



Tanzania plans four Covid-19 labs to ensure tourists' safety

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

TANZANIA will soon unveil newly established Covid-19 laboratories to complement already deployed testing centers operating across the country's tourism circuits.

The move is intended to boost safety of tourists as the country opens up its travel and hospitality industries in the post-closure period as the coronavirus emergency wanes.

"We are working to assure international communities that Tanzania remains the safest destination to visit, now that the whole world is opening up as the global lockdown is eased," said the minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, Dr Hamis Kigwangala.

The minister was accompanied by his deputy, Constantine Kanyasu as he launched the National Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for the Tanzania tourism industry in the post-corona period and in view of the forthcoming summer holiday season.

"Some countries are demanding that when



We are going to test and issue certificates to all visitors after touring the country

their citizens travel abroad they should first have their health status checked before returning home. Tanzania is complying with that and upon request, we are going to test and issue certificates to all visitors after touring the country," he said.

But in another approach, the government is now focusing on new types of tourists starting with promoting domestic tourism, but also targeting African countries with high levels of income such as Kenya, Egypt, Morocco and South Africa.

Deputy Minister Kanyasu said the tourism sector has suffered bad press during closure due to the pandemic, despite that the country wasn't as impacted as other states in the continent and beyond.

Henry Kimambo, the vice-president of the Tanzania Association of Tour Operators (TATO), said that local tourists were taking greater interest in visiting tourism attractions.

A recent case is one in which 35 local people toured Tarangire National Park and actually spent nights in hotels there.

"We need to address the issue of costs for ordinary Tanzanians and residents of East Africa, especially accommodation. Entry fees to national parks are affordable to all but most

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Wider immunity for key state officials irks NGOs

By Guardian Reporter

CIVIL society organisations have expressed fears on the recently proposed changes in the Miscellaneous Amendments No. 3 (2020) Bill, saying some of them violate the spirit and the letter of the Constitution.

They are concerned that amendments proposed to the Judiciary Administration Act (Cap 237) that grants immunity from prosecution to all judiciary employees. Other contested sections are the Law Reform (Fatal Accidents and Miscellaneous Provisions Act (Cap 310) and the Basic Rights and Duties Enforcement Act (Cap 3), that they shall erode judicial accountability.

As per proposed amendments, the President, Vice-President, Prime Minister, Speaker and Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly and the Chief Justice cannot be brought to the court directly and instead charges should be brought against the Attorney General.

In their joint statement, the organizations, namely the Centre for Strategic Litigation, Jamii Forums, the Legal and Human Rights Centre (LHRC), the Media Council of Tanzania (MCT), Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) and the Twaweza opinion survey outfit claimed that shielding individuals in high office from being held directly accountable in a court of law erodes judicial accountability.

"Experience from around the world shows that individual direct accountability is critical in ensuring performance and

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For these and several other women, crushing stones for gravel for sale but the crude and energy-sapping way is just about the only way to make some semblance of decent income - come rain or shine - and often operating in "unauthorised" areas. Correspondent Woinde Shizza captured this scene at Kiranyi village in Arusha Region yesterday but, indeed, things are much similar in several other parts of Tanzania. Hopefully, some life-changing assistance will one day come these needy people's way.

Salary cuts: PCCB questioning 69 ex-Chadema MPs, officials

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

THE Prevention and Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) yesterday started questioning Chadema MPs and some party officials over corruption allegations.

PCCB targeted about 69 individuals, including former party members, mostly MPs who have since decamped, accusing party leaders of misappropriation of funds.

PCCB headquarters said in a statement here

yesterday that interrogations started yesterday and would end next week.

"Through this statement I would like to confirm that PCCB headquarters has called some Chadema members of Parliament and former MPs among others for questioning," it said, signed by PCCB public relations officer, Dorine Kapwani.

The interrogation is part of action taken by PCCB headquarters following allegations of

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Nightmares, shock over Freeman Mbowe attack

By Guardian Reporter

UPROAR had not yet abated yesterday on the past-midnight incident late on Monday involving Chadema national chairman Freeman Mbowe, while he continued being treated at the Aga Khan Hospital in Dar es Salaam.

ACT-Wazalendo national chairman Seif Sharif Hamad described the attack close the door of Mbowe's house in Dodoma as a serious incident that needs to be condemned by every person.

Hamad also censured those who have been joking over the incident saying that the behaviour is disrespectful and contrary to the country's ethical attitudes.

"This is not our culture; it is hard to believe that incidents like this may happen in our country. I am asking myself if Tanzania has lost humanity to this level as it is bad to see someone has fallen into disaster and others are mocking him," he said.

Tundu Lissu, the Chadema national vice chairman through social media platforms raised his voice calling on religious, social and human rights defenders organizations to wake up and strongly condemn the incident.

Lissu said he has no hope as regards investigations being conducted by the police, adding that the only resort is power that

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SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



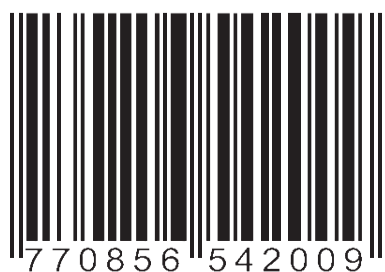
FACT 4 There are simple things you can do to help keep yourself and others healthy.

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

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

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

cdc.gov/COVID-19





Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein holds talks with a Tanzania Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance delegation at Zanzibar State House yesterday. Photo: State House

Salary cuts: PCCB questioning 69 ex-Chadema MPs, officials

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misuse of funds in the opposition party raised in Parliament.

Funds complained about by some MPs who decamped include salaries deducted as contribution to the party as from June 2016.

They alleged that Special Seats MPs were forced to contribute 1.5m/- while their constituency counterparts paid 0.5m/- per month in the scheme. However, they were not told how the money was being spent.

"We would like to inform the public that as PCCB director general, Brigadier

General Mbungu said recently on 27th May, investigations into corruption allegations have started," the bureau underlined.

PCCB is carrying out interrogations as there could be some misdeeds such as bad use of party money by those in authority. All these fall under the PCCB

Act number 11 of 2007 that governs its activities. Several people including former and current party leaders and MPs who complained to the electoral commission have been interrogated.

Others are the party board members as well as party MPs and former MPs, it added.

Wider immunity for key state officials irks NGOs

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reducing wrongdoing," the NGOs' statement reads in part.

It said the principle of equality before the law enshrined in the Constitution requires that every citizen, regardless of position or rank, be held equally accountable for breaking the law.

"The proposed amendments reduce the possibility for holding specific groups directly responsible for their actions while in office," it said.

Article 26 of the Constitution empowers and enjoins every Tanzanian citizen to protect and promote the Constitution, including through the courts. Thus removing the right of individuals or entities to sue for their rights unless they are directly affected, effectively outlaws public interest litigation and alienates the disenfranchised from legal redress, the statement indicated.

It said: "The proposed changes alter the hierarchy of laws and law-making by allowing procedural legislation to dictate a hierarchy between articles of the Constitution."

The proposed changes to the National Assembly (Administration) Act (Cap 115) which gives the president significant mandate over parliamentary business, will result into unconstitutional removal of powers of the legislature to hold the executive accountable.

Amendments to parliamentary autonomy also contravene Articles 62 and 63 of the Constitution which detail the president's role in the National Assembly and the supremacy of Parliament, it further asserted.

"The amendments pose a clear and present danger to the United Republic. We call on lawmakers, the media, civil society and all citizens to unite in challenging them and in so doing, to defend the Constitution and the country," the NGOs declared.

They further said that Article 4 threatens the separation of powers, as Section 4(1) states that authority in the United Republic shall be exercised and controlled by two organs vested with executive powers, two organs vested with judicial powers and two organs vested with legislative and supervisory powers over the conduct of public affairs.

Noting that the principle of separation of powers is one of the cornerstones of the country's young democracy, they emphasized that of the three branches of government - the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary - each branch is independent and has a role in holding the others accountable in the public interest.

The Judiciary in particular is tasked with ensuring that all of us comply with the law, the statement intoned.

On June 4, the government published the Miscellaneous Amendments No. 3 (2020) Bill proposing amendments to 13 laws. The proposed amendments were read for the first time in Parliament on June 5.

"The proposed amendments reduce the possibility for holding specific groups directly responsible for their actions while in office"

Nightmares, shock over Freeman Mbowe attack

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remains in the hands of stakeholders, institutions and individuals to talk about it and fight inhuman acts.

"The incident which has been done to the top leader in the National Assembly is a kind of terrorist attack. These political attacks are carried out for a political purpose regardless of whether they are done by the government, its institutions or individuals. It is terrorism," Lissu insisted.

He further said Mbowe was attacked the same way he was attacked in 2017 and up to now no one has been arrested.

"There is no need to wait for investigations from the police as I know they won't do anything despite the nature of the incident," he stated.

Augustino Mrema, chairman of the

Tanzania Labour Party (TLP) said he had received the news of Mbowe's attack with profound shock.

Mrema called upon security organs to work on investigating the matter and take serious actions against those found to have been involved.

At the diplomatic level, envoys of the United States and the European Union condemned the beating of Chadema national chairman Freeman Mbowe.

In a joint statement, the envoys called for an immediate, thorough and impartial investigation, and for the rapid apprehension and prosecution of this assault's perpetrators.

The US/EU statement said this attack on an opposition leader "is only the latest in a long series of disturbing acts of violence and harassment perpetrated against members of the opposition."

Govt urges citizenry, institutions to fight against illicit drugs trafficking

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government has appealed to Tanzanians and private institutions to step up the fight against illicit drugs use and drug trafficking.

Anthony Mavunde, the deputy minister in the Prime Minister's Office for Labour, Youths and Employment, made the call here yesterday when presenting the 2019 drugs control report in the National Assembly.

He said that despite the remarkable progress in controlling smuggling of illicit drugs into the country, there are people who are still engaging in the outlawed business.

"That's why it is important for Tanzanians and institutions to chip in and join the government's initiatives in fighting against the illegal business," he said.

According to the World Drug Report 2019, an approximately 27million person which is equivalent to 5.5 per cent of people aged between 15 and 64 were subjected to drugs in 2017.

Mavunde said that last year the use of drugs and drugs business continued to be a problem in the country. He said a section of the society used cannabis as well as the number of people using herbs for treatment that originated from drugs such as tramadol, ketamine and valium had been on the increase.

"The increase in traditional herbs

was due to tight initiatives implemented to control smuggling of drugs such as cocaine and heroin. Drug addicts who are denied access to drugs normally change into using local herbs", said Mavunde.

He said the government through the Commission for Prevention, Treatment and Rehabilitation, Drug Control and Enforcement Authority has conducted several operations that had reduced smuggling of drugs into the country.

The deputy minister said the authority nabbed 55.35 kilogrammes of heroin, 10.34 kilogramme of cocaine, 21.16 tonnes of cannabis, 9.07 tonnes of marijuana that led the authority into arresting 10,384 suspects which their cases are ongoing at different courts.

Peter Mfisi, commissioner for prevention treatment and rehabilitation at the Drug Control and Enforcement Authority (DCEA) said that in 2019 the authority destroyed 122.55 kilogrammes of heroin and 71.51 of cocaine in Dar es Salaam and Mbeya regions.

He said the authority had established six sober houses for drug addicts. The sober houses in Dar es Salaam, Mbeya, Mwanza and Dodoma regions had treated 7,600 drug addicts as of the end of last year.

"Needles and syringes users are at high risk of being infected with HIV/AIDS," said Mfisi.



Jonathan Cox (L, in black T-shirt), general manager of Zanzibar's Blue Bay hotels group, leads staff from the company in distributing face masks to residents of Cairo at Kiwengwa in Zanzibar's South Region. The masks are the work of the firm's own tailor. Photo: Correspondent Martin Kabemba

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people cannot afford staying in tourist hotels," he said.

Representatives from the Hotels Association of Tanzania (HAT), agreed to start reviewing pricing for local guests and even extend offers to foreign visitors to attract more travellers now that the world is slowly opening up to tourism.

A number of those who spoke said that they were consulting with agencies in foreign countries to see the possibility of them bringing meetings, symposiums and conferences to Tanzania.

Regarding recent travel advisories from various embassies that harmed the tourism industry, the ministry is taking steps to address the problem through diplomatic channels.

Dr Kigwangala said the government was engaging representatives of different countries to enable them to see how Tanzania was doing its best to address issues related to the coronavirus pandemic.

"Our diplomatic engagements are meant to assure visitors that the

Tanzania plans four Covid-19 labs to ensure tourists' safety

country and its people are safe, and that is why the Ministry of Health works closely with it. It has set up four Covid-19 testing laboratories dedicated to tourism and transport sectors," he said.

As the new tourism season kicks in, the tourism authorities are working hard to revive the travel industry. Focus is being directed at the Christmas and New Year holiday season which has often created a temporary boom in tourism especially for visitors from within the region.

Last year Tanzania received 1.5m tourists and generated more than US\$ 2.6bn, accounting for over 25 percent of total exports earnings. The sector was also employing nearly 1.6m people.

Before reopening following the Covid-19 outbreak, the government

jointly developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to curb spreading the virus via air travel in particular and in visiting tourism sites.

The ministry collaborated with the private sector through the guidance of the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children as well as the World Health organization (WHO).

SOPs are meant to ensure that tourists entering the country do not bring new infections, with airlines given the responsibility of making sure that all passengers are screened for the coronavirus.

Tourists will be permitted to enter the country once there is evidence that those tourists are not infected with COVID-19. Secondly, the guidelines seek to ensure that when tourists enter the country they will

be safe and not exposed to infection with COVID-19.

SOPs serve as guidance on how to receive and serve tourists from the time they arrive at the airport to the end of their stay in the country.

They cover the entire tourism business service delivery chain, from airport to land transport, accommodation, food and viewing or sighting destinations. They are intended to comply with guidelines of the Ministry of Health and the World Health Organization.

"It is in the interest of the tourism industry to ensure that tourists stay safe while in the country. The government and the private sector will ensure that this guidance is adhered to and will monitor its implementation closely," the guidelines emphasise.



Tanzania Media Women's Association (Zanzibar) marketing officer Muhidini Ramadhani (R), presents working tools for women entrepreneurs from Kiboje village in Zanzibar yesterday. The support is part of Tamwa's move to empower women. Story on Page 6. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Soldiers gun down 7 suspected bandits

By Correspondent Mutayoba Arbogast, Bukoba

SEVEN suspected armed bandits were gunned down by the Tanzania People's Defence Force (TPDF) in exchange of fire in Biharamulo district, Kagera region. Kagera regional police commander, Revocatus Malimi told reporters here that the incident occurred in Rusahunga division when the bandits were attempting to rob passengers. "The bandits were found with an AK47, eleven bullets and a grenade. Their identities are yet to be established," RPC Malimi said. Malimi said that after being notified by citizens over the presence of suspected group of people walking around the area, the officers set a trap and managed to gun down the suspected bandits.

"We laid an ambush trap and succeeded to surround them, however, once the bandits realised they had been trapped, they responded by opening fire, but the officers were tactical enough to fire out and injured them before they lost their lives," he asserted. He further said all seven bandits are still unidentified and they are aged between 25-35 years. Their bodies had been kept at Biharamulo hospital for identification. Malimi further appealed to the area's residents and general public to be vigilant and continue reporting suspected movements of unknown people.

"The bandits were found with an AK47, eleven bullets and a grenade. Their identities are yet to be established"

By Guardian Correspondent, Arusha

Tanzania to end wrangle over COVID-19 screening for cross-border truck drivers

THE government will promptly resolve the Namanga border dispute with Kenya which has to date affected operations of haulage transporters, a senior official said yesterday. The border dispute is largely contributed by Kenyan officials who refuse to recognise Covid-19 test certificates from Tanzanian truck drivers, thus restricting them from transporting cargo straight to customers in Kenya. "Tanzanian truck drivers have for two weeks been blocked from entering the country over claims that they were Covid-19 positive after being tested in Kenyan side," said Dr Godwin Mollle, the deputy minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children.

According to Dr Mollle, the truck drivers from Tanzania were tested at the main national laboratory. Addressing truck drivers on the Tanzania side of the border on Tuesday, Dr Mollle assured the drivers to end the stand-off between the two countries, adding the government cares for them. "There should be no problem with testing for Covid-19. Our drivers are being tested by competent authorities and are presented with certificates. It is confusing that the same drivers are tested positive in Kenya," queried Dr

Mollle, noting that the ministry was working to resolve the matter. The dispute at Namanga border in Longido district has continued despite recent EAC transport ministers communiqué stating that truck drivers will be tested for Covid-19 before commencement of their journeys at the point of origin using standards set by the World Health Organisation (WHO). Dr Mollle said that his tour at the border is meant to listen to the drivers and once he is back in Dodoma they

will sit with a team of experts from different ministries to see how the problem can be resolved amicably. He added that to facilitate businesses between Tanzania and Kenya, officials from both countries will convene in near future to find amicable solution to the problem. He said the heads of state of Tanzania and Kenya had recently tasked ministers responsible for transport and regional commissioners at the various border points to work on the dispute so as to facilitate trade between EAC

member countries. "It is surprising that you have stayed here for two weeks but you have not fallen sick," said Dr Mollle. One of the truck drivers, Japhet Jeremia said: "I was tested negative in Tanzania, but laboratory tests in Kenya indicated that I am Covid-19 positive." Jeremia claimed to have not fallen sick or taken any drugs since he was told to be positive for the disease for the past 14 days. He also complained that Kenyan officials had been demanding bribes

from Tanzania drivers so as to issue them with negative results. On Monday, Tanzania Truck Owners Association (TATOA) Vice Chairperson Elias Lukumay called upon the government to intervene on the border dispute before it turns into a trade war. Lukumay said that truck drivers have been spending needlessly many days at border points, which adds operational costs to transporters owing to increased container demurrage charges now standing at an average of 120,000/- per day. Truck drivers are continuously permitted to enter Uganda and Burundi, unlike Kenya and Rwanda border points. The same applies to Southern African Development Community (SADC) member states of Zambia, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Botswana.

By Henry Mwangonde

'Mbezi Luis bus terminal complete by 79 per cent'

CONSTRUCTION of a state-of-the-art bus terminal for upcountry buses at Mbezi Luis has attained 79-per cent and is expected to be completed before the end of this year, it has been learnt yesterday. Acting Dar es Salaam City Mayor Abdullah Mtinika announced when he received seven new mass hand washing facilities at Ubungo Bus Terminal and three Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations from WaterAid Tanzania and the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM). According to Mtinika said the new facility which will be the largest in East and Central Africa, will house all crucial services and will cost 51bn/-. He further said the new terminal will accommodate 700 buses and 80 small vehicles at a time and will have outside parking lot for 1,000 vehicles. "It was supposed on be completed by July but due to some technical problems, there had been delays but we believe that it will soon be completed," he said. The machines were installed at Ubungo Bus Terminal, Kimara, Gerezani and Kivukoni Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) stations in efforts to control the spread of the coronavirus in Dar es Salaam. The installed stations were identified as COVID-19 'high-risk areas' as they are some of the busiest and most populated areas in the city. Speaking during the handover ceremony, WaterAid Tanzania interim country director, Anna Mzinga, said the hand washing facilities showcase a new design, where the user does not need to use

their hands to turn the tap - they simply use their feet to access clean water and soap, which ensures that the facilities themselves do not become contaminated. "We will continue supporting the government in efforts to prevent the spread of the virus, through placement of more hand washing facilities and behaviour change campaigns to encourage citizens to

wash their hands even beyond COVID-19," she said. The machines were manufactured by the University of Dar es Salaam's college of engineering and technology (CoET). Hand washing with clean water and soap for 20 seconds has been one of the simplest yet effective ways to prevent COVID-19, as well as other infectious diseases.

