 17 points and posted 11 rebounds, seven assists and two blocks to see to it Kurasini Heat level the last four stage's series with their opponents.

In the game three of the series ABC had taken 2-1 lead after Kurasini Heat had tied the series to 1-1 in game two.

Shooter Philbert Mwaipungu stepped up for the ABC side as he recorded 28 points, five rebounds and four assists in their victory over Kurasini Heat in game three.

Kurasini Heat and ABC will thus lock horns in the deciding fifth game today, seeking to sail through to the final.

The JKT Basketball Club had easily advanced to the finals after recording a comprehensive 84-63 win over Oilers Basketball Club in game three of the semi-finals.

The eventual winners, therefore, came out with a 3-0 series victory over their opponents.

Jimmy Brown produced an outstanding performance for JKT Club, both offensively and defensively.

He slotted in 16 points and registered 17 rebounds and two assists to help JKT Club secure finals' spot.

The RBA League women category's semi-finals completed with two teams advancing to the finals.

The JKT Queens and Don Bosco Lady Lionesses made smooth passage to the finals, with both commanding 3-0 series wins against their opponents.

Don Bosco Lady Lionesses beat Ukonga Queens 58-36 to advance to the finals.

Jasmine Bablia recorded 17 points and 16 rebounds for the eventual winners in game three to secure the finals' spot for them.

Gaudencia Oluoch was also impressive both offensively and defensively for Don Bosco Lady Lionesses, slotting in 17 points and posting 20 rebounds, one assist and two blocks for the squad in game two.

Jessica Julius made sure JKT Queens remain dominant in the women category of the showpiece with impressive performance Vijana Queens.

She recorded 26 points and three rebounds in JKT Queens's 65-57 win over Vijana Queens, which saw to it the army outfit progress to the finals.

The 2020 RBA League finals for both men and women are expected to take place after the semi-finals between Kurasini Heat and ABC have been completed.

Aga Khan SC faces SKLPSC test in 2020 Caravans T20 Cup tourney

By Guardian Reporter

DAR ES SALAAM cricket giants, Aga Khan SC, have an opportunity to make it two wins out of two games in the 2020 DC Caravans T20 Cup tournament, as they are expected to lock horns with Shree Kutchi Leva Patel SC (SKLPSC) in the city tomorrow.

Aga Khan SC got off to an impressive start in the competition, commanding a comprehensive six-wicket victory over GP Pak Stars in a clash which took place at Leaders Club venue last weekend.

Youngster Arshaan Jasani and experienced player Issa Kikasi, who starred for Aga Khan SC in the first match, are set to lead the club's quest for yet another victory tomorrow.

Jasani had an impressive unbeaten spell at the crease, seeing to it his squad successfully chase GP Pak Stars' score and the youngster is expected to replicate his batting exploits in the coming clash.

Aga Khan SC's other experienced all-rounders, Riziki Kizito and John Zablon, had less impressive showing in the previous duel and, therefore, tomorrow's clash will be an opportunity for them to prove their worth.

They should nevertheless brace for stiff opposition in the duel, as SKLPSC will be eager to



Dar Cricket Club (DCC) bowler, Dharmin Parmar, in action against Gymkhana Club in a 2020 Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) Caravans T20 Cup tournament match, which took place in the city last weekend. COURTESY OF TCA

bounce back after losing to Aces Club in their first game played last weekend.

The SKLPSC had a woeful batting showing as they conceded a 43-run loss to Aces Club at the same venue.

Tomorrow's tie will, for that matter, be a chance

for SKLPSC to make up for their poor showing in the opening clash.

The Aga Khan SC versus SKLPSC duel will be the last clash of the day, with all matches taking place at Leaders Club venue.

In the day's two other clashes, hosts Caravans Club will face Strikers

Club in the morning, Dar Cricket Club (DCC) will later lock horns with Annadil Burhani.

It will be a second clash for Caravans Club in this season's competition, given the squad is, today, expected to open its campaign by confronting Annadil Burhani.

As for DCC, tomorrow's duel will offer them chance to rectify mistakes, which contributed to their loss to Gymkhana Club in the first clash.

They were out of sorts, as far as batting was concerned, and eventually succumbed to

62-run loss to the in-form Gymkhana Club.

Experienced players, Meet Jetha and skipper Adil Kassam, will have to be at their best should DCC tame Annadil Burhani and register their first victory.

Assad Aziz and Dharmin Parmar will have chance to prove they have what it takes to offer significant contribution at the crease, after faring dismally with the bat in the previous clash.

Parmar, nevertheless, put stellar displays with the ball, posting a five-wicket haul against Gymkhana Club.

He will therefore be under pressure to prove his bowling exploits in the previous clash were not mere fluke.

The competition, which is an annual feature, is hosted by Caravans Club in cooperation with regional cricket governing body, DC, in a bid to improve promotion of the sport at the domestic level.

Petrofuel Company, Color Flex Inks & Coatings, Grand Restaurant and Alliance Insurance Company are sponsors for the 2020 DC Caravans T20 Cup tournament.

Flexibles by David Chikoko