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REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

TENDER TITLE: PROVISION OF TAX COMPLIANCE AND AD HOC TAX CONSULTANCY SERVICES

TENDER NUMBER: PRQ20190878

TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) is an aid-for-trade organisation that was established in 2010, with the aim of growing prosperity in East Africa through increased trade. TMEA wishes to invite interested and qualified **reputable firms/consortiums** to participate in this tender, for the provision of tax compliance and Ad hoc tax consultancy services, covering its countries of operation within Eastern Africa, Horn of Africa, and Southern Africa.

The Terms of Reference and the Request for Proposals (RFP) document can be obtained at <https://www.trademarkea.com/procurement/> . All queries quoting the above Tender Title and Number should be emailed to procurement@trademarkea.com . The closing date for submission of this tender is on or before **Wednesday, 8 July 2020 on or before 4.00 p.m. (Kenya Time).**

Interested and qualified **reputable consultancy firms/consortiums** **MUST** submit their bids through TMEA's Procurement mail box using the email address, procurement@trademarkea.com . The maximum size of each email with attachments should not exceed **5 MB**.

TMEA cannot answer any query relating to this tender 7 days or less prior to the submission deadline.

Lake Nyasa ports to get facelift

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government has allocated 4bn/- in fiscal year 2019/2020 to finance the construction of a dock at Ndumbi port in Lake Nyasa with the aim of streamlining passenger and freight transport services.

The Tanzania Port Authority (TPA) commenced construction of Ndumbi dock at Ndumbi port in December last year, the project that is expected to be completed by October, 2021.

The remarks were made after question from Deogratius Ngalawa, Ludewa MP, who had sought to know when will the government build a dock at the Ndumbi port alongside construction of passengers' boarding and off-boarding stations and harbours for loading and unloading cargo at Manda, Lupingu, Lumbila, Makonde, Yigha, Nsisi, Nsele, Chanjale and Nkanda small ports in lake Nyasa;

The Minister of Works, Transport and Communication, Isack Kamwelwe, said the government TPA had hired a project consultant M / S Royal Hoskoning DHV from the Netherlands to undertake a feasibility study and detailed design on the shores of lake Nyasa to improve passenger and freight transport services by building.

"The feasibility study commenced in October 2019, whereby the project consultant submitted the inception report in November last year, and the final report with suggestions on how to upgrade the existing docks and build a new dock, has already been submitted," said the minister.

He said upon completion of the feasibility study and detailed design, the TPA on behalf of the government, will begin procurement procedures to procure competent contractors for the commencement of construction of the docks at the respective ports.

"It is the government's expectation that construction works will commence in the financial year 2020/2021 depending on the recommendations by the project consultant," he added.

In December last year the Tanzania Ports Authority (TPA) kicked off plans for port infrastructure improvement in

Lake Nyasa terminals. The Authority is keen to strengthen marine transport in the third largest and second deepest Lake in Africa.

In implementing the plan, the Authority has engaged Royal Hoskoning DHV from Netherlands to carry out a feasibility study on how it should improve its terminals.

Currently TPA has a total of 15 official ports in Lake Nyasa but majority of them operate as shorelines due to lack of proper infrastructures.

Lake Nyasa ports Manager, Abed Gallus said the Authority was implementing two infrastructure projects that involved the construction of port infrastructures of Ndumbi terminal in Nyasa district, Ruvuma region and expansion of Kiwira Port in Kyela district, Mbeya region.

On Ndumbi Port project, Gallus said TPA has started constructing a permanent berth to enable cargo ships dock and undock comfortably, including facilitating loading and unloading of cargo.

Other infrastructures to be built at Ndumbi port include a jetty, ramp, open storage area with a hard surface measuring 9,000 square metres for keeping cargo, fence, office block and a staff house.

China Henan International Corporation Group (CHICO) is undertaking the 12.25bn/- project which is expected to be implemented in 22 months.

According to Gallus, the decision to upgrade port infrastructures at Ndumbi terminal was necessitated by the good flow of cargo, especially coal and cement.

"We made the decision to upgrade port infrastructures at Ndumbi terminal after we experienced difficulties in handling various types of cargo, especially in loading coal being ferried from Ruvuma region to Mbeya and unloading cement from Mbeya region to various destinations in Ruvuma and Njombe regions," he clarified.

The Ndumbi port is one of the major terminals in Lake Nyasa as it handles over 90 per cent of all cargo handled by TPA in the zone.



Cherry Garments and Safety Solutions Ltd general manager Dennis Simba (L) presents face masks in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday to Brenda Msangi (to his left), CEO of the city's CCBRT Hospital, for use in the war on Covid-19. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

PRESIDENT John Magufuli has ordered the Tanzania Roads Agency (Tanroads) to abandon its plan of taking up Isyonje village land for the installation of a weigh bridge along the main Tanzania-Malawi highway.

President Magufuli gave the order on Tuesday after the Mbeya Regional Commissioner Albert Chalamila telephoned him during a public rally at the village.

Speaking to the rally from Chamwino State House, in Dodoma President Magufuli said he has listened to their plight after seeing

JPM bars Tanroads from taking villagers' land in Mbeya Region

them via TV complaining about TANROADS taking up their land without compensation.

He said the Lands Law - No. 3 and 4 of 1999 calls for payment of compensation before taking away land from the citizens, but TANROADS did not abide by that requirement for more than three years now which he said was against the law.

"I am ordering TANROADS to

abandon the area and instead the villagers should continue with their economic activities, and the weigh bridge should be installed in another area," said President Magufuli.

The President offered his apologies to the villagers for delaying their economic development without paying compensation for three years.

Mbeya Regional Commissioner Albert Chalamila told the villagers that

President Magufuli loves them and hates people being victimized that is why when he came to know about their plight he telephoned the regional commissioner and directed him to go to the village to give back the land taken by TANROADS.

He said after that decision no one else will bother them hence he called upon them to continue with their development activities.



Arusha district commissioner Gabriel Daqarro (4th-L) presents a dummy cheque for 626m/- in loans to help 100 groups of youths, women and people with disabilities conduct their businesses better and more profitably. Photo: Correspondent Cynthia Mwilelezi

TPSF goes digital to help curb corruption, red tape

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Private Sector Foundation (TPSF) has urged members of the business community to use a digital facility it has launched in order to easily fight against the red tape and corruption in doing businesses.

The facility has been sponsored by the Trade Mark East Africa.

TPSF director of members services, Zachy Mbenna, said over the weekend that members should access the national freight and logistics information portal (NFLIP) for exhaustive information.

No fee is charged for registration, but an applicant must have tax identification number (TIN) and a business licence, he said.

The director said use of the facility would not only help members thwart corruption and red tape, but it would go a long way in fighting the current COVID 19 disease by reducing crowds in offices, saving people's time and travel costs.

"We are thankful to the Trade Mark East Africa for the sponsorship in order to spurring vibrant businesses growth in the country," he said.

He said the facility would help encourage performance in hotels, lodge and food provision businesses and the hospitality industry in general.

Mbenna said the foundation anticipated challenges in strengthening

the new digital system, explaining that even members themselves might not enthusiastically embrace the new system simply because it was something new.

"We also expect to have difficulty in eliminating middlemen who are benefiting from the current system," he explained.

Mbenna thanked the government for rejecting the lockdown option and allowing businesses to go on normally. "This move has saved the nation

from going through a difficult period while revamping a much weakened economy," he said.

The TPSF, too, has a MSMEs information portal that serves to reduce knowledge barriers affecting access to and use of financial products and services by households and MSMEs.

It also seeks to facilitate the creation and development of new business ideas and opportunities. The portal also provides an avenue for financial service providers to freely capture market intelligence about consumer's demand and develop product or introduce services that respond to the consumer needs.

The portal also helps building capacity of financial service supervisors by having access to opinions of MSMEs through online forums, thus formulate policies that respond to their demands.

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government is employing new initiatives to promote beach tourism and Mikindani old town to lure more tourists in the southern regions of Mtwara and Lindi.

Dr Hamisi Kigwangalla, the Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism announced yesterday in the august House when responding question from Mtwara Rural MP, Hawa Ghasia (CCM) who had wanted to know government's strategies to promote tourist attractions in southern region

Govt in new drive to boost tourist destinations in southern regions

of Mtwara such as beaches of Msimbati and the Mikindani old town.

Dr Kigwangalla said that the government has continued to introduce new initiatives to expand the scope of tourism products according to the geographic nature of the areas where tourism attractions are found.

For such efforts, the minister said the government continues to implement various strategies for developing and

growing new tourist destinations in various parts of the country, including beaches and promotion of Mikindani old town.

"To extend these efforts, the ministry in collaboration with the private sector renovated some buildings available in the old town of Mikindani alongside the opening centre for the management of historic conservation and tourism activities development in the town," he

said. The minister said that the ministry has been working closely with the private sector as well as the Mikindani authorities with the purpose of facilitating the annual Mikindani cultural festival. The festival has largely continued to attract visitors and tourists from both local and foreign tourists to visit the old town of Mikindani and its surrounding areas.

He asserted that in ensuring beaches tourism is developed in the country as well to encourage investment in tourism activities in the area, the ministry has completed the task of identifying the entire coastal area along the Indian Ocean covering 1,423 kilometers for the development of beach tourism.

"However, the ministry through the Tanzania Tourism Board (TTB) has

been promoting tourism as a whole including all the beaches and historical attractions through various means of publicity such as; Tourism Destination Portal and Mobile App, which lists all tourist destinations in Tanzania," he added.

All the beaches in the south east areas of Mtwara region are gaining momentum of both local and foreign tourists.



ACT-Wazalendo national Chairman Seif Shariff Hamad speaks at a press briefing in Dar es Salaam yesterday. He called upon the National Electoral Commission and the Zanzibar Electoral Commission to work for fair play during the General Election scheduled for later this year. He is with the party's vice chairpersons for Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar - Dorothea Semu (R) and Juma Duni Haji. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Lake Rukwa water level up 1.69 meters by April

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE water level of Lake Rukwa has risen to 7.47 meters by April this year compared to 5.78m, which is the highest for the past 16 years.

Water officer from Lake Rukwa Basin Authority, Grace Chitanda said that the rise of the water level is attributed to long rains this year.

She said measurements taken on the lake shows it has a mean depth average of 4m even though some places the depth of 9m, 3m and 4m and that it is not very deep compared to other lakes in the country.

She said the lake's water level up to April this year - 7.47m is equivalent to 813.4 above mean sea level and that the long time average water level of 5.8m in the lake was equivalent to 811.7m above mean sea level.

Chitanda said records show that Lake Rukwa almost completely dried up with some of its marine life disappeared in 1770, and in 1939 the lake overflowed with water compared to other periods before.

She said in addition to efforts on its preservation including its rivers, there are still challenges contributing to its being filled up with mud due to

livestock, mining and farming activities. She also said the lake is also facing a challenge posed by human settlements near its shores.

She said in order to fight its destruction the office of Lake Rukwa Basin Authority has established water consumers communities that have its constitutions and laws to safeguard it against all acts of environmental destruction in the lake and rivers that feed it.

She also said the authority has been taking rains measurements in its various centres located at Utengule, Usongwe, Namanye, Isangati and Inyonga.



She also said the lake is also facing a challenge posed by human settlements near its shores

By Guardian Reporter

THE project to refurbish Tanzania's Central Line - Tanzania Intermodal & Rail Development Project (TIRP) to cost USD 300 million is in the final stages of completion after major work done to the 970 km stretch between Dar es Salaam and Isaka.

The project that officially began in June 2018 is now 85 percent complete and is aimed to upgrade the axle weight of the old permanent way from 13.1 tonnes to 18.5 tonnes by relaying

\$300m upgrade project of central line 85pc complete

312 kms of railway line, refurbishing another 638 kms, repairing 44 bridges and culverts, renovation of the communication system and upgrading of goods sheds at the port of Dar es

Salaam and Ilala and the Isaka dry ports.

It also included the purchase of rail repairing equipment, three new locomotives and repairing two others

as well as purchasing of 44 goods wagons.

TIRP coordinator Eng Mlemba Singo explained that in general the work is 85 percent complete and what remains is

the Dar es Salaam-Kilosa section which will see the replacement of the old rails and sleepers and the reinforcing of the railway ridge.

He said only 50 kms remains for

upgrading on the Dar-Kilosa section out of the 289 kms and added that in other areas the work remaining includes wayside trenching for drainage and the erection of railway signs.

"In general the work is expected to be completed in October this year," said Eng Singo and added that already 44 goods wagons have been bought, the locomotives are being repaired and the installation of the communication system is being finalised at each station to enable trains to run by computer.



Agai Gilbert (R), Tanzania Postal Bank Plc's branch manager for Mara Region, pictured earlier this week presenting to Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development deputy minister Dr Angelina Mabula (2nd-R) and Mara regional Lands deputy commissioner Jerome Kiwira a printer for use by the region's Lands office. Photo: Photo: Munir Shemweta

Know history of places you want to invest in, NEMC tells investors

By Guardian Correspondent, Kigoma

THE National Environment Management Council (NEMC) has called on prospective investors to be acquainted with environmental history of coastal places they plan to put their money into to avert damage on expensive infrastructure caused by floods many years after establishment of the infrastructure.

The call was made by the NEMC Director General, Dr Samuel Gwamaka, after inspecting damage caused to infrastructure by rising waters of Lake Tanganyika in various places of Kigoma Region. He said in one year the water level of Lake Tanganyika rose by over 1.3 metres and that in 14 years water

rose by 3.19 metres.

He said they were planning researching on the changing levels of water bodies in Tanzania.

Dr Gwamaka said NEMC was concerned with human activities in and around sources of water, deforestation and increasing siltation in water bodies.

Dr Gwamaka said the Valley Water Resources Authority has invaluable information on the history of valleys and coastal areas and advised investors to ask for information from the authority before making decisions on their investment plans.

Dr Gwamaka also reminded about effects of climate change that he said had serious environmental impacts

in everyday life, explaining that such effects should be constantly considered in decision making on various issues.

He said NEMC was in touch with other stakeholders to ensure no human activities are done inside 60 metres from water bodies as required by law.

Dr Lameck Yohana, who owns Golden Beach properties said the rising level of Lake Tanganyika has had a very negative and huge impact on their businesses.

"Water from Lake Tanganyika has damaged our infrastructure and gravely affected our business. We have informed the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) on the issue and we are waiting for their response," Dr Yohana said.

The United Republic of Tanzania President's Office TANZANIA SOCIAL ACTION FUND



VACANCY ADVERTISEMENT

Tanzania Social Action Fund (TASAF) is currently implementing Productive Social Safety Net Program which aims at protecting the vulnerable poor households from severest consequences of poverty by implementing interventions that will lead to increased household incomes and opportunities while increasing consumption.

The TASAF Executive Director is inviting applications from suitably qualified Tanzanian nationals to fill the below vacant posts:

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. Director of Finance and Administration | 1 post |
| 2. Director of Coordination | 1 post |
| 3. Director of Knowledge Management and Advocacy | 1 post |
| 4. Conditional Cash Transfer Manager | 1 post |
| 5. Public Works and Infrastructure Manager | 1 post |
| 6. Human Resources Manager | 1 post |
| 7. Internal Audit Manager | 1 post |
| 8. Procurement Officer | 1 post |
| 9. Assistant Procurement Officer | 1 post |
| 10. Program Officer Public Works and Infrastructure | 1 post |
| 11. Development Communication Officer | 1 post |
| 12. Legal Officer | 1 post |
| 13. Internal Auditor | 2 posts |
| 14. Registry Officer | 1 post |
| 15. Driver | 2 posts |
| 16. Motor Vehicle Mechanic | 2 posts |
| 17. TASAF Monitoring Officer | 23 posts |

Job Descriptions and required qualifications for these posts are available in TASAF website www.tasaf.go.tz

How to apply:

- Applications, enclosing scanned certified copies of certificates and Curriculum Vitae be sent to the following address: Executive Director
Tanzania Social Action Fund
Board of Trustees of PSSSF Building
Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete Road
P.O. Box 2719
DODOMA.
- Applications (In PDF Format), enclosing scanned certified copies of certificates and Curriculum Vitae be sent through the following email address: hrm@tasaf.go.tz
- Applications made in a way other than the above will not be considered.
- Deadline for receiving applications is **9th July, 2020**.
- Those who will not hear from us, 14 days after the deadline, should consider themselves as unsuccessful.


Ladislaus J. Mwamanga
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TAMWA spends 7m/- to empower Zanzibar women entrepreneurs

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania Media Women's Association (Tamwa, Zanzibar) has spent 7m/- to buy working tools for women entrepreneurs in Unguja and Pemba islands.

The support is part of the nonprofit organisation efforts to empower women economically in the Indian Ocean archipelago. Among the groups, which have been empowered include those who are engaging in agriculture and making soaps.

The support came after Dr Mzuri Issa, Tamwa Zanzibar Director visited different women economic groups in the two main islands, where she found that most of them were in need of working facilities, which include soap making trays, watering cans and other farming related tools.

Dr Mzuri said that most of the groups were in need of working facilities to increase productivity in their business undertakings. So far, she said that 12 groups in Unguja have been supported and 24 groups are being supported in Pemba.

All these groups were established three months ago under the supervision of Tamwa-Zanzibar.

Muhidini Ramadhani, Tamwa-Zanzibar marketing officer urged entrepreneurs to ensure that the

donated facilities are well managed for future use.

He said that Zanzibar has a wide-range of opportunities including growing vegetable and fruits due to its favourable climate conditions.

Tamwa Zanzibar has been in forefront in assisting women in Isles to get out of poverty trap through economic activities.

This is due to the fact that women play a key role in the private sector and micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Tanzania.

The proportion of women owned enterprises is reported to have increased from 35 per cent in early 1990s to 54.3 percent in 2012.

Tamwa Zanzibar became fully self-governing and operational in both Isles of Unguja and Pemba since 2004.

In January 2007, it attained its own separate registration. The registration number is 493 under Zanzibar Society Act No. 6 of 1995. TAMWA's Mission is to advocate for women and children's rights by conducting awareness raising activities for cultural, policy and legal changes in the society through the use of media. This mission is meant to facilitate the realisation of the association's vision of existence of a peaceful Tanzania society, which respects human rights with a gender perspective.



Residents of Kyawazaru village in Mara Region brief journalists earlier this week on reports that water suspected to be laced with toxic material was 'filtering' into their farms, destroying crops. Photo: Correspondent Happy Severine

Kagera RC launches 2020/21 coffee selling season

By Guardian Reporter

KAGERA Regional Commissioner Brig Gen Marco Gaguti has officially launched 2020/21 coffee selling season that included announcing of initial payment of 1,200/- per kg of coffee with husks to secondary cooperatives - the Kagera Cooperative Union 1990 Ltd (KCU), Karagwe District Cooperative Union (KDCU) and Ngara Farmers Ltd. Gaguti called upon coffee traders who are ready to buy coffee from

farmers in the region to ensure they do so in broad daylight without sabotaging them.

The RC also used the occasion to reiterate that if there is a coffee trader ready to buy coffee from farmers at good prices to come out and announce his price and get the coffee.

"By June 8 this year we received application from eight traders out of whom only two submitted their price quotations - at 1,100/- only per kg," he said.

He also appealed to farmers to ensure they maintain the quality of their crop before transporting them to primary cooperatives to ensure that Kagera coffee reaches the market with the required quality, and added that in the 2020/21 season about 60 million kgs of coffee is expected to be collected, compared to 52 million kgs collected in the previous season.

Chief Executive Officer of Tanzania Agricultural Development Bank (TADB) Japhet Justine said at the event that

Kagera region' Secondary cooperatives have been trustworthy since 2018 when the bank started providing them with loans whereby in the 2018 season it gave them 30bn/- loans that was fully repaid, while in 2019 TADB gave 23bn/- loans that was also fully paid back.

Beginning June 9 this year coffee traders in Kagera Region were mobilised to start collecting coffee to their primary cooperatives as money for their initial payment was ready for payment.



Stanbic Bank Tanzania's main branch manager, Richard Chenga (R), speaks yesterday shortly before presenting to Chalinze legislator Ridhiwani Kikwete (2nd-L, in glasses) medical equipment and supplies worth 9.4m/-. It is assistance meant for Miono Health Centre in Chalinze constituency. With them: Chalinze Town Council acting director Zainabu Makwinya (L), Miono councillor Juma Mpwimbwi (2nd-R) and Stanbic members of staff. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

ActionAid donates Covid-19 PPE worth 4 million/- to Mafia

By Beatrice Philemon

ACTIONAID Tanzania has donated Covid-19 protective gear worth 4.5m/- to Mafia District to contain the spread of the virus.

ActionAid Tanzania programme and sponsorship officer in Mafia, Amri Lutela said yesterday that the protective gear were handed over to Mafia District Commissioner Shaib Nnunduma.

The organisation had donated three thermal scanners, 3 water tanks of 500 litres and their supportive stands including 8 billboards.

This has been possible through Local Rights Programmes (LRP) that is being executed by ActionAid Tanzania in Mafia district.

"As part of communities we must join the fight against the corona virus, we are also supporting the government in efforts in controlling the spread of the Coronavirus," he said.

ActionAid Tanzania has come together to show their support to protecting the lives of many people in Mafia because they are accountable for the community that they are working with.

The protective equipment will help them to detect Covid-19, identify people who may need medical care or isolation and prevent the spread of Covid-19 to other people.

So far the district has 8 wards, 23 registered villages and 136 suburbs that depend on fishing activities and agriculture.

Apart from that, ActionAid Tanzania has already trained Community Development Facilitators (CDF) from different villages to raise Covid-19 awareness in their communities.

Under the programme, CDF were trained on what is Covid-19, response and adaptive measures to take to prevent infections and if people infected with Covid-19 what measures should be taken to avoid the spread of coronavirus to others.

"We are glad because CDF have started taking initiatives to raise Covid-19 awareness in their communities. They are educating people on how to prevent the virus spread," he said.

According to him, the CDF will become an agent of change in their respective villages because it will educate community members about Covid-19 to save their lives and reduce spreads of Coronavirus disease.

"We have decided to train them because majority of Mafia residents are not aware about coronavirus disease and they don't have community radio stations where they can access information about coronavirus and the effect it has on their life.

By Guardian Reporter, Tarime

LOCAL councils in the country have been directed to embark on a special operation in surveying land plots and providing the owners thereof with title deeds.

The directive was given by the Deputy Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development Dr Angeline Mabula at different times in Mara Region when she met with council leaders and officials from the lands sector during her visit to inspect projects implemented by the National

Survey all land plots and issue owners with title deeds, Mabula tells councils

Housing Corporation (NHC) in the region.

Dr Mabula said it was important for the councils to embark on this operation that will enable the people to have title deeds for their lands which they can use for their development activities and earn the government

income from land rent.

She said in its 2020/21 budget there are projects funded by the World Bank and Exim-Korea Bank to survey every piece of land and councils have the responsibility to ensure every piece of land is surveyed and title deeds given to owners thereof.

She called upon district and urban countries to allocate budget for planning and surveying land areas and stressed the project should not merely end with surveying, but must incorporate the issuance of title deeds.

She said equipment for survey work are already in some regional land

offices and the councils should liaise with these offices to use them for survey work.

The deputy lands minister said in councils with few land experts, they can scrounge such experts from other regional land offices, and added that what is needed is for councils directors

to allocate funds for allowances for these experts.

Turning to the issue of land conflicts in various areas, Dr Mabula called upon local councils to work together with regional land offices recently established to resolve these conflicts in their areas.

Tarime District Commissioner Eng Mtemi Msafiri hailed the ministry for the steps it is taking in dealing with land conflicts in the country and asked the office of the Commissioner for Lands in Mara Region to take up his district's land conflicts for resolving.

PWAs pleads for govt support post Covid-19

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

A CROSS section of people with albinisms (PWA) have appealed to the government to financially support them survive in the post Covid-19, saying they were economically affected during the pandemic.

Addressing a press conference here, Michael Salali, the founder of a local non-governmental organisation, Foundation for Disabilities Hope (TDH) said most of the PWAs had borrowed money through their groups but it has been difficult to repay the loans due to Covid-19 effects.

"The government has done it good to lend money to different groups of people including PWAs but now most of the businesses or economic activities we ventured in stalled," he said, adding that the government should consider giving them a new repayment schedule.

He said it is only prudent enough for the government to extend repayment timetable to help those who are adversely affected by the pandemic pay back the money.

Speaking, ahead of the June 13, 2020 International Albinism Awareness Day, Salali noted that there is increasing fear among them since most of violence and deaths against them occur during election periods.

"I call upon the government to increase security for people with albinism especially during the electioneering period which is known to be a dangerous period for us," he said.

He also called on parents with children with albinism and the society at large to protect them against attacks and murder, saying, "People with albinism deserve to live without fear just like other members of the society".

On the international albinism awareness day, he noted that it is an opportunity to raise awareness of the human rights of persons with albinism.

Globally, member states of the United Nations are encouraged to continue

their efforts to protect and preserve the rights to life and to security of persons with albinism.

They are encouraged to safeguard their right, not to be subject to torture and ill-treatment, and to ensure access to adequate health care, employment, education and justice for persons with albinism.

On a different note, Salali appealed to the government to consider importing the sunscreen lotion suitable for albinism skin through the medical stores department (MSD) to make it more affordable and easily available to persons with albinism.

He argued that the lotion currently being imported by private sector players is quite expensive and many of those with albinism cannot afford, leading to increased deaths through skin cancer.

"It is our plea to the government to consider importing the lotion through MSD that can distribute it throughout the country at quite affordable prices and rescue PWAs dying of skin cancer," he noted.

While pleading with the government to change the modality, he also said there is need to continue with public education and awareness on albinism, noting that stigmatisation is still rife.

According to Salali, by 2012 census, there were 16,337 people with albinism in Tanzania whereby about 820 die annually due to skin cancer. However he said the statistics might be higher due to lack of database as others die unreported.

FDH director, Epiphania Kabunduguru appealed to the government and other stakeholders to join hands in the fight against skin cancer among persons with albinism.

"Together we can save our brothers and sisters from death caused by skin cancer," she said.

She observed that the sunscreen lotion is expensive, costing between 35,000/- up to 200,000/- which many people cannot afford.



Residents of Likombora village in Lindi District clear the site earmarked for the construction of a school latrine, as found earlier this week. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Govt to spend 200m/- on construction of four dispensaries in Mbozi District

By Francis Kajubi, Dodoma

THE government has allocated 200m/- for the 2020/21 financial year for the completion of four dispensaries in Mbozi District in Songwe Region as a way of bringing health services close to the public.

In a written response to a question by Mbozi legislator Pascal Haonga (Chadema), Deputy Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government

Mwita Waitara said the government will continue to allocate funds for the rehabilitation, construction and expansion of health facilities in Mbozi district as far as funds availability is concerned.

In his question the legislator wanted to know when the government will allocate funds for the construction of Isowezya, Mtunduru, Hasanga and Mlowo dispensaries in the District.

In his response the minister said: "During the 2017/18 financial year,

the government allocated 900 million/- to Mbozi district council for the renovation, construction and expansion of Itaka and Isanza health centres,"

He added that construction and expansion works have been completed and the health centres are now providing services adding that in the fiscal year 2019/20 the government allocated the Itaka health centre with 50 million/- for rehabilitation of the outpatient department (OPD) which is

in the final stages of construction.

In his principal question Haonga blamed that Mbozi constituency had only two health centres, the Isanza and Itaka centres hence offering unsatisfactory service attributed to lack of specialists and shortage of essential treatment facilities supply.

"Does the government not feel that it is the right time to build more centres and improve the existing ones?" questioned Haonga.



Tanzania Petroleum Development Corporation director general James Mataragio speaks at the inauguration of a Tanoil filling station at Segera in Handeni District yesterday. Left is Tanga regional commissioner Martine Shigella. Photo: Correspondent Hamida Kamchalla

By Guardian Correspondent, Morogoro

Mati-Ilonga plans to expand training, production capacity

THE Ministry of Agriculture Training Institute at Ilonga (Mati-Ilonga) continues to expand in the areas of production and farm crops processing training and is now engaged in improving its products to go in tandem with various market needs.

This was revealed recently by Mati-Ilonga Acting Principal Abdallah Gulana when speaking to reporters in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region.

"As of now our aim is to improve the production model to go in tandem with market needs. Our main stress is to start production by abiding to our researches on market needs," he said.

He said the institute with a capacity to receive 300 students still has many opportunities that are beneficial to positive changes in the industrial economy area and asked the government and other stakeholders

to give it a push - in regard to financial resources to enable it to plan and refurbish its ailing infrastructures and outdated equipment.

Gulana said as of now they are concentrating in the production of livestock and agricultural crops and eventually processing through its small factory with the labour force being provided by students by 50 percent.

Gulana who is an expert from the education department and advisory called upon various groups, institutions among the community to contribute in opportunities for short courses of three to seven days provided by the institute

that will assist in increasing benefits from modern agricultural training and processing of food crops and livestock.

Aside from congratulating the government in its various efforts to improve its training institutes, he called for the various challenges at the institute to be given special consideration.

Another challenge at the institute that was established 48 years ago by the late President Mwalimu Julius Nyerere include the acute shortage of staff and financial resources to enable it implement its activities.

Mati-Ilonga Vice Principal and Coordinator of Studies Felix Mrisho

said his dream for the Institute covering 237.8 hectares is to see it becoming a quality institute that provides training in the production and processing of agricultural products.

"We have already written a proposal to one education institution asking for financial assistance towards the improvement of the entire processing department and the establishment of a trade centre."

"The institute conducted assessment of its existing asset and decided among other things that it should increase its production capacity through its small factory to enable it send its products to the market," Gulana said.

Forum stresses need for 'elderly law' in Tanzania

By Correspondent James Kandoyo

THE Tanzania Older People's Forum (TOP) has appealed to the government to come up with elderly law as Zanzibar's government did to ensure its older people's wellbeing is attributed.

TOP's appeal has come following the exemplary bold action taken by Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein assented to the Elderly Affairs bill passed by the House of Representative in March this year into law.

TOP Secretary Livingstone Byekwaso said that once it was over it will enable provision of pension among older people in the mainland.

"We are happy to learn that Zanzibar's older people now have an act that protects their welfare and enhances their wellbeing," he said.

For her part, the older woman from the Zanzibar Association of Retirees and Older People (JUWAZA) Ghanima Othman commended the decision made saying it was good news for them.

"This is huge news to us older people here in the isles. This means that among many other things, we are entitled to pension. It is now our right. We are very grateful for many things that our government is doing for older people here in Zanzibar. We also wish the same to our friends in the mainland," she said.

Livingstone said while the Zanzibar government signed the older people bill into law, Tanzania mainland is still in the reviewing process of the National Ageing Policy of 2003 which if finalised will possibly pave way to have an Act.

"We are grateful to the many things the government has done for the older people but we need to be able to claim them as the policies are providing. We need the National Ageing Policy of 2003 reviewing to be finalised, social protection policy development to also be attained," he said.

"Older people experience challenges resulted by lack of reliable income, neglect and abuses. We need to be protected by law like what our fellow older people in Zanzibar are experiencing," he added.

As the nation heads to the general elections this year, Livingstone urged political parties to firmly include older people's agenda in their manifesto that will ensure inclusion of older people.

"We are also voters, I call upon inclusion of older people's affairs in the election manifestos. We all matter and we older people should never be overlooked," he noted.

Other things that the Elderly Affairs Act of Zanzibar addresses includes; the need to treat the elder person fairly and equitably, protect the elder person from any form of discrimination and violence, participate in the affairs of society and community life in any position appropriate to his interests and capabilities.

A family where such elder person lives shall among other responsibilities provide love, affection, food, shelter, and accommodation to the elder person.

“We are grateful to the many things the government has done for the older people but we need to be able to claim them as the policies are providing. We need the National Ageing Policy of 2003 reviewing to be finalised, social protection policy development to also be attained”

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Food safety level hinging on farm mechanisation, gradual awareness

ACTIVISTS around the world were on Sunday, June 7 marking the World Food Safety Day, which an online write up says it is a day that reminds people of the need to have safer and healthy food to have a disease-free life. This day is also an opportunity to promote awareness about how to keep our food supply safe, a theme that is relevant both at household level and at the level of society. Food safety is a problem that has pernicious effects in much of society, as the food we take is healthy more by accident than by design, in the sense of lack of assurance about environmental precautions, technically as sanitary issues.

The reason sanitary surroundings of the food we take remain poor and in many cases cause diseases that can even be life threatening like the spasmodic cholera epidemics that come up with less frequency over the past few decades. At the time of independence the cholera burden started to shift from Asia to Africa, as the growth trajectory was sharper and more effective in Asia than Africa. At present most of the world burden for food safety diseases is likely to be borne by Africa, as our food storage, preparation or delivery methods to the table are still questionable, with variations in threats from grains, vegetables, fruits, meat.

Surprisingly one effect of the coronavirus pandemic is to cultivate habits of washing hands with soap at regular intervals. It is a habit that many people have difficulties in cultivating even when taking their meals, satisfied with washing hands or just one hand, or strictly speaking, fingers of one hand, to take a meal, which obviously invites trouble. These habits are not

likely to linger on for long as many of us are now taking to brushing aside the coronavirus threat, so 'business as usual' will continue with unsafe food taking environments and lack of a checking mechanism at the social or local government level about this.

For one thing, it can't be said that those who prepare and deliver food to customers - or at homesteads - in rather unsafe environments are totally unaware that this isn't the best way to do things. All safety improvements have their costing element, in which case the trade off relates to market mechanisms, if the customers will accept what is delivered. Usually each environment of food preparation and delivery, or the taking of fruits and vegetables, meat or its accessories, had its ground rules fixed by competition and the price mechanism, so clean supermarket fruits will cost higher.

A lot in this situation is gradually changing with farm sector improvement, though crying gaps can be seen in that direction as well, for instance in efforts to eradicate aflatoxins from grains like maize, groundnuts and others. Less evident as to what is to be done is to tame the growth of microbial organisms in vegetables, with quite a number of them consumed raw and often causing mild diseases for that reason. Some fruits for instance avocado, when it is rough on the surface and marketed directly from the farm without any prior mechanized washing as with supermarket supplies, is wash resistant Typhoid can result as washing wasn't thorough enough, a situation sorted out with gradual farm mechanization and processing of most marketed vegetables and fruits.

Life with Covid-19 risk will be less equitable and more inhospitable

ACTIVISTS and commentators over the past two months at most, in the pages of this newspaper, given detailed scenarios of what economic life ought to be like in the aftermath of 'lockdown' in most countries around the world. Global economic prospects have sharply contracted in the face of drastic cuts in demand and disruption of industrial supply chains, which is being corrected just on the margins, as life remains in relative doldrums of activity as yet. Chances that economic activity will return to normal are limited, as major economies are having trouble shrugging off the pandemic; infections rise with opening.

What many activists have been underlining is that economies in Africa and beyond should not come back to full activity or relatively unhinged production and distribution on the same terms as before. Many have insisted that countries ought to take up 'green reopening,' and sorting out bottlenecks of marginalization of substantial portions of the population which have been worsened by the Covid-19 pandemic. All that concern is valid and urgent but there are limited options for governments to work around those matters.

The most important avenue for governments to sort out painful situations in economic life is to use what is often known as an 'economic surplus' to direct it where it is needed most. That is a process known as resource allocation, but the key is that the resources have to be extracted from somewhere, normally by means of taxation. What changes in a Covid-19 situation is that it isn't an atmosphere where people are basking in the sun and a portion of society has been forgotten so we are trying to take

account of it, say.

Covid-19 policy environment is a situation where practically all sectors are demanding 'something' from the government, ranging from pumping oxygen into tourism companies and hotel chains, to forgiving or vastly rescheduling payments of loans to small and medium firms, cutting taxes on medical imports, etc. There is also a breadth of job losses that is painfully taking its toll in society by disconnecting education from job markets, not trying to fit in as was the case earlier. Getting a job is now luck, not qualification.

As activists have been talking in general terms about a 'green reopening' or one that is focused on urgent elimination of Covid-19 based marginalization of considerable portions of society, it is hard to say what measures they actually expect governments can take. Routine economic wisdom is already being seen in the set of changes in macroeconomic levers in the financial sector, like borrowing rates from the central bank and bank deposit levels so as to enable commercial bank to lend more to clients. Still this can't in good measure solve the problem as it is the demand that has shrunk, and this in policy terms has no cure.

So the reality is that the government will not be in a position to rectify vast drawbacks in economic activity that come with the threat of Covid-19 outbreaks or continuation in most countries, as the virus is like a sea wave that comes and goes. It means that a more humane global economy has diminished chances compared to the past, as taxable surpluses to help companies, households and population sectors to cope are less available or drying out as compared to the past. There is greater competition, less cushion.



By Special Correspondent

OCEANS cover 70 per cent of the Earth's surface. But, because many of us spend most of our lives on land, the 362 million square kilometres of blue out there aren't always top of mind.

While vast, oceans are not empty. They are teeming with life and connected to society through history and culture, shipping and economic activity, geopolitics and recreation.

But oceans - along with coastal people and marine species - are vulnerable, and good ocean governance is critical to protect these expanses from pollution, overfishing and climate change, to name just some of the threats.

The laws, institutions and regulations in place for the oceans are a multi-layered patchwork and always a work in progress.

Some characterize oceans as the "common heritage of humankind." As such, the United Nations plays a critical role in ocean governance, and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is a key international agreement. The agreement grants coastal and island states authority over swaths of ocean extending 200 nautical miles (360 kilometres) from the shore. These are called exclusive economic zones (EEZ).

EEZs are domestic spaces. Countries enshrine law and delegate authority to state agencies that lead monitoring, management and enforcement in these

How global ocean treaty stands to protect biodiversity in the high seas

zones.

Indigenous peoples also assert jurisdictional authority and coastal peoples hold critical insight about coastal and marine ecosystems. Governance is improved when state agencies share power and collaborate.

For example, during the Newfoundland cod collapse, inshore fishermen had local ecological knowledge about changing cod stock dynamics that might have helped avoid the disaster.

A vast portion of the ocean lies beyond EEZs: 64 per cent by area and 95 per cent by volume. These regions are often referred to as the high seas. The high seas are important for international trade, fishing fleets, undersea telecommunications cables and are of commercial interest to mining companies. The high seas also host a wide array of ecosystems and species. Many of these are understudied or altogether unrecorded.

UN agreements identify high seas using a technical term "areas beyond national jurisdiction" that refers to the water column. The sea floor is identified separately and called "the area." UNCLOS and other pieces of international law regulate activity in these spaces and are responsible for ensuring that no single country or company dominates or benefits

unfairly.

Other multilateral, sector-based arrangements manage particularly complex resources. For example, regional fisheries management organizations bring nation states together to collaborate on monitoring and managing fish stocks, like tuna, that have large ranges and cross multiple borders and boundaries.

The biodiversity governance gap

Currently, international law does not meaningfully address biodiversity monitoring and conservation in the high seas. This "biodiversity governance gap" has been of concern for the past two decades.

Without a binding mechanism under international law, countries are not obligated to co-operate on developing and implementing conservation measures in the high seas. In addition, monitoring the impacts of various economic activities, such as fishing and mining, on biodiversity is piecemeal and inadequate. Marine species or even entire ecosystems could be lost before we have had a chance to identify and understand them.

On Dec. 24, 2017, the UN General Assembly voted to convene a multi-year process to develop a treaty on "the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction."

Driving the future of transport through technology, innovation

By Mary Nnah

THE future of aviation, ports, rail and road cannot be projected without fusion of technology as a major driver to ensure the success of these sectors.

The West African transport corridor is the least integrated in the world. More than ever before, there is need for a modern and multimodal transport network to efficiently connect hubs of economic activity and areas of potential growth along its alignment.

Record has it that the African continent has the highest transport costs in the world, accounting for above 20 per cent of the total imported price of goods within landlocked countries. This inefficient and expensive transportation restricts business activities, global competitiveness and intra-regional trade.

With these in mind, there is therefore a need for a new transportation and technology summit (focusing on aviation, ports, rail and road) to help point direction to the future.

The 2020 West Africa TransFuture and Tech Summit (WA-tts), scheduled for September 1-3, 2020 at the Eko Convention Centre, Eko Hotels and Suites, Ademola Adetokunbo,

Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria will contribute to the breakthrough of future transportation technology like e-mobility, robotics, and artificial intelligence etc. in West Africa.

It promises to serve as a platform to address and contribute to the need for integrated and ambitious actions across West Africa, to further advance the deployment of e-mobility through the coordination and joint financing of research, development, innovation and implementation activities.

The summit boasts of many firsts in its maiden launch event; in that it has the first curated port tour as well as several technology workshops organised by the major global technology giants as part of the programme.

So far, institutional and private sector partnership and support for the summit has been unprecedented; from international organisations like the EU to the federal ministry of transportation, Lekki Port, Nigerian Export Promotion Council and the largest transport supply chain group in Estonia (Prolog) are already partners of the summit, with many more coming on board in the months to come.

Graham Oluosanmi Lawal, Ceo, WA-tts Co stated that the West Africa TransFuture and Technology Summit

is the first time the two vertical sectors

of transportation and technology are coming together to explore and look at how new and future technologies are driving the mobility revolution and impacting the global transportation landscape thereby helping solve the challenges we face as a region.

"The event is going to be opened by the ECOWAS president and will have all the ministers of transportation and tech sectors from 16 West African countries together with solution and service providers, stakeholders, regulators as well as transport and tech practitioners," Lawal stated.

He admitted that due to the dearth of summits/conferences that are private-sector led that bring together ministerial heads and the various arms and agencies of government in the ECOWAS sub-region in collaborative exchanges with solution and service providers, investors and other stakeholders to shape policy directions that proffer solutions to the myriad of challenges inherent in the regional transportation sector; there is now a real and present opportunity for a new summit to be born as a son of necessity to meet and address the needs, opportunities and challenges that abound within the regional

sessions have taken place, while the fourth and final one, scheduled for March 2020, was postponed due to the coronavirus pandemic. Some progress has been made. Notably, the draft treaty addresses four key areas: marine genetic resources; area-based management tools, including marine protected areas; environmental impact assessments and capacity building and the transfer of marine technology.

Yet, many disagreements remain.

For example, countries diverge on the extent to which governance should prioritize the principle of oceans as the "common heritage of humankind." Very pragmatic questions underlie this tension: should marine genetic sequences be commercialized? If so, how would this work and will it be possible to agree on a way to share benefits fairly? These are critical and how they are addressed will determine if persistent inequities between the Global North and Global South are lessened or exacerbated.

Another challenge relates to marine protected areas (MPAs), especially how they are defined and implemented. What levels of protection are needed for an area to count as an MPA? How much should the treaty predetermine processes used to establish new MPAs and how will MPA rules be enforced?

transportation sector.

West Africa TransFuture & Technology is a new summit and first of its kind that explores the future of Transportation and Technology in road, rail, maritime and aviation transportation as catalysts to drive the rapid development and growth of individual states within the ECOWAS union and the region as a whole.

"The future of Transportation in West Africa must be driven by technology and innovation; from smart ports connected through intelligent integrated rail systems which link high density road networks that connect various airport runways; the Summit will showcase future technologies at the heart of the mobility revolution that will help transform transportation in West Africa.

"This summit will provide a convergence of multi-level regional government participation and public and private sector representation, with a view to sharing innovative ideas and nuanced approaches to solving the challenges we face as a regional entity by the utilization of technology in this mobility evolution that is impacting the way we move people and goods from one point to the other within the ECOWAS sub-region," Lawal explained.

The Sahel – ‘in every sense of the word a crisis’

UNITED NATIONS

THE combination of rife insecurity, food insecurity and more than 7.5 million people in need of humanitarian assistance has left the Sahel a region in crisis, with the global coronavirus pandemic expected to exacerbate the situation.

In a briefing released today, Jun. 10, Amnesty International painted a picture of rife insecurity in the Sahel, with a civilian population “trapped between attacks by armed groups and ongoing military operations”.

The briefing, titled “They Executed Some and Brought the Rest with Them: Civilian Lives at risk in the Sahel”, details the grave reality in the region, especially across Mali, Niger, and Burkina Faso, including “at least 57 cases of extrajudicial executions or unlawful killings, and at least 142 cases of enforced disappearances” that have allegedly been committed by soldiers between February and April.

The organisation stated that in Mali and Burkina Faso the deliberate killing of unarmed citizens by security forces could be counted as war crimes.

- The Western Sahel has been in the grip of a security crisis since 2012, when Tuareg rebels in Mali grouped together in an attempt to administer a new northern state called Azawad.

- The attempt failed, after intervention from French troops in 2013. However, local groups linked to al-Qaeda and the Islamic State continue to spread violence across the region.

- A multinational military force from the G5 Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania and Niger has attempted to control the violence since 2017.

- France has retained a military presence in the region.

A range of concerns

The briefing comes on the back of a recent United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) high-level talk about the region where Ramesh Rajasingham, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs at the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), said the current situation in the Sahel region was “in every sense of the word a crisis”.

Rajasingham noted that between 2019 and now, the region experienced an exponential rise

in its need for humanitarian assistance: with 7.5 million people in Burkina Faso, Niger and Mali requiring assistance – up from 6.1 million just a year ago.

He added that issues such as food insecurity and displacement of people were adding to this need, and that 5.5 million out of 12 million people in the larger Sahel are “just a step away” from “emergency levels of food insecurity”.

“These are the highest levels of food insecurity we have witnessed in this region in a decade,” he said. “The socio-economic fallout from COVID-19 is likely to double these numbers.”

According to Ousmane Diallo, a Sahel researcher at Amnesty International, the COVID-19 pandemic “is not the defining feature in the region due to its emergence but it constitutes another challenge that different governments must contend with”.

“Some of the measures that were taken such as restrictions to freedom of assembly or to the continuation of the lockdown measures and curfew generated a lot of tensions – political, economic, but also on human rights issues,” Diallo told IPS.

“Some of those actors who were critical of how the government handled the pandemic, especially some of the emergency funds that were set up in order to meet the socio-economic effect of the pandemic, were sometimes arrested or even charged with causing public disorder,” he said.

Achim Steiner, Administrator, U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) and Vice Chair of U.N. Sustainable Development Group said: “Before the onset of COVID-19, the central Sahel region was trapped by protracted conflict, violent extremism, competition over accessible lands and water and the [dangers of] climate change with temperatures rising at one and a half times faster than the global average.”

According to the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, violent activity involving militant Islamist groups in the Sahel has doubled every year since 2015.

The academic institution noted that since 2013, Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger have doubled their military budgets, amounting to a total of some \$600 million.

“The governments of Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger have mobilised their security structures in an effort to respond to the rise in militant Islamist



The Western Sahel has been in the grip of a security crisis since 2012, when Tuareg rebels in Mali grouped together in an attempt to administer a new northern state called Azawad. File photo

group violence,” the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies said.

Not the first human rights violations

But Diallo told IPS that this is not the first time Amnesty International has documented human rights violations committed by security forces, and that international actors must be swift in taking action.

“There’s been announcements about investigations that [have] never been conclusive or led to sanctions,” he said.

One such incident was the Apr. 9 arrest and execution of civilians in Burkina Faso’s Soum province when soldiers arrived in the town of Djibo in a long convoy of pick-ups and motorbikes.

“They arrested several youths who were around a well, watering animals,” an eye witness is reported by Amnesty International as saying.

Though the soldiers later released a number of the youths, including those under-age, three individuals had been re-

tained in custody.

“Hours later, we heard gunfire but dared not go and inquire until the military had left. I lost a paternal cousin and two maternal uncles that day,” the eye witness said.

The arrests had led to the execution of 31 residents by the GFAT (Groupe ment des forces anti-terroristes).

While on Apr. 20 the Burkinabè government acknowledge these extrajudicial killings, stating that the Direction de la Justice Militaire had been mandated to investigate it, there have been no further updates on the investigations.

Better solutions

Meanwhile, Rajasingham from OCHR

shared possible solutions for addressing the current crisis.

“Sustained development investment is key to strengthening basic services: food security and nutrition displacement demand our full attention support,” he said, adding that women and children must be kept as the highest priority in any approach.

Cessouma Minata Samate, Commissioner for Political Affairs at the African Union Commission highlighted the need for cooperation from all levels of society.

“We need to [be] including local communities,” she said, adding that the approach should be inclusive.

Agencies

Improving girls MHM vital for education performance

By Correspondent Daniel Semberya

FINDINGS have shown that every month millions of women and girls around the world face the challenge of managing their menstrual period without clean, convenient, comfortable sanitary products.

In Tanzania, estimates suggest 85 per cent of girls resort to unhygienic solutions, most commonly strips of cloth, which are difficult to keep clean and more likely to spread fungi and infection, or leak blood onto the user’s clothes.

The potential humiliation that results, plus inadequate water and sanitation facilities in schools, results in thousands of schoolgirls missing school due to menstruation.

Most girls both in rural and urban primary schools who have reached puberty do not use appropriate sanitary wear during their monthly menstrual.

... Poor menstrual hygiene management (MHM) could contribute to poor performance and completion rates among girl pupils and expose them to health risks.

The Tanzanian Gender Networking Programme (TGNP), a leading gender Civil Society Organisation, has been tirelessly campaigning to further galvanise support for MHM with parliamentarians, policy makers and other players.

Speaking over the weekend in Dar es Salaam on the importance of allocating resources to enable safe MHM for girls during TGNP Mtandao virtual debate, Gender Budget Analyst from TGNP Mtandao, Deogratius Temba said that his organisation was working tirelessly to ensure the MHM issues become a policy and streamlined in the budget guidelines and financial laws so as to become sustainable.

Temba suggested that the district councils through their education or social development departments could allocate funds for MHM.

He commended Kisarawe, Kishapu, and Mbeya district councils for allocating and having the fund which is well managed under their social development departments.

Temba stressed the importance of using the local industries to produce and ensure the availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of sanitary pads



Poor menstrual hygiene management (MHM) could contribute to poor performance and completion rates among girl pupils. File photo.

to meet the local demand.

He further suggested that the national budget supposed to clearly indicate the amount of money that has been allocated through the ministry of education in the form of capitation grant so as to improve the environment and needs of safe MHM.

“District councils should continue allocating funds that would enable them buy sanitary pads for girls in their respective areas.”

Temba has called upon the government to put an indicative price for sanitary pads to help a poor rural woman. “Men are equally responsible when it comes to women’s access to safe and affordable menstrual services,” he said.

For her part, Public Service provider in the Ministry of Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Rabia Yusuf Esmail said that a policy for safe menstrual hygiene was in the final stage, and once it is released and approved it will be streamlined in the primary school wash, starting from the ward level as it was one of the crucial requirements.

However, she said that of recent there have been many improvements in many schools. “There are many sanitary pads, enough flowing water in each room, where girls can secretly perform her privacy without disturbance,” she said.

Gender Activist at the grassroot level, from

Ukenyenge Ward, Kishapu District in Shinyanga Region, Fredinan Said has called upon all stakeholders to join forces to raise a unified voice on menstruation to ensure girls were in good environment.

“Let us change our mindset and take responsibility and make sure girls don’t miss their classes because of menstrual hygiene,” she noted.

Suzan Lyimo (MP) suggested that the capitation grant should be also used to buy sanitary pads for girls.

“They should prepare a policy, which will later be enacted into a law that will particularly target the vulnerable girls coming from poor families.”

Dr Immaculate Sware (MP) has urged stakeholders and other players to ensure all matters concerning MHM are implemented.

She said: “when you abuse menstruation, you abuse a woman’s health who has a role of productivity and shape society. It is a necessary thing that should be seen with a broader eye.”

An independent consultant on gender and climate change, Dr Lucy Sendi, has urged all stakeholders involving hygiene practitioners, boys and girls, humanitarian workers, government officials and parliamentarians to ensure the education on safe menstrual hygiene is taught at all levels, from family level to the central government.

“Education at home is a crucial part of MHM improvement and contributes to a shift in societal behaviours,” she stressed.

She further emphasised that everyone, including government officials, sanitary pads suppliers and family members especially men, should be involved in actions to break the silence on menstrual hygiene management (MHM).

“Let us break the silence and talk about safe menstrual hygiene to all levels by involving men in this agenda so that they can push and buy sanitary pads for their girls,” she noted.

TGNP’s Activism and Movement Building Manager, Grace Kisetu said that collaboration was key to ensuring that menstruation is considered normal and managed with dignity.

Wash Advisor-sanitation and water action, Wilhelmina Malima has urged TGNP to establish more knowledge centres as they have been pivotal in offering different education awareness on different issues such as MHM, social, cultural, economic and political.

According to Malima menstruation remains a secretive subject where abuse, fear and lack of knowledge contribute to girls’ school absence and cause frustration.

Janeth John from Binti Makini Organisation, said that lack of menstrual and reproductive health education also resulted in the perpetuation of dangerous myths and taboos.

She has urged policy makers and decision makers to take the importance of MHM on a serious note and ensure it is implemented in schools.

Speaking last year during menstrual hygiene day Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children, Ummu Mwalimu, promised to work jointly with other players to ensure the MHM goals for girls are achieved.

“Our aim is to find solutions and address menstrual hygiene challenges that face women and girls in our country in getting access to safe water, and good MHM services including improved toilets in schools, availability of special room for girls for MH issues, special places for hand washing as well as menstrual product tools. Menstruation is unavoidable, it is natural,” she said.

Everyone agrees that George Floyd's killing isn't up for debate, but what happens next is

By Meghan Daum

IN the immediate aftermath of George Floyd's murder on May 25 there was, for one brief and stinging moment, a feeling in the air that had been achingly absent for months: a feeling of consensus.

Anyone who watched the video of ex-Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin kneeling on Floyd's neck for close to nine minutes could see that the events shown on the video were not up for interpretation.

Even before Chauvin was charged in Floyd's death, it was clear what had happened. This was not an accident or an unintended consequence of authorised force. Chauvin had murdered Floyd in a bloodless act of cold blood.

So unequivocal were these events that it wasn't just anti-racism activists and others on the left who were appalled, but also some of the farthest right-leaning politicians and pundits.

Fox News' Jeanine Pirro, known for championing US President Donald Trump, as well as being an all-around criminal justice hardliner, said on May 29 that there were "clear facts" that Chauvin should be charged with murder.

Laura Ingraham, arguably the most noxiously Trump-aggrandising Fox News personality, called Floyd's death "outrageous", as well as "infuriating and heartbreaking" - though she still managed to shoehorn in praise for the president's response.

Even Rush Limbaugh, despite later arguing rather ridiculously against the existence of white privilege - he's a flat-earther on that score - said that Chauvin should be charged with murder.

"Look, you people in law enforcement know I'm at the top of the list of people who support you and understand how hard your jobs are," he said on his May 28 broadcast, adding: "I still - given all of that, do not... I cannot find a way to explain that. I can't find a way to justify it. I don't care what the guy did."

Within a few days, many parts of the US had plunged into chaos. In Minneapolis especially, but also in cities like New York and Los Angeles, incidents of rioting and property destruction threatened to

overshadow lawful protesting, especially on the news - with the massive overreaction from police at times exacerbating the impression of widespread civil disorder.

Several members of law enforcement have been badly injured or killed, including a retired St. Louis police captain turned small-town police chief who was shot to death on June 2 while trying to protect a pawnshop from looters.

At the same time, we've also been barraged with incidents of police acting with jaw-dropping brutality, including using pepper spray and Tasers against protesters, dragging people from their cars, and driving police vehicles into crowds.

June 4 saw two officers in Buffalo, New York, shoving a 75-year-old protester, who subsequently fell backwards, hit his head on the sidewalk, and lay there bleeding and motionless as police passed him by.

The day before, of course, police fired tear gas and flash grenades into crowds of peaceful protesters in Washington, DC, so the president could pose despotically for an empty photo op in front of a church.

Much as words like "anarchy" and "fascism" tend to get thrown around too loosely these days, I'd venture to say that these particular days, roughly the days between May 30 and June 4, more than warranted them.

Everyone still appears to agree that Chauvin murdered Floyd, and there's growing support for at least a handful of police reforms. But lots of people now are also fighting about how best to go about fighting for justice.

The questions and points of contention are far-ranging and, in some cases, strangely unanswerable. Do "peaceful" protests include destruction of property? Does looting, in and of itself, constitute violence? Who exactly were those violent white protesters?

To what extent were organised criminals taking advantage of the police being distracted by the protests? And how would the call to "defund the police" - really a call to reassign their non-crime-fighting duties to other city agencies - work in practice?

If that sort of muddy battleground feels familiar by now, it's because we've been occupying similar terrain for the



past several months when it comes to the coronavirus pandemic.

Though you would have to be a deeply committed conspiracy theorist to believe that the virus doesn't exist at all, public opinion as to how to deal with it is not so much divided but utterly torn asunder.

Thanks to a combination of chaotic messaging from government leadership, around-the-clock panic mongering from the news media and a steady mess of social media commentary (including from the highest government leader himself), it often seems like we understand less about the virus every day.

It lives on surfaces or it doesn't? The antibody tests work or they don't? The states that have reopened are seeing infection spikes or they're not? Outdoor transmission is extremely unlikely or it's not?

Hydroxychloroquine is Trump-backed quackery or a potentially useful therapy? The Wuhan lab theory is the domain of tinfoil-hatted xenophobes or a legitimate hypothesis worthy of examination? On and on it goes.

The uncertainty around how to respond to Covid-19 made it that much easier to organise ourselves into warring factions based on an ever-shifting balance of moral and ethical considerations.

It is wrong to order takeout food because it puts delivery and other restaurant workers

at risk? Or it is helpful because it keeps local businesses alive for another day?

Is it okay to send children to summer camp in locations where phase two or three reopenings are under way? Or is even that too risky? Can I go maskless while I'm jogging as long as I don't get too close to anyone?

Does the fact that I'm asking any of these questions in the first place mean that I'm a privileged idiot who should just shut up and keep quiet until this whole thing is over?

The answers to all of the above are yes, yes, yes, yes, yes, and yes. Also no, no, no, no, no, and no. You get the idea. Which is that no one has any idea...

George Floyd's death, however, isn't an idea. It's a hard fact captured on video about as clearly as anything can be captured - without room for hedging or creative extrapolation, though no doubt some team of defence lawyers will try.

It may, in fact, be one of the few videos in the history of the internet to have been viewed millions of times and yet prompt almost no debate as to what's actually being depicted.

That's why, for at least a day or so late last month, the utter moral clarity around Floyd's death felt almost startling. After months of infighting about the correct response to Covid-19, here was something we could all agree on: this death was a horrific crime that should be punishable under the full extent of

the law.

And given how many of us were delirious from arguing with our Facebook friends over the validity of epidemiological models we didn't understand in the first place - hell, most of us didn't know what an epidemiological model was until mid-March - his sudden consensus suggested that there might still be such a thing out there as incontrovertible reality.

The responses to the protests in recent days - and the warring opinions about and analyses of them - have extinguished, or at least mostly obviated, that moment of consensus. National agreement about what happened quickly gave way to disagreement about what ought to happen next.

To hear the president threaten to use the Insurrection Act to order military force against the public, to see Senator Tom Cotton defend this idea in the New York Times, and then watch as that newspaper had an internal meltdown over the fact that this opinion was expressed in its venerable pages, is to wish we could go back to the good old days of constant low-grade existential despair and carbohydrate overload from all that sourdough bread.

Inspiring as it was to see footage of massive peaceful protests all over the country this past weekend, they're likely to remain overshadowed for a large fraction of the country by the scenes of destruction that came before.

Meanwhile, let's not ignore the cognitive whiplash that can come from watching otherwise-intelligent and surely well-intended people shame lockdown skeptics as "grandma killers" one day and, the next day, glorify massive street gatherings on the grounds that police brutality is as deadly a virus as Covid-19.

We can all see what happened to George Floyd, but we still can't see the shadings of the forest for our own righteous trees.

And yet, this case already seems different from so many others. Chauvin was initially charged with third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter, but soon those charges were upgraded to second-degree murder and the three ex-officers who stood by were charged with aiding and abetting.

The same day, Trump's former defence secretary, James Mattis, issued a statement criticising the president's use of military force against protesters.

Calling the protesters' demands for equal justice under the law "rightful", as well as "wholesome and unifying", Mattis said: "Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people - does not even pretend to try. Instead, he tries to divide us."

He added: "We are witnessing the consequences of three years of this deliberate effort. We are witnessing the consequences of three years without mature leadership."

Those are extraordinary remarks from a former White House official, even one who, like Mattis, had known differences with the president. The current defence secretary, Mark Esper, has also distanced himself from his boss, saying he does not support using military troops to control crowds on the street.

Meanwhile, the nation's streets grew calmer as the week progressed, and the protests swelled in size and scope, triggering solidarity protests around the globe.

Another surge of coronavirus infections, ignited by all the mass gatherings, may well lie in wait, but there's always the hope that the warm weather will enable some sort of reprieve.

The summer is just getting started, but it's difficult to think about anything other than all the anger and despair - be it related to the pandemic, the grotesque presidency, or a social and political infrastructure that seems to perpetuate racism and injustice at every grinding turn.

And though we'll probably never reach consensus on exactly how to solve these problems - some epidemiological, some electoral, some systemic - at least we can agree that it's well past time for a lot of things to be over.

Meaghan Daum, author of several books, is a columnist with GEN - itself a Medium publication about politics, power, and culture.

Getting the coronavirus twice is highly unlikely - in the short term

By Markham Heid

SINCE the early days of Covid-19, the disease caused by the new coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2, South Korea's thorough testing and monitoring practices have been the envy of public health agencies around the world. Much of what science now knows about the novel coronavirus is based on that country's data.

Back in April, that data pointed to a frightening phenomenon: some people who had recovered from Covid-19 seemed to be experiencing a second infection. According to reporting from NPR, South Korean public health officials had identified 163 people who tested positive for the virus following hospital discharge.

Similar reports have since cropped up in China. These reports have led to speculation that people could be reinfected with the coronavirus or that it could somehow "reactivate" in a person's body.

While doctors can't yet eliminate either possibility, follow-up research suggests that a dangerous relapse or reinfection is unlikely - at least in the short term.

A closer look

Two weeks ago, the Korean Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (KCDC) - South Korea's version of the CDC - published an analysis of people

who tested positive for the virus a second time, which the agency referred to as "re-positive" cases. That analysis found no evidence that these people were contagious, meaning that they did not seem to be experiencing a second SARS-CoV-2 infection.

This finding is consistent with data from the United States and elsewhere, which so far has not turned up evidence that a person recently infected with the coronavirus can be infected a second time.

"As far as I know, there are no confirmed cases of anyone getting sick, then better, then sick again with a confirmed live virus," says Lee Riley, MD, a professor and chair of the Division of Infectious Disease and Vaccinology at the UC Berkeley School of Public Health.

So, what explains those "re-positive" results from April? Riley says testing imprecision is the likeliest explanation.

"The test is not designed to pick up the live virus. It's really designed to detect the presence of nucleic acids," he explains. These nucleic acids - which are snippets of the virus's genetic information - may persist in a person's body even when the virus itself is no longer alive and able to infect others. In other words, the "re-positive" test results were actually false positives.

While in some ways reassuring, the KCDC's analysis also found that nearly half of the people who tested positive a



second time reported symptoms such as a cough or sore throat. Many viruses - including HIV, herpes, and chicken pox - can lie dormant for years before reemerging. And so some have worried that a similar re-emergence may be happening among some people who have recovered from Covid-19, albeit on an abbreviated timescale.

Riley says this is also unlikely. He says the virus can cause symptoms that last for many weeks, and these symptoms may ebb and flow.

He says that's especially true among older or immunocompromised people, adding: "So there may be a period where an individual starts feeling better, and then a couple days go by and they get sick again."

But once a person has fully recovered from the

virus, Riley says there's no evidence that it could lie dormant and then reactivate at some later date, à la chicken pox. "None of the coronaviruses have been known to do this," he notes.

The long-term risk of reinfection

Last month, a team of Dutch researchers published the results of a study that examined the four types of coronavirus that have circulated among humans for decades and that tend to cause cold-like symptoms.

The study is small - it includes just ten people - and has not yet been peer-reviewed. But it concludes that if SARS-CoV-2 acts like its cousins, any immunity that people develop following an infection could be "alarmingly short". Within six months

to a year, the study authors estimate, SARS-CoV-2 reinfections may be possible.

"Experience suggests that people who have been infected and have recovered will be protected for some period and won't be able to transmit virus to others, but there are no guarantees," says Stephen Morse, PhD, a professor of epidemiology at the Columbia University Medical Center.

He mentions research efforts like the Dutch study that have examined how the other coronaviruses behave, saying this speculative evidence suggests that even if people are reinfected with the coronavirus, the second infection will probably be milder or asymptomatic and less transmissible to others.

"We'll have to wait and see what happens. Fingers crossed," he adds.

If some of these estimates prove accurate - that is, if people are susceptible to reinfection as soon as six months or a year after initial infection - then the vaccine can't come soon enough.

Mark Cameron, PhD, is an associate professor at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine in Cleveland. Cameron studies disease biomarkers using genomic and bioinformatic techniques.

"People who have had Covid-19 almost certainly will be encouraged to have the vaccine as well, which would boost their immunity," he says, adding: "And it may be that we need a booster shot every five or ten years while Covid-19 is still in circulation, similar to the way we get a tetanus shot every ten years."

Nothing is certain when it comes to this virus. But there's a good chance human beings will be living with it for years to come.

A piece from Elemental, a new Medium publication about health and wellness. Markham Heid is a health and science writer.

Forest communities keep on seeing decent revenue from conservation despite Covid-19 pandemic crisis

By Guardian Reporter

EVEN when the world struggles to battle the Covid-19 pandemic, continued efforts by forest communities in conserving natural woodlands have yielded positive results after the villagers received 210,000,000/- in revenues this month.

Carbon Tanzania, a forest conservation enterprise has paid the monies which were derived from the sale of carbon credits to across 16 villages within the forest communities in three areas of Tanzania.

According to a statement from Carbon Tanzania, benefitted communities includes villages from Hadza hunter-gatherers of the Yaeda Valley, Makame wildlife management area and Ntakata mountains in western Tanzania.

Carbon Tanzania, one of Africa's leading carbon project developers have injected the money to the communities at a time when the global pandemic caused by the outbreak of Coronavirus has made a big impact on many economic activities that usually provide livelihoods for Tanzanians.

The tourism industry has come to a halt, while the export of commodities, food and other goods has become difficult due to border restrictions.

The Hadza hunter-gatherers of the Yaeda Valley, in partnership with the village governments of Domanga, Mongo wa Mono and Yaeda Chini have been working with Carbon Tanzania for 10 years to protect their traditional

homelands.

The villages have received 28m/- from carbon credits sold over the previous six months.

In recent years the revenues were used to paid village game scouts to patrol and protect the legally gazetted forest areas, to provide health care cover at the Haydom Lutheran hospital, and construction of a rural police post in Yaeda Chini.

The Makame wildlife management area which involves five villages in Kite-to district has received 62m/-. The villagers have set aside large areas of natural savannah to support the traditional lifestyle of the pastoralist Masai people of the area and to offer trophy hunting to commercial tourism companies.

"With the lack of tourism visits due to the pandemic outbreak, the generation of revenues from their forest conservation project with Carbon Tanzania has come at a critical time. After 3 years of planning and initial activities, the WMA has just received its first carbon revenues which will be invested in on-going protection work and social development needs such as education and health," the statement reads.

In the remote Ntakata mountains in western Tanzania, eight villages that have been working with Carbon Tanzania have received 65m/- sales of carbon credits from their project in the past six months.

The villagers are benefiting from the monitoring and reporting of their efforts to protect their legally designated



Village Land Forest Reserves (VLFRs). They received their first payments in December 2019, and thanks to continuing interest from companies in the international carbon market to compensate communities that are committed to protecting natural forests.

The three carbon projects all rely on forest owning communities, with their village and district governments, taking responsibility for their own natural resource management.

This responsibility allows them to demonstrate effective and enduring

forest management which means that Carbon Tanzania can certify the projects to international standards, thereby generating carbon credits.

The projects are planned to run for 30 years initially, so the activities and revenues generated will facilitate long term financial sustainability and strong governance mechanisms to develop in the communities, supporting local economies, livelihoods and environmental health.

While deforestation and land use change contributes approximately 20

percent of global carbon emissions, in Tanzania it contributes closer to 80 percent of the country's total emissions.

Shifting agriculture conducted by migrant farmers is the main driver of deforestation in the country, threatening the existence of forest communities and Tanzania's iconic wildlife.

Carbon offset programmes are about planting trees whereas Carbon Tanzania focuses on the benefits available by avoiding cutting down trees and avoiding tilling the soil.

The project is part of the global reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD) framework.

Carbon Tanzania is a social enterprise that has overturned conventional landscape conservation in East Africa with its innovative, business approach to protecting forests and wildlife.

It empowers communities and local governments to earn money from their forest by generating certified forest carbon offsets which are sold on the voluntary carbon market.

New approach to reduce spread of mosquito-borne diseases

By Rob Jordan

IN the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, another source of deadly and increasingly frequent disease outbreaks goes largely unnoticed by much of the world. Stanford researchers working in rural Kenya have identified the most productive breeding habitats for certain mosquitoes – spreaders of untreatable viruses that sicken millions every year – and revealed related community perspectives that could inform a solution. Their findings, published recently in PLOS Neglected Tropical Diseases, point to more effective and efficient health interventions spearheaded by

women and children.

"Until everyone in the world has reliable access to safe piped water, low-tech community interventions that target unused water containers can lead to large reductions in human health risk from vector-borne diseases," said study senior author Desiree LaBeaud, a professor of pediatrics in the Stanford Medical School.

Tiny as it may be, the Aedes aegypti mosquito poses an outsized threat to global public health. It transmits a host of viruses, such as dengue, chikungunya, Zika and yellow fever, for which there are no vaccines or therapies. Human victims suffer a range of symptoms that can include life-threatening

encephalitis and hemorrhage or debilitating arthritis that persists for years. The past two decades have seen mosquito-caused disease outbreaks grow increasingly common and unpredictable.

Countries on every continent except Antarctica have suffered a number of Aedes aegypti-spread virus outbreaks in recent years. These outbreaks have been underreported and infections often misdiagnosed in some African countries where public health efforts have long focused on nighttime biting mosquitoes that transmit malaria. For example, the researchers found that residents in the study area had limited awareness of daytime-biting Aedes ae-

gypti mosquitoes, and prioritized sleeping under bednets as a primary protection against mosquito-borne disease.

Because of a lack of piped water, most people in the region obtain water from rainfall and wells or boreholes. Many people also leave stored water uncovered in various containers. The researchers surveyed hundreds of residents and measured mosquito abundance in buckets, jerry cans and other water-holding containers – the most common breeding habitat for Aedes aegypti mosquitoes. More than half of the mosquitoes the researchers found were in tires, buckets and small containers with no immediate

purpose, and nearly 40 percent of the mosquitoes they found were in buckets used for laundry. Although tires accounted for less than 1 percent of all containers, they contained nearly a third of the mosquitoes the researchers found.

The findings suggest that reducing the number of unused containers lying around could be an efficient and effective means of mosquito control. Rather than try to cover or reduce the number of all water-holding containers or all containers of a certain type – a complex and difficult approach for community members to sustain – national and local health interventions should target the most

likely mosquito-breeding habitats, such as laundry buckets and containers without a purpose, such as tires and trash, according to the researchers.

Key to the effort is education and empowerment, as well as community events such as trash clean-ups to manage the accumulation of purposeless containers, according to the researchers who emphasize that women and children are the most likely agents of change. Women, who are most likely to collect and store water for households, can use simple nets, such as torn bednets, to cover laundry buckets. Children, who are generally more willing to engage with new ideas and take up

new behaviors, can collect unused containers or turn unused tires into toys so they won't collect water for mosquito breeding.

"It sounds simple, but targeting specific containers by purpose can have a huge impact," said study lead author Jenna Forsyth, a postdoctoral research fellow at the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment. "It's low cost, requires relatively little behavior change and can be scaled up easily."

The research was funded by Stanford's Maternal & Child Health Research Institute, Center for African Studies and Emmett Interdisciplinary Program in Environment and Resources.

Moves are afoot in Africa to keep more women in science careers

By Barbara Tiedeu

WOMEN scientists have a vital part to play in scientific leadership and in contributing to Africa's development and transformation. But they remain substantially under-represented in higher education and in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). This is because women are generally seen and treated by society as being inferior and less capable than men. This then spills over into their educational and professional lives.

This is a global issue. Women account for 53 per cent of the world's bachelor's and master's degree graduates and 43 per cent of PhD graduates. But they make up only 28 per cent of researchers in all fields. And, only 30% of women in higher education move into STEM-related fields.

The situation is no different in sub-Saharan Africa; in fact, in some countries in the region it's worse. Only 30% per cent of sub-Saharan researchers in all subject areas are women.

Happily, there have been some improvements in recent years. Between 2011 and 2013, for instance, there was an increase in the percentage of women researchers in South Africa, Egypt, Morocco, Senegal, Nigeria, Rwanda, Cameroon and Ethiopia.

But it isn't all good news. Many women leave scientific research careers at a fairly junior level. Gender disparities persist in the scientific workforce, largely leaving women scientists in

junior positions with little responsibility and power to make decisions, as well as limited leadership opportunities.

The result is that scientific work is missing women's perspectives and contributions. This weakens the science agenda. But examples are emerging of how to close the gender gap in African STEM.

The UNESCO STEM And Gender Advancement (SAGA) project is one. It keeps track of gender data and supports the design and implementation of policy instruments that affect gender equality.

To track and monitor women's representation, the African Development Bank's gender equality index captures progress on the appointment of women to posts of responsibility. The index shows the legal, social and economic gaps between men and women, giving African leaders the evidence to begin dismantling the barriers that prevent women from fully contributing to the continent's development.

Read more: African science needs more leaders. Here's how to develop them

The Boardroom Africa maintains a database of talented women leaders and senior executives, making them easy to find. It also trains, certifies, mentors and prepares women for board membership. The Boardroom Africa helps organisations benefit from



Getting more women involved in science is good for everyone.

diversity by placing women directors and shifting the boardroom gender balance.

The Gender Summit Africa platform provides evidence of when, why, and how biological differences (sex) and sociocultural differences (gender) affect outcomes. Its goal is to make gender equality in research and innovation the norm and a sign of quality. Africa has hosted two Gender Summits: GS5 in South Africa and GS14 in Rwanda.

The recognition of achievements is crucial to driving gender equity.

The African Union Kwame Nkrumah Awards for Scientific Excellence Programme honours two outstanding African women scientists from each of Africa's five geographical regions. This programme promotes scientific development, encourages perseverance in research or academic careers, nurtures ambition, and raises the profile of science and technology innovation so that it contributes to Africa's development.

As part of building skills and mentoring the next generation of African scientists, the African Union declared

2015 as the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development Towards Africa Agenda 2063. It also adopted the Science, Technology and Innovation Strategy for Africa 2024, which examines among other things the role women can play in accelerating Africa's transition to an innovation-led, knowledge-based economy which meets society's needs.

Convened events that aimed to amplify the voices and concerns of African women and girls have included UN sessions of the Commission on the

Status of Women and the International Conference on Population and Development.

Mentorship programmes such as COACH-Cameroon and the Higher Institute for Growth in Health Research for Women (HIGHER Women) Consortium have trained hundreds of women in career-building scientific skills, such as applying for grants, leadership, ethics, research quality, and project management. Individually and through workshops, mentors provide professional guidance on dealing with African traditional, societal, and cultural pressures on women.

Annual evaluations show empowerment and improved assertiveness and self-confidence among participants, resulting in an upsurge in their careers. For example, they have been able to get research grants, attend conferences, publish more scientific articles, and achieve promotion.

All these efforts can contribute to closing the gender equity gap in STEM in Africa. But change is needed in other spheres too. Many women in research have to balance their careers with family responsibilities. A strong family support system has been key to the success of many women.

Africa's ability to harness scientific and technological knowledge is crucial for its socioeconomic development and competitiveness. This potential cannot be fully realised without the inclusion and advancement of women.

Barbara Tiedeu is Associate Professor of Biochemistry, University of Yaounde

Vietnam's response to Covid-19 points to resourceful, if troubling, use of technology

By Georgina Phung

THE rooftop of an apartment block in central Hanoi seems like an odd space to host a marathon. But when Vietnam imposed aggressive restrictions on outdoor movement in response to the coronavirus, athlete Nguyễn Tiến Đạt was forced to adjust his track to the strict bounds of state-sanctioned exercise.

Last month, Đạt became Vietnam's first runner to complete a marathon by looping the 25-meter length of his rooftop terrace. As he logged the 860 laps on Strava, a mobile app for tracking runs, his message to his Strava followers was to stay active - and stay at home.

Millions of Vietnamese citizens like Đạt have made preventing the spread of Covid-19 a priority. It's the result of a sweeping public education campaign that relied heavily on social media and state-controlled news to instill a sense of civic duty in combating the coronavirus.

Vietnam's response has been an underreported success: the communist country has logged 326 cases of Covid-19 and zero deaths, and experts say there is no evidence to suggest a systematic cover-up.

Elsewhere in the region high-tech interventions have been deployed, among them providing real-time, location-specific data to the public on face mask availability, facial recognition, geotagging, and thermal scanners to track infected individuals.

Meanwhile, a close look at Vietnam's response reveals a resourceful - and often troubling - mix of high-tech and low-tech measures. They illustrate how mass data collection can be deployed to contain a disease - and how it can go wrong.

One of the most effective tools Vietnam used to manage the spread of the coronavirus was public education, often deployed via popular social media channels.

In February, for example, the Health ministry released the viral hand-washing song "Ghen Co Vy." The song, which likens the virus to a jealous ("ghen") opponent, spread preventive advice to millions.

Dancer and choreographer Quang Dũng of Ho Chi Minh City used the song to create the #GhenCoVChallenge video on TikTok, which features hand-washing dance moves and sparked a TikTok dance craze. The hashtag #GhenCoVChallenge has 37.7 million views and counting on the platform.

Propaganda-style posters invoked a wartime spirit showing how to wear masks correctly, and the state invested in multiple channels to consistently communicate the severity of the disease.

Citizens received daily updates from the Health ministry via text message and Zalo, Vietnam's most popular messaging app. Hanoi-based Dr Tran Tuan, a health care practitioner and public health researcher, says that posts by influential Facebookers also played a key part in disseminating accurate information to the public.

health researcher, says that posts by influential Facebookers also played a key part in disseminating accurate information to the public.

Vietnam's centralised communication apparatus was also critical for implementing nationwide programmes. Early on, the country focused on targeted testing and aggressive contact tracing, a tactic that helped it become the first country to have stopped the local transmission of SARS 17 years ago. Contact tracing is the process of identifying people who have come into contact with infected individuals.

In Vietnam, people identified via contact tracing are sorted into one of four tiers based on their exposure level. That determines how they are contained within a mass, centralised quarantine programme.

Each case is numbered, and anonymised details about each person's travel history are published in local newspapers and on social media - a striking move given the country's tough curbs on media freedom. Containment is enforced by a massive human task force comprising health professionals, civil servants and public security personnel.

For instance, 300 personnel were involved in the contact-tracing campaign of "Patient 91," a British pilot for Vietnam Airlines who attended Buddha Bar in Ho Chi Minh City in mid-March.

Shortly after the man's visit to the bar, Vietnam's Health ministry alerted the public by text message and Zalo. These alerts were even translated for expatriates.

All those who had visited the Buddha Bar during that ten-day period in March were asked to self-isolate immediately and contact their local authorities. People who had been in direct contact with the patient were tracked using surveillance footage and then taken to quarantine centres.

The locations of all these centres were displayed on Zalo. At least 4,000 people were tested as a result of the "Buddha Bar cluster", and 19 positive cases were identified.

Vietnam's surveillance efforts rely on two smartphone apps, and it is mandatory to download them. The Health ministry's official coronavirus app, NCOVI, enables users to log their symptoms and voluntarily report suspected infections in their area, identifying hot spots. It also gives advice on whether to self-quarantine or go to hospital.

Infected and quarantined people must also download another free mobile app, SmartCity, which notifies the heads of households if a person travels 30 meters from their quarantine area. District authorities must also submit a list of self-isolating residents via the app.

Effective surveillance - at steep cost

Disease surveillance was no doubt effective in curbing Vietnam's pandemic, but it came with a steep social cost.



Motorbike riders with face masks stuck in traffic jam during the morning peak hours on May 19, 2020, in Hanoi. Photo: Linh Pham/Getty Images

The price for Vietnam's relative success was its "draconian" restrictions, says Tuan Nguyen, an epidemiologist and principal research fellow at the University of New South Wales.

"Those measures cannot be used in a democratic society," Nguyen says. In Ho Chi Minh City, signs warn the public that any individuals found to have infected another will face criminal charges.

Serious concerns have been flagged over users' data privacy and the consequences if it is breached. The identities of some infected patients have already leaked on social media, calling into question Vietnam's ability to protect sensitive information.

And the nationalist spirit that united citizens in their war on the coronavirus can easily turn, as demonstrated by social media attacks villainising the potentially infected.

Vietnam's long history of censoring online discussion over controversial events and clamping down on dissenters persisted through the pandemic. In April, the state introduced fines for the sharing of what it classes as coronavirus disinformation, raising concerns among human rights groups.

The criminal penalty also extends to material promoting "reactionary ideas". When one Vietnamese woman wrote a Facebook post mistakenly stating that Covid-19 had reached her community, the police immediately fined her and removed the post - when it had just a handful of likes.

In April, Reuters reported that Vietnam's state-owned telecom companies slowed traffic to Facebook to pressure the company to censor anti-state content - which Facebook eventually did.

The state has also been accused of using its cyber capabilities to gain an advantage in its coronavirus response. FireEye, a US cybersecurity firm, revealed that "Vietnamese actors" APT32 hacked the Wuhan government from January through April to "collect intelligence" from the virus epicentre.

But despite the obvious shortcomings of Vietnam's model, its success makes certain elements impossible to overlook. Crucially, its response was shaped by the country's experiences in public health crises.

After the SARS virus engulfed Asia in 2003, Vietnam

strengthened its capacity for disease control and prevention with funding from the World Bank. When the country registered its first case of Covid-19 on January 23, the government immediately imposed border restrictions and quarantined tens of thousands of people in military-style camps.

While many wealthier nations were weighing the health and economic consequences, Prime Minister Nguyễn Xuân Phúc established a ministerial task force, the National Steering Committee, to control the response from the outset.

Widespread cooperation from Vietnam's citizens was also a key factor in the success. The outbreak offered the ruling party a unique opportunity to demonstrate transparency in its coordination with the public.

"Another critical factor to Vietnam's success, in my mind, is the faith of people in the government's strategy to handle the pandemic," Việt Thọ Lê, a senior BBC Vietnamese journalist, says, adding: "It sounds unusual because, in Vietnam, the government has failed to keep people's faith owing to its corruption."

Fighting Covid-19 like an enemy

Le points to "the tradition of solidarity of the Vietnamese people in history in the face of big enemies". From top officials to community workers, those enforcing the rules repeat the same militaristic refrain: *Chống dịch như chống giặc* - meaning "fight the pandemic like an enemy".

Popular Facebook posts are swamped with pro-government sentiment. "Many social media posts say that no place is as safe as Vietnam," explains Mai Truong, a political science researcher at the University of Arizona.

"While UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson was in an intensive care unit, the Vietnamese state media even published an article offering to give advice to his medical team," Truong adds.

Vietnam was quick to shut down business operations across the country. Tuyen Vo, head of partnerships at the LIN Centre for Community Development - an NGO based in Hanoi - explains: "Vietnam took these steps even though it knew that doing so would place a heavy burden on the hospitality and tourism industries."

Until very recently, Vietnam placed heavy restrictions on rice exports to guarantee its citizens food. In April, it debuted

"rice ATMs", which provide free rice for laid-off workers. Local residents queue six feet apart to collect rice from the dispensers, which operate around the clock.

Global crises are known to touch off technological innovation, but they also create a disturbing acceptance of more invasive control measures.

The ruling party has capitalised on the battle against the coronavirus to boost its legitimacy both home and abroad as the country prepares for a reshuffling of national leadership at a congress early next year.

Vietnam's censorship apparatus has cracked down on attempts to undermine the narrative that only the state's system saved the country from the health crisis. As governments' surveillance capabilities continue to develop, their place in the citizenry's lives raises continual debates: Can they be justified on public health grounds?

While Vietnam's model is rife with issues, its success demonstrates how, by focusing on early risk assessment and creative communication, a nation can unite its government and its people to launch an incredibly effective fight against infectious diseases.

While the culture of surveillance bolstered by Vietnam's one-party system is not to be condoned or celebrated, there's no denying the effectiveness of the central elements of its decisive response.

Georgina is a British-Vietnamese culture writer on diversity and the intersection between technology and race. She wrote this piece for OneZero, a Medium publication on technology and science.

BY CHANDRÉ GOULD AND SELLO HATANG

WHEN people's need for water, food and shelter isn't met, the result is catastrophic for the individual, their family and society. Food insecurity and violence are close companions, a connection exposed in South Africa during the COVID-19 lockdown when conflict over food parcels arose. Hunger, uncertainty, fear and a legacy of unfairness interacted in a toxic mix leading to public violence and anger.

In South Africa food insecurity has been found to double the risk of men's perpetration of intimate partner violence, because food insecurity affects our mental health and relationships.

Hunger wasn't caused by the spread of COVID-19, but measures to contain the virus have exacerbated a long-term pandemic of inequality and poverty. The South African Demographic and Health Survey 2016 says the physical growth of 27% of children under five in South Africa is stunted because they don't get enough nutrition.

The effects of poverty and hunger mean that globally,

more than 200 million children in low- and middle-income countries don't achieve their potential. Not having enough to eat affects children's health and their cognitive, social and emotional development. These factors combine to entrench intergenerational poverty and inequality.

Nutrition is critical to educational achievement and success in the job market. So failing to ensure all people in South Africa have enough nutritious food has devastating consequences for our development as a nation.

In SA food insecurity has been found to double the risk of intimate partner violence by men

Personal safety and national development are mutually dependent, and hunger is one of a complex cluster of social problems. COVID-19 has laid this prevailing reality bare. But the virus also presents an opportunity to tackle hunger, not least because food security has finally climbed up the agenda for business, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and donors.

AgrISA told ISS Today that the problem isn't with food supply, but with the lockdown restrictions distorting markets. South Africa is producing as much food now as before COVID-19

Can we solve hunger in South Africa?



and the lockdown. The problem is people's inability to access and afford food.

One challenge is the lack of reliable information about the scale of the problem and the number of people needing food support. Another is high food costs. While the price of basic goods has risen only marginally since March, low-income households face higher prices because lockdown has restricted their ability to buy from informal traders, or shop around.

The crisis is forcing all sectors to move faster, work together and rethink food supply chains

There's a significant shortfall between the value of social grants and the amount of money a household needs to feed itself. The Pietermaritzburg Economic Justice and Dignity Group tracked the cost of 38 basic items. It found that a month's food for an average family costs R3 470 - far more than any government grant, and far more than many employed South Africans earn.

There's also the risk that food supply will become politicised, with recent reports of local councillors favouring political party members for food parcels. The Nelson Mandela Foundation's Each One Feed One campaign has wit-

nessed how corruption at a local level negatively affects food distribution.

Then there's the question of what it costs to mount an operation to source and deliver food parcels at multiple sites countrywide. What would an elimination of overheads look like for delivery mechanisms? And how do food providers ensure access to food in remote rural areas? These are some of the many challenges we collectively need to confront.

In South Africa lockdown has also stimulated many exciting new initiatives by social enterprises, corporations and interest groups. New collaborations have emerged between NGOs, churches and companies with a shared commitment to get food to people who need it

most. Communities have mobilised to support those who cannot afford food.

There are excellent examples of how low-income communities are feeding up to 20 000 people a day

Digital tools, including mapping technology, have enabled information sharing about food distribution and the crisis is forcing NGOs, businesses, charities, government and community-based organisations to move faster, work together and rethink food supply chains. The Gauteng Food Security Committee uses the technological and organisational skills of the private sector, and a network of faith-based institutions and NGOs, to purchase, pack and distribute food parcels to communities.

There also seems to be a growing 'social listening' by the state. Government is taking note of trends in social media conversations and has a deeper awareness of its dependency on civil society, faith-based organisations and business intermediaries to complement government action.

We should use this heightened awareness and collaborative spirit to drive long-term change. This could include better access to reliable and affordable supplies of locally produced fresh produce in low-income communities, and sustained access to markets for small-scale farmers.

There are excellent examples of how well organised low-income communities are feeding up to 20 000 people a day in response to the food crisis caused by lockdown. The Bonteheuwel Development Forum in the Western Cape is organised at street-level, has a soup kitchen on all 17 blocks in Bonteheuwel, and is establishing community food gardens.

Agencies



Thursday 11 June 2020

CRDB Bank Plc invites shareholders to virtual annual meeting on June 27

By The Banker Reporter

CRDB Bank Plc's shareholders will for the first time ever hold their annual general meeting online on the last Saturday of this month, group Managing Director, Abdulmajid Nsekela has announced.

Addressing an online press briefing in Dar es Salaam this week, Nsekela said the 24 AGM which was due to be held in May as per shareholders' agreement last year, was postponed because of the novel coronavirus outbreak.

"We understand that this is a new set up therefore our number one priority is to ensure that shareholders are not deprived of their right to participate fully in the meeting through listening to presentations, voting, asking questions and other contributions as it pertains to the status of their bank," Nsekela said.

He said the virtual AGM which will be live-streamed will go through a number of agendas including adoption of Directors' Report, Audited Financials, 2019 Dividend, Directors' Remuneration, appointment of external auditors and election of two independent board members.

The CRDB chief further stated that the ordinary virtual AGM will give full opportunity for shareholders to participate and even ask questions online with shareholders' voting rights being exercised through proxies.

"AGM joining credentials will be sent to all shareholders through their email address and/or phone numbers registered with the



CRDB Bank Plc managing director Abdulmajid Nsekela (2nd-L) briefs journalists yesterday on the bank's shareholders virtual annual general meeting to be held on June 27. With him are Secretary and Director - Corporate Affairs John Rugambo (R), Director - Corporate Affairs and Public Relations Tully Mwambapa (L), and Chief Financial Officer Frederick Nshekano. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

bank. For those who will have proxies, they will need to fill proxy forms and register their proxy appointment. The proxy forms are available online on our website [HYPERLINK "http://www.crdbbank.co.tz"](http://www.crdbbank.co.tz) www.crdbbank.co.tz," he noted.

Shareholders have to make sure they submit their proxy forms whether through branches, email to shareholders or through WhatsApp number 0767 757 215 no later than 4:00pm on Friday 19th June, 2020. After confirming attendance, shareholders will be supplied

with AGM credentials, meeting identity cards, usernames and passwords to enable them attend the meeting digitally

Hence shareholders and their proxies are strongly encouraged to utilize the options available for them to participate in the AGM, the urged.

CRDB Bank provides unmatched convenience in Tanzania and Burundi serving more than three million customers with a large footprint of over 250 branches, over 14,000 CRDB Wakala, 551 ATMs, over 1,200 merchants and a 24/7 Call Centre.

Absa completes milestone since separating from UK Barclays Plc

By The Banker Reporter

ABSA Group Limited, which is Absa Bank Tanzania Limited's holding company, announced the substantial completion of critical projects on its separation journey from UK based Barclays Plc.

Following Barclays Plc's decision to sell down its controlling stake in Barclays Africa Group Limited in 2016, the South African based lender was permitted to continue using the Barclays brand during the June 2017 to June 2020 transition period.

The banking group marked the end of this component on 5 June 2020 with the official name change to Absa in Tanzania and across all subsidiaries markets on the continent earlier this year. "As a unified African brand, we have never been more ready to become a self-sufficient bank of the future," said Absa Bank Tanzania's Managing Director, Abdi Mohamed.

Mohamed noted that after undergoing one of the largest rebranding in modern African history, Absa Group is now able to own and control processes and infrastructure, upgrading systems and propositions that better serve customers in Tanzania and across Africa.

"What's more, the initiatives undertaken have fundamentally improved Absa's resilience and capabilities, benefiting both employees and customers alike," the Absa Tanzania chief noted adding that the banking group has a long legacy and an integral part of Tanzania's economic development.

"We will continue to drive relevant initiatives and partner in crucial growth sectors. We can now build on the ambitious strategy that we've created, and enhance our ability to lead the sector. We believe that this can be achieved by offering competitive products, excellent service and a truly African experience," Mohamed noted.

In a statement earlier this week, Absa Regional Operations (ARO) Chief Executive, Peter Matlare said the critical



Absa Bank Tanzania's Managing Director, Abdi Mohamed, speaks at a past event. File photo.

milestone, which was delivered on time and on budget, is so much more than just a name change.

"We now have an opportunity to create and sustain valuable partnerships that allow us, and our stakeholders, to thrive. However, considering recent events and the prevailing economic environment, as a near-term focus, our strategy has been adjusted to ensure we also prioritise capital preservation and remain liquid. Rebranding under Absa in 12 African countries has united us under a single brand, identity, purpose and

strategy," Matlare said.

He stated that going forward, the bank will continue to execute on its growth strategy; enhancing operational efficiencies and pushing digital boundaries. "As a modern, future forward African banking group, a key pillar in our strategy is finding scalable solutions and platforms that continue to meet the evolving needs of our customers. As the accelerated use of technology continues, investing in digital banking services will remain a key priority for us as a business," the ARO chief added.

Value of bad loans hits Sh366bn, CBK reveals

NAIROBI

THE proportion of defaulted bank loans has hit a 13-year high, reflecting the cash flow burden on workers and businesses brought about by coronavirus disease hardships.

Data from the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) shows that the ratio of non-performing loans (NPLs) rose from 12.5 percent to 13.1 percent - the highest since August 2007 when it stood at 14.41 percent. Defaulted loans - which is credit that remains unpaid for more than 90 days - jumped by Sh11.1 billion to stand at Sh366.8 billion in April when restrictions imposed to limit the spread of Covid-19 hit the Kenyan economy hard.

Industries and other businesses have since cut down on their activities in response to the infectious disease, leading to job cuts and unpaid leave for retained staff as profitable firms move into losses. This has seen workers who had tapped mortgages and unsecured loans for purchase of goods like furniture, cars and expenses like school fees default. Unsecured loans are given on the strength of one's salary.

Firms that had borrowed based on the forecast of cash flows have also been struggling to repay their bank loans. "This was due to increased NPLs in the real estate, trade and manufacturing sectors following a further slowdown in economic activity in these sectors," noted CBK governor Patrick Njoroge.

"Banks will have to work with customers, but there will be no mechanical way of arresting NPLs spike," he said. The April figure show that banks are losing an average of Sh131 for every Sh1,000 loaned in a period when lending rates have fallen to 15-year lows at 12.09 percent. They also came in a period when banks have restructured loans worth Sh273.1 billion, or 9.5 percent of industry total credit, to ease the pain for borrowers and to avoid a sharp increase in defaults.

The restructuring involved non-payment of loans for up to three months and extension of credit tenures, which translates to lowering of monthly repayments. Banks had lent Sh2.8 trillion by the end of April.

The loan defaults coincide with the prevailing tough economic times facing households since the first case of Covid-19 was confirmed in Kenya on March 12. Kenya, which has reported 2,767 positive cases, has suspended commercial flights in and out of the country, banned public gatherings and imposed a night curfew since March, which was on Saturday was reduced to seven hours from the initial 10 hours but extended for the next 30 days.

The current rise in NPLs points to the difficulties that businesses are facing to keep afloat in the Covid-19 period, which has also cut workers sending power - the lifeblood of the economy. While warning of more sackings, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection had told Parlia-



CBK governor Patrick Njoroge

Vodafone warns UK against banning Huawei

LONDON

VODAFONE Group, the world's second biggest mobile operator, has warned that Britain's desire to lead the world in 5G technology will face a big blow if it decides to remove Huawei Technologies from the country's telecoms infrastructure.

"The UK's leadership in 5G will be lost if mobile operators are forced to spend time and money replacing existing equipment," Scott Petty, Vodafone UK's chief technology officer, said

in an e-mailed statement.

The British government should make efforts to expand 5G coverage and invest in the next stage of this technology instead of stripping out the equipment of the Chinese telecoms equipment maker, Petty said.

"We are not tied to one supplier, but it is important to understand the extent of what is at stake here," he said, adding Vodafone is working with Ericsson and testing equipment from new suppliers. Vodafone's warning was reported earlier by the Financial Times.

The development comes as Britain held talks on 5G networking equipment supplies with Japan's NEC and South Korea's Samsung Electronics as part of a bid to develop alternatives to Huawei. Britain designated Huawei a "high-risk vendor" in January, capping its 5G involvement at 35% and excluding it from the data-heavy core of the network.

Under pressure

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has come under renewed pressure from

Washington and lawmakers in his own party, who say Huawei's equipment could be used by Beijing for spying. Huawei has repeatedly denied the allegations.

London is looking at the possibility of phasing Huawei out of its 5G network completely by 2023, officials have said. Ties between Britain and China have grown tense recently over Beijing's handling of the coronavirus outbreak and the situation in Hong Kong, where China has decided to impose a new security law.

Tanchoice's meat factory to start operations, target Asian markets

By The Banker Reporter

A state of the art meat processing facility at Soga in Bagamoyo, TANCHOICE Limited will next month commence operations to supply meat to some Asian countries currently facing shortages due to the outbreak of coronavirus.

Most of industrial operations, including meat processing plants around the world have been shut down as governments impose lockdowns to contain the spread of Covid-19 disease, which in turn has increased demand for meat and other commodities.

But President John Magufuli's refusal to lockdown the country has meant that industrial production continue with strict health guidelines to contain the virus which infected hundreds with a dozen fatalities.

President Magufuli rejected to adopt a global one-size-fits-all copy and paste lockdown approaches as most of his peers to contain the virus a move that has led to surplus production of consumer goods while construction work of factories such as TanChoice continued.

Export Processing Zones Authority's Director for Investment Promotion and Facilitation, James Maziku said the 35bn/- TANCHOICE meat processing factory was due to commence operations later this

year.

Maziku however, said the acute demand for meat in earmarked Asian markets has prompted the factory to start operations this month in order to cater for shortage of beef. "This project expected to create over 500 direct jobs will strategically help the livestock sector graduate and unlock the challenges of commercializing it," Maziku said.

TANCHOICE meat processing factory with capacity to slaughter 1,000 cattle and 4,500 goats/sheep daily has already complied with national and international standards namely, certification from the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS) including food safety management System ISO 22000 and quality management system ISO 9001.

The EPZA Director further noted that earmarked exports markets include United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, China, Indonesia, Vietnam and Malaysia.

The transport of meat and meat products from TANCHOICE Limited will be by refrigerated trucks or reefer containers to Julius Nyerere International Airport and Dar es Salaam Port.

"The meat processing

factory will reduce and ultimately end smuggling of livestock to neighbouring countries that has been reaping immense benefits from processing and exporting various livestock products," he noted.

The meat processing factory with five slaughter lines is the largest in East Africa and second after the Ethiopian meat processing plant. The volume of meat to be sold at the domestic market will be 12,480 tons per year which is twenty percent of the meat produced. This means that the factory is capable of slaughtering about 320,000 cattle and 1,440,000 goats/sheep a year, hence producing 62,440 tons of meat a year.

Tanzania has one of the largest livestock populations in Africa with 13.5 million heads of cattle, 5.5 million goats, 3.6 million sheep, 0.4 million pigs and 23.2 million chickens, according to statistics by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

Maziku said the establishment of the TANCHOICE meat processing plant will create a new middle class Cluster of business dealing with fattening of cattle, goats and sheep for supplying to the factory.

"The investor of the meat

processing plant cannot do everything and thus the local investors should grab this opportunity to establish fattening activities of cattle, goats and sheep needed in the factory," he added.

The byproducts during the slaughter process namely livers, brains, hearts, sweetbreads (thymus and pancreas), fries (testicles), kidneys, oxtails, tripe (stomach of cattle), and tongue will be sold in the local market and others exported to the huge Chinese market.

Also some byproducts like the blood from the animal slaughtering are important raw material for the production of poultry feeds. Through EPZAs efforts, arrangement has been done for TANCHOICE to sale raw skin to PHISS Tanneries, another EPZ licensed factory in Bagamoyo Special Economic Zone processing raw skin to wet blue.

Cow horns and hoofs are used for making buttons for clothes and handbags. Furthermore, the strategic location of the meat factory close to the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) will provide easy access to the port and the regions with high population of cattle, goats and sheep.



Yara Tanzania Limited's Commercial Manager for North and Lake Zone, Phillipo Mwakipesile, applies sanitiser to the hands of one of the agro-dealers, Hakidumu Mkuyu when the company donated protective materials to farmers and agro-dealers in Lake Zone earlier this week. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

Lake Zone farmers, agro-dealers praise firm over Covid-19 protective gear

By The Banker Reporter

SMALLHOLDER farmers and agro-dealers who work in partnership with Yara Tanzania Limited have commended the fertilizer manufacturer for supporting them with personal protective equipment against the novel coronavirus outbreak.

The Lake Zone farmers and agro-dealers said in Mwanza earlier this week after receiving their share of Covid-19 protective materials which included sanitizers, water buckets and masks that they will comfortably continue with their daily farming activities while taking the necessary precaution against the pandemic with the donation.

Speaking on behalf of the farmers, Ibrahim Kagete, said other private companies should emulate Yara Tanzania good corporate governance behaviour which has enabled farmers and agro-dealers to go on with their daily activities.

"The spread of the virus has drastically reduced but we have to continue taking precaution. Yara has prioritized farmers and dealers with regards to fighting the pandemic as they are the main producers of food that is consumed in and out of the country," Kagete said.

He challenged the agro-dealers to ensure that the PPEs get to the targeted group of farmers so they protect them-

selves against the virus while continuing with farming business to ensure food security for the nation. "There are some farmers who do not know anything about the pandemic, please go and sensitize them while giving them the protective materials donated by Yara," he advised.

Speaking at the same event, Yara Tanzania's Commercial Manager for Lake Zone, Phillipo Mwakipesile said donation was made to support government's efforts to fight against the spreading of the pandemic.

Mwakipesile noted that the whole world is currently facing the Covid-19 outbreak which has already claimed thousands of lives while also negatively impacting on economies as governments lockdown their countries to slowdown the virus' spreading.

"Farmers have the role to continue producing food to avoid a possible food shortage crisis this year," he said adding that there Yara's donation is aimed at encouraging the group to continue doing their farming activities.

Yara Tanzania has set aside 82m/- worth of PPEs that it will donate to farmers and agro-dealers countrywide where it does its business. In addition to the donation, the company has also engage in a sensitization of its stakeholders against the Covid-19 pandemic.



Angellah Kairuki Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Investment) speaks to reporters after visiting Tanchoice factory at Kibaha. File photo.

Global Finance names Ecobank as the most innovative in Africa

LOME

GLOBAL Finance has named Ecobank as the most innovative bank in Africa. The announcement was made at the eighth Global Finance annual awards, the Innovators 2020, honouring entities that regularly identify new paths and design new tools in finance.

Categories in the award include Top Innovations in Corporate Finance, Payments, Trade Finance, Cash Management, Islamic Finance, with Winners selected from different regions of the world. The classes of award comprised Most Innovative Banks in Africa, Asia-Pacific, Central & Eastern Europe, Latin America, Middle East, North America and Western Europe; The Most Innovative Fintech Companies in Asia-Pacific, Central & Eastern Europe, North America and West-

ern Europe; and The Best Financial Innovation Labs

At the virtual awards announcement, Anita Hawser, European Editor at Global Finance and Lead, Global Finance Awards evaluation team, noted that companies recognized at the Innovators 2020 significantly stood apart. She said the review panel looked at innovation in the context of product or process innovation, as they were ultimately more concerned with the impact of innovation in terms of creating value for customers or addressing a specific need, like speeding up lending or credit review process for small businesses; enabling companies to deposit cheques remotely and not having to visit the branches.

According to her, these are innovations that significantly reduce the time or cost of companies to perform financial tasks and

really transform customers' business lives helping them operate more effectively in a significantly challenging business and economic environment.

In his remark, Ade Ayeyemi, Ecobank Group CEO said: "We are pleased to be recognised as the 'Most Innovative Bank in Africa' by Global Finance. This attests to the strength of our brand in multiple countries across Africa, our unique pan-African platform, and our innovative banking products and solutions made possible by the success of our digital transformation journey."

With a larger African footprint than any other bank operating in West, Central, East and Southern Africa, Ecobank is the only bank that has banking operations that spans 33 African countries, operating a truly integrated African network.

That is one unified integrated Ecobank Mobile Banking App, that works seamlessly across all 33 operating countries in Africa; One Ecobank Omni and Omni Lite serving Multinationals and SMEs in Africa; One Rapid transfer app that breaks down country borders and allows the Diaspora community send money directly to their loved ones, instantly and affordably across Africa; One Ecobank Online Banking platform that can be easily accessed across 33 African countries.

The Ecobank Group's unique and largest pan-African platform is designed to help unlock the opportunities of the continent, for the benefit of the continent, through standardization, thereby enabling regional integration, and trade and investment across borders.

MARKETTRENDS

Remittances to Rwanda down by 16 pc in March

KIGALI

THERE has been an unprecedented decline in the flow of remittances to Rwanda - a vibrant source of money for a section of Rwandan - just as cases of coronavirus surge worldwide and the country grapples with the pandemic.

Remittance inflows to Rwanda decreased by 16 per cent in March from Rwf22.5 million, according to the latest data from the National Bank of Rwanda (BNR). In March this year, remittance inflows recorded in Rwanda stood at Rwf18.9 million compared to Rwf22.5 million recorded during the same period in 2019, a drop that could be attributed to Covid-19.

"We continue to monitor the trend in April 2020 to see if the drop realized in March 2020 persists and if so, it will affirm Covid-19 effect," an emailed response from the Central Bank to this publication read.

This is because some of the largest remittance sending countries - such as the US and Germany - have locked down in an effort to reduce the impact of the virus, leaving many migrants unable to work. In the first three months of this year (January - March), diaspora remittance inflows to Rwanda rose by 1 per cent to Rwf63.1 million from Rwf62.55 million in 2019.

On average, migrants send home 15 per cent of their earnings, with one in nine people or around 800 million people on the receiving end of these flows, according to the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

The Covid-19 has exacerbated the inflows of remittances to low and middle income countries, generally because incomes have shrunk. But even in cases where migrants have money to send home, it has become more difficult to do so - around 80 per cent of remittances are sent physically via a Remittance Service Provider, but these money transfer networks have partially or totally shut down.

On April 22 the World Bank predicted that remittances to low and middle-income countries would see the sharpest decline in recent history this year, falling by 19.7 per cent to around \$445 billion, compared to \$554 billion in 2019.

The fall is expected to disproportionately affect emerging economies, which are the greatest recipients of these inflows and whose citizens rely on them to varying extents for a basic income. David Malpass, the President of the World Bank Group, said in a statement released on April 22 that remittances are a vital source of income for developing countries.

"The ongoing economic recession caused by Covid-19 is taking a severe toll on the ability to send money home and makes it all the more vital that we shorten the time to recovery for advanced economies," he noted.

Accurate delineation of intra-group loan transaction - an arm's length analysis

By Cecilia Otaru

AS associated companies are advancing in ways to transact with each other with the aim of maximization of profits, the global transfer pricing practise is advancing alongside with various ways of analysing the arm's length nature of the vast diversity of related party transactions.

Majority of the associated companies provide financial assistance within the group in the form of financial instruments such as loans, guarantees or in the form of beneficial arrangements such as cash pooling.

Now, while it is common that in the analysis of the arm's length nature of the financial transactions such as intra-group loans, a critical investigation is done on the interest charges between associated parties, other matters of relevance to the arm's length principle of the transaction such as volume of the funds, business strategy are ignored in their totality.

It is of paramount importance to the associated companies engaging in intra-group loan transactions to consider that besides the interest rates charged in the said transactions, all terms and conditions including the volume of debt, should be tested against the arm's

length principle. The parties to an intra-group loan transaction are called upon to perform an accurate delineation of the transaction in the determination of its adherence to the arm's length principle.

The OECD Transfer Pricing Guidelines put forward the concepts and the importance for accurate delineation of the financial transactions in the arm's length analysis and ways for implementation are presented under the OECD Transfer Pricing Guidance on Financial Transactions issued in February 2020.

In accurately delineating an intra-group loan transaction, the economically relevant characteristics such as the presence or absence of a fixed repayment date, the obligation to pay interest, the right to enforce payment of principal and interest, the status of the funder in comparison to regular corporate creditors, the existence of financial covenants and security, the source of interest payments, the ability of the recipient of the loan to obtain loans from unrelated lending institutions, the extent to which the loan is used to acquire capital assets, the failure of the purported debtor to repay on the due date or to seek a postponement, are all useful indicators, depending on the facts and circumstances of a



particular transaction. The key question that associated companies need to ask themselves is whether the actual transaction

possesses the commercial rationality of arrangements that would be agreed between unrelated parties under comparable economic circumstances, and not whether the same transaction can be observed between independent parties. Where it is considered that the arrangements made in relation to the transaction, viewed in their totality, differ from those which would have been adopted by independent enterprises behaving in a commercially rational manner in comparable circumstances, there is not a price that is acceptable to both parties, as such the transaction should not be recognised altogether.

In a nutshell, the OECD Guidelines are placing a substantial importance on the commercial rationality and viewing of financial transactions such as intra-group loans in their totality.

However, the mere fact that the financial transaction may not be seen between independent parties does not mean that it should not be recognised as long as it poses characteristics of an arm's length arrangement.

The non-recognition of a transaction that possesses the commercial rationality of an arm's length arrangement is not an appropriate application of the arm's length principle. Restructuring of legiti-

mate business transactions would be a wholly arbitrary exercise, the inequity of which could be compounded by double taxation created where the other tax administration does not share the same views as to how the transaction should be structured.

Therefore, associated companies need to acknowledge that for a financial transaction such as an intra-group loan to conform to the arm's length principle, importance should not only be placed to the interest rate of the funds transferred. The determination of the arm's length nature of such a transaction goes far beyond the price for the funds.

A comprehensive approach should be taken when engaging in intra-group loan transactions between associates in the manner that, the complexity of all the circumstances of the transaction is taken into account when establishing the arm's length price for the funds transferred, while maintaining a keen eye on the avoidance of tax base erosion and profit shifting.

NB:

Cecilia Otaru (pictured) is a Senior Tax Advisor at KPMG in Tanzania (cotaru@kpmg.co.tz). The views and opinions are her own.

LSF mid-term report lauds access to justice dispensation in last two years



LSF chief executive officer Lulu Ng'wanakilala displays a placard after launching a mid-term evaluation report on its Access to Justice Programme implemented since 2016. She is with LSF programme manager Ramadhan Masele (L) and Mzumbe University senior lecturer, Dr Frank Theodory. Photo courtesy of LSF.

By The Banker Reporter

A report on access to justice by marginalised groups in the community such as women being financed by a donor basket fund with Legal Services Facility as an implementing agent has painted a bright future for the project.

Backed by Danish International Development Agency, UK's Department for International Development and European Union basket fund, the project clocked two and a half years in June last year.

The midterm report stated

that through Legal Services Facility, a non-governmental organization that promotes and protects human rights particularly for poor women and other vulnerable groups, major achievements have been made in providing funding on an equal opportunity basis to organizations that provide legal aid and paralegal services around Tanzania.

Speaking at the official release of the report in Dar es Salaam earlier this week, LSF's CEO, Lulu Ngwanakilala said the Access to Justice Programme has been successful in inculcating a culture of seeking legal redress among local communities in matters relating to justice and human rights.

"One positive result to date is that most

ordinary, everyday people are now more aware of their legal rights and available channels of obtaining justice. This has been evidenced by the increasing number of reported cases including those which have existed for a long time," Ngwanakilala said.

She added that there is significant consensus among stakeholders that access to legal aid services has improved since the implementation of the programme, and that in all the regions that were visited, there was a functional legal aid system with active paralegals at district level.

"In essence the programme has responded to the national agenda enshrined in the country's constitution for all access to justice by all people. In addition, its interventions are also

aligned to existing national frameworks such as the Legal Aid Act, 2017, the National Plan of Action to End Violence Against Women and Children 2017/18-2021/22 and the National Gender Policy," the LSF chief noted.

She said the LSF Access to Justice Programme also addresses the sustainable development goals in their entirety. Ngwanakilala further stated that the LSF maintains a vital working relationship with the government through various ministries and agencies both on the Mainland and in Zanzibar.

"Our role is to compliment government efforts in fostering access to justice which is a catalyst for economic development and poverty reduction. Our implementing partners have admitted to receiving adequate cooperation from government officials at regional and council levels," Ngwanakilala added.

In a presentation on how the report was compiled and data collection, LSF Monitoring, Results and Evaluation Manager, Said Chitung interview guidelines were developed for each specific category of key informants from the national to the community level.

"Key informants were strategically and randomly selected from wards in identified districts of the 28 regions of both Mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar and in total 287 key informants were interviewed," Chitung said.

He added that selection of two districts in each region involved one district at the headquarters of the region and another situated in the periphery. In each of the selected districts the purposive sampling technique was used to identify one ward where there is an LSF intervention.

LSF's Access to Justice Programmer's approach aims to empower communities to know, use and shape the law through the provision of legal education and legal aid services. The programme has strengthened legal aid systems through capacity building to legal aid providers including paralegals, enabling them to address human rights and legal aid issues as well as offering them a set of skills to establish income-generating activities for their own sustainability.

LSF is a not-for-profit organization established in September 2011 as a basket fund that strives to increase access to justice for all in the country through a legal empowerment by capacity building at grass root levels using paralegals.

Since its establishment, the LSF has been enhancing the availability, affordability, accessibility, and acceptability of quality legal aid services to promote and protect human rights for all, with an emphasis on women and other vulnerable groups.

BANKING & FINANCE

Senior financiers accused of sexism in £1.6bn Barclays court battle

LONDON

THE head of a UK finance trade body has been accused of personal attacks on a prominent businesswoman at a £1.6 billion trial that is set to reveal allegations of arrogance, sexism and misogyny at the top of Barclays bank.

Stephen Jones, a former senior executive of the British bank, is accused by lawyers acting for businesswoman Amanda Staveley of "thoroughly unpleasant" personal comments as the bank sought billions of pounds from investors.

The unspecified comments were referred to in legal documents on the opening day of a two-month trial in London focused on the actions of Barclays executives who turned to Qatar and Abu Dhabi to raise more

than £11bn during the 2008 financial crisis.

Ms Staveley, the head of private equity company PCP Capital Partners, claims that Barclays repeatedly lied to her over payments to Qatari officials who were given better terms for investing about £4bn during two rounds of fund-raising.

Barclays is contesting the claim and denies that Qatari investors, headed by former prime minister Sheikh Hamad bin Jabar Al Thani, were given preferential terms. Barclays officials had warned the bank would be "dead" without the Qatari investment.

Ms Staveley's lawyer, Joe Smouha, said conversations between senior officials at the bank would reveal "the pre-global-financial-crisis arrogance, ethical carelessness,



Financier Amanda Staveley is suing Barclays Bank for up to £1.6 billion.

focus on bonuses, on money, on jobs

and unfortunately also sexism and misogyny."

Mr Smouha said a "significant theme" in the case would be Barclays "seeking to criticise the professional skill and competence of Ms Staveley." He added: "This is regrettably consistent with some attitudes, reflected in some deeply unpleasant personal comments about her - professed by some of Barclays' most senior staff at the time."

Mr Jones was a central figure in the fund-raising operation and met Sheikh Hamad in Doha in 2008, London's High Court heard.

He left the bank in 2011 and for the past three years has been chief executive of UK Finance, which represents 250 companies across the British banking and finance industry.

Last year, he told an annual UK Finance event that the industry had come a long way since Barclays appointed the first female branch manager in 1958.

"But it is not enough progress. It is clear from this room that some barriers still exist," he said. "As an industry we have a crucial role to play in ensuring we recruit, build and nurture a diverse and inclusive workforce." UK Finance has been contacted for comment.

Barclays said the claim by PCP is without merit and the amount claimed is "nonsensical". Jeffery Onions, a lawyer for Barclays, claimed on Tuesday that the company was acting as a "middleman" for Abu Dhabi rather than as a key investor.

The case started on Monday, four months after three former Barclays executives were cleared of fraud over the Qatar fund-raising operation.

The bank and former chief executive John Varley were also charged, but the cases against them were dropped before they went to trial.

WORLD

'Pandemic hurting poorest UK families'

LONDON

THE economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic is hitting hardest to those United Kingdom households supported by single parents and people from black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds, according to a study by the Institute for Social and Economic Research at the University of Essex.

After analyzing the answers of more than 17,000 respondents to the ongoing Understanding Society survey, the researchers built up a picture of people's financial situation during the last week of April, and back in January.

They concluded that all types of UK households had been made poorer by the recession, but that the poorest homes had been hurt the most.

Workers from black, Asian, and minority ethnic backgrounds a grouping

known in the UK as BAME and single parents were more likely than others to have lost their jobs, had reductions in their earnings, or to have not been helped by the government's furlough program.

The research showed 31 percent of BAME workers who had a reduction in their working hours had been placed on the government furlough program through which they got to stay at home and receive 80 percent of their salaries and 20 percent had lost their jobs.

That compared to 44 percent of households supported by wage earners who were not from the BAME demographic being placed on the furlough program; and 7 percent of them losing their jobs.

Joe Richardson, of the registered charity Gingerbread, which supports single parents in England and Wales,



A commuter wears a protective facemask as he waits at a tram-stop in central Manchester on June 5, 2020, as lockdown measures are eased during the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic. (AFP)

told The Guardian newspaper the figures were "particularly striking".

"We need to urgently understand the source of the difference," he said. "For example, to what extent it can be explained by differences in the type of jobs done by different groups."

Incomes drop

The survey found BAME household earnings had fallen, on average, from 441 pounds (US\$560) a week to 404 pounds, while non-BAME households had seen incomes fall from 547 pounds to an average of 503 pounds.

Many low-earners were behind on their bills and the demographic was five times as likely to

experience hunger as top earners.

Metro newspaper quoted Thomas Crossley, associate director for scientific content at Understanding Society, as saying: "These new data show us that the economic shocks caused by the pandemic have affected people unevenly across the UK."

An unnamed government spokesman said: "Our job retention and self-employment schemes are helping millions through the crisis. We've injected 6.5 billion pounds into the welfare safety net and have introduced mortgage holidays and tax deferrals."

Agencies

Zelensky not invited to Victory parade since Ukraine is not CIS member de facto – Kremlin

MOSCOW

UKRAINIAN President Vladimir Zelensky was not invited to attend the Victory parade in Moscow on June 24, since Ukraine is not a CIS member country de facto, and since it has not signaled its wish to share the joy of Victory Day celebrations, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told journalists yesterday.



"As far as I know, [the invitation to Zelensky] was not sent," Peskov said when asked whether Moscow had sent an official invitation to the Ukrainian leader. In comments on this decision, he stressed that "the renewal of official invitations to the heads of the Commonwealth of Independent States' nations is prioritized."

"A number of partners have said they want to come, to our joy. As we know, de facto and in many cases de jure Ukraine is not a member of the CIS, it shows no interest in continuing activity in its agencies this way or another, and has never signaled its wish to share the joy of Victory Day celebrations," Peskov added.

At his video conference with Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu on May 26, President Vladimir Putin announced that the anticipated Victory parade would be held on Moscow's Red Square on June 24.

The head of state explained he had chosen this date because June 24 was the day when back in 1945 the legendary historic parade of victors took place on Red Square, involving soldiers, who fought for Moscow, defended Leningrad and Stalingrad, liberated Europe and stormed Berlin.

Agencies

Swedish prosecutor names killer of PM Palme, closes 34-year case

STOCKHOLM

A GRAPHIC designer at an insurance company was the man who shot dead Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme in 1986, a prosecutor said yesterday, announcing that a case that has haunted Sweden for decades was now closed.

Palme (pictured), who led Sweden's Social Democrats for decades and served two periods as prime minister, was one of the architects of Scandinavia's model of a strong welfare state, and a fierce Cold War-era critic of both the United States and Soviet Union.

He was shot dead in central Stockholm in 1986 after a visit to the cinema with his wife and son.

Prosecutor Krister Petersson, who has led an investigation into the case since 2017, said the killer was Stig Engstrom, a suspect long known to Swedes as "Skandia man" after the company where he worked, with of-



fices near the scene of the shooting.

"Because the person is dead, I cannot bring charges against him and

have decided to close the investigation," Petersson said.

Wednesday's naming of the killer

as a lone gunman with no public political profile is unlikely to put to rest the conspiracy theories that have surrounded the assassination. For decades, Swedes have blamed a range of forces, from the CIA and Kurdish separatists to the South African security services. The prosecutor did not announce any major investigative breakthroughs that had helped solve the crime, and said the technical evidence was not new.

Engstrom has long been a suspect, known to have been present at the scene of the crime. He was repeatedly questioned by police, but dismissed relatively quickly from investigation.

Petersson said several witness accounts of the likely killer were in line with Engstrom's appearance, while witnesses also contradicted Engstrom's account of his movements at the scene.

Members of Engstrom's family have repeatedly dismissed accusations that he was the killer. Daily Ex-

pressen quoted his ex-wife as saying in an interview in February this year that he was too timid to have carried out the murder.

The paper quoted childhood friend Olle Madebrink as saying Engstrom was "the most normal person in the world. I can't believe anything else." Reuters was unable to immediately reach members of Engstrom's family.

While a petty criminal was convicted of Palme's killing decades ago, that judgement was later overturned. The subsequent failure of police to identify the culprit has left a scar on the psyche of a country that still prides itself on how safe it is to walk its streets.

Palme was prime minister between 1969 and 1976 and between 1982 and 1986. Some hail him as the architect of modern Sweden, while conservatives denounced his anti-colonialist views and criticism of the United States.

Agencies

China tightens international students' application for universities, colleges

BEIJING

CHINA will further tighten international students' applications for undergraduate programs in Chinese universities and colleges in an effort to uphold education fairness, said a recently released circular.

The circular, issued by the Ministry of Education, noted that students whose parents are both Chinese nationals or one parent is a Chinese national and who have acquired foreign nationality at birth are qualified for admittance to undergraduate programs of Chinese universities and colleges on the condition that they have a record of actually living abroad for more than two years in the last four years, in addition to other application requirements prescribed by the universities and colleges.

Those who have immigrated and acquired foreign nationality are qualified for admittance into the undergraduate programs of Chinese universities and colleges on the condition that they have held valid foreign passports or nationality certificates for at least four years and have a record of actually living abroad for more than two years in the last four years, in addition to other application requirements prescribed by the universities and colleges.

Universities and colleges need to strictly examine the nationality status and qualification of international students applying for admission in accordance with the law, said the circular.

Further confirmation should be conducted by the exit and entry departments of local public security organs if the nationality status of an applicant is in doubt, said the circular.

Universities and colleges can formulate their own requirements based on the circular for international students to apply for admission, it added.

The circular is set to take effect on Jan. 1, 2021. Xinhua



Xinhua

Aid must go directly to beneficiaries, says Premier Li

BEIJING

China will set up a special transfer payment mechanism to ensure that newly increased fiscal funds this year will directly benefit businesses and people. A host of related arrangements were given a green light on Tuesday at the State Council's executive meeting, chaired by Premier Li Keqiang.

It also was emphasized at the meeting that it is an important mission for the government this year to advance the six priorities where stability is key and the six areas where protections are needed. Areas that primarily rely on prefecture and county level governments are efforts to support jobs, people's basic living needs and businesses.

This year, the government will reduce tax and fee payments on enterprises by 2.5 trillion yuan

(US\$353 billion). This will effectively ease difficulties on businesses particularly micro, small and medium-sized ones and meet pressing demands from vulnerable individuals. Yet it will also lead to sizable shortfalls in the fiscal resources for prefecture and county governments.

The 2 trillion yuan of new fiscal funds made available by raising the budget deficit and issuing government bonds for COVID-19 control will go straight to prefecture and county governments.

"Both primary-level governments and companies look forward to benefiting from these funds as early as possible. This measure must be promptly and fully implemented," Li said.

Those at the meeting decided that a special transfer payment mechanism will be set up to en-



Premier Li Keqiang

sure that all new fiscal funds this year will be fully channeled to prefecture and county governments at the earliest possible time by increasing transfer payments

from central to local governments as well as transfer payments of government-managed funds.

Prefecture and county governments should create records to keep track of the use of funds and ensure that each item of expenditure is accounted for.

"The economy has been steadily reopening. We are also faced with great uncertainty in the global environment. Our top priority now is to help businesses and the people resolve their pressing difficulties," Li said.

"Though provincial governments will only be pass-throughs for these funds, they must not just sit idly by and do nothing. While enhancing the oversight of the funds, they will work to put more fiscal resources at primary-level governments' disposal to fill the shortfall of funds, thus ensure that

measures supporting jobs, livelihoods and market players are fully implemented."

It also was made clear at the meeting that it is important that the Ministry of Finance establish a mechanism to supervise the use of the funds.

The meeting also decided to roll out more measures to ease the difficulties of the country's foreign trade companies, which employ nearly 200 million people.

The country will encourage foreign trade firms to explore more international markets while simplifying procedures for them to sell goods to domestic customers, according to the meeting.

Financial institutions were encouraged to step up credit support for foreign trade firms, the meeting said.

Xinhua

China resolutely opposes foreign interference in Hong Kong affairs

RECENTLY, the National People's Congress (NPC), the top legislature of China, has adopted a decision on establishing and improving the legal system and enforcement mechanisms for the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) to safeguard national security.

The decision, made in accordance with China's Constitution and the Basic Law of the HKSAR, is a totally natural and justified move, as Hong Kong is a special administrative region of China, and its affairs fall entirely within China's domestic affairs.

However, the decision has

placed some external forces with ulterior motives on pins and needles. They gave a so-called joint statement regarding the national security legislation, threatened to plan a strong response, and lobbied for "immediate attention."

These hegemonic actions, with an attempt to interfere in Hong Kong's affairs and blatantly interfere in China's internal affairs, cannot intimidate the Chinese people and are doomed to fail.

The reason why Hong Kong has become a prominent risk of China's national security can be largely attributed to foreign interference.

From the illegal movement of "Occupy Central" in 2014 and the turbulence over proposed legislative amendments in 2019, external forces have been emerging from backstage. They kept on pointing fingers at Hong Kong affairs, fanning the flames of discontent, flagrantly ratcheted up pressure on the Chinese government and the HKSAR government, and encouraged opposition.

By particularly taking advantage of Hong Kong's national security loophole in legislation, they colluded with anti-China forces in Hong Kong, clamored for "Hong Kong independence," "self-deter-

mination" and "referendum," and applied the "burn with us" tactic in society, politics and economy.

With an ill intention to destroy the future of Hong Kong and the principle of "one country, two systems," the external forces are turning the HKSAR into a bridgehead of anti-China activities, a base camp of violence, and instigating a "color revolution" in Hong Kong, so as to contain China. Such an intention is obvious to all.

Only thieves hate burglar-proof doors. Those with a sinister intention now begin to act like a cat on hot bricks, as they come to realize that China is going to establish and

improve its legal system and enforcement mechanisms for Hong Kong, and their opportunities to divide, overthrow, destroy and make inroads into the country are diminishing. Agitated and flustered, they are repeatedly resorting to threatening and intimidation.

Of course, they still need excuses, so they kept on whitewashing the violent rioters as pro-democracy fighters, stigmatizing the law enforcement of Hong Kong police as violent suppression, and hailing the violent acts as a fight for freedom, no matter how these acts have trampled on the laws.

The double standards only exposed their ugly faces covered up by "human rights," "democracy," and "freedom," as well as their malicious motives of disrupting Hong Kong and containing China's development.

Their anxiety now exactly exposes their desperation, and their strong opposition against China's decision to make Hong Kong national security laws also reveals their true intention to disrupt China and Hong Kong.

Hong Kong is a part of China. Nobody values the special administrative region as much as the central government does; nobody

cares about the prosperity and stability of the HKSAR and its people's well-being as much as the central government does; and nobody implements the principle of "one country, two systems" and the Basic Law as earnestly as the central government does.

Since the modern times, the Chinese people have gone through tremendous sufferings and made huge sacrifices. The painful history of being weak and torn apart is still a fresh memory, and to achieve national rejuvenation and reunification always remains their tireless pursuit.

People's Daily

The
Guardian

SPORT



In this March 4, 2020, file photo, people wearing masks walk past the Olympic rings near the New National Stadium in Tokyo. It's been 2 1/2 months since the Tokyo Olympics were postponed until next year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. So where do the games stand? So far, many ideas about how the Olympic can take place are being floated by the International Olympic Committee, Japanese officials and politicians, and in unreported Japanese newspaper articles coming from local organizers and politicians. The focus is on soaring costs, fans, or no fans, possible quarantines for athletes, and cutting back to only "the essentials." (AP Photo)

Q&A: State of Tokyo Olympics 2 1/2 months after postponement

TOKYO

It's been 2 1/2 months since the Tokyo Olympics were postponed until next year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. So where do the games stand? So far, many ideas about how the Olympic can take place are being floated by the International Olympic Committee, Japanese officials and politicians, and in unreported Japanese newspaper articles coming from local organizers and politicians. The focus is on soaring costs, fans – or no fans – possible quarantines for athletes, and cutting back to only "the essentials."

No one blames the IOC for not knowing what conditions will be a year from now. And from the IOC perspective, there is no need yet to speak frankly and possibly alienate Japanese politicians and citizens, sponsors and TV broadcasters, and athletes.

The IOC executive board meets on Wednesday and will hear a brief presentation from Tokyo organizers on a remote hookup, explaining where things stand. Few surprises and few specifics are expected. The meeting is behind virtual closed doors, although IOC President Thomas Bach will speak afterward.

Q: Given the pandemic, will the Olympics really open on July 23, 2021? There are skeptics, particularly if no vaccine is available.

A: The IOC says "yes," although that was the stance just days before the 2020 games were postponed in late March. Japan and the IOC have agreed: the games cannot be postponed again. If they can't be held this time, they will be canceled.

IOC member John Coates, who oversees preparations for Tokyo, said a few weeks ago that the games face "real problems." Much has to do with the massive scale: 11,000 Olympians, 4,400 Paralympians, 206 national Olympic Committees, dozens of summer sports federations, 42 venues and more than 5,000 apartments to secure in the Athletes Village, about 25% of which are reported to have been sold. Pierre Ducrey, Olympic Games operations director, said last week that retaining the Olympic Village was "problem No. 1." This is without even raising the question of fans.

Q: So, will there be fans? Sports starting up around the world are doing it in empty venues.

A: Bach has not ruled out competing in empty venues. "This is not what we want," he said, in an interview with the BBC. But he has acknowledged there are questions about access to venues. All of this affects more than 4 million tickets already sold. Ticket sales are worth at least \$800 million to the local organizing committee. Organizers are unlikely to want to pay refunds. Tickets have a "force majeure" clause that might get organizers off the hook if the coronavirus is deemed beyond "Tokyo 2020's reasonable control." Not helping is that Japan, like many other countries, is heading into a recession due to the economic repercussions of the coronavirus shutdown.

Q: What will the postponement cost?

A: This is the best-kept secret. Tokyo 2020 CEO Toshiro Muto undoubtedly has a very good idea. He's a former deputy governor of the Bank of

Japan and a veteran of Japan's finance ministry. But he has declined to offer any numbers. The estimates in Japan for the postponement range from \$2 billion to 6 billion. The IOC has said it will chip in \$650 million "as our part of the assessment" toward the added cost. Therefore, the vast majority of extra costs fall to Japanese taxpayers. Tokyo said the games would cost \$7.3 billion when it won the bid in 2013. The official budget says the games will cost \$12.6 billion, though a government audit says it's twice that. All but \$5.6 billion is public money.

Ducrey, the Olympic Games operations director, said last week the IOC is in talks with insurers about some compensation for the postponed Olympics. The IOC has cancellation insurance but it's unclear if that covers an unprecedented postponement.

Q: How different might these Olympics look on TV?

A: No matter where the Olympics are held, or in what city, most Olympic venues look much the same on television. The venues are studios for a TV production. TV will have a year to adapt, watching how European soccer clubs, or the NBA, present their games. TV pays the Olympic bills, and the IOC cannot do without TV revenue. The IOC earns at least 73% of its income – about \$4 billion in a four-year Olympic cycle – from selling broadcast rights. By any calculation, it's difficult to see the games being canceled and the IOC losing its major income source. And don't forget, the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics open six months after Tokyo closes.

Q: Is there any deadline for organizers and the IOC to firm up plans?

A: Former Olympic minister Toshiaki Endo, a member of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling party, said last week that March was a possible deadline for deciding whether the postponed Tokyo Games can go ahead. Muto, the CEO of Tokyo 2020, has said few decisions will be made public before the fall about the shape of the Olympics. Everyone from Bach to Muto to Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike is preaching cuts. Bach, who has termed putting on the games next year "an enormous task," says old ways of running the Olympics have "to be questioned." Muto has been open about slashing costs and "reducing service levels." Koike has used the words "streamlined and simplified" but has offered nothing specific. Among the cuts could be having only one opening and closing ceremony, combined for both the Olympics and Paralympics.

Q: Where do the athletes stand in all of this?

A: Olympics athletes have no single voice. Most get only one chance at participating. The pandemic has financially crushed many Olympics-related bodies – sports federations and national Olympic committee – that help fund athletes. Bach earlier this year warned against using the Tokyo Olympics as a platform for highlighting political and social causes. That will certainly be challenged next year in the wake massive protests condemning the death of black Americans by law enforcement. American hammer thrower Gwen Berry wrote in an open letter this week that "the idea that sport and politics can be separated is absurd." AP

Only thing normal about golf's return is the score

FORT WORTH, Texas

RORY McIlroy and Dustin Johnson were together on the first tee Tuesday morning, just like they were three weeks ago at Seminole for a charity match that was the first live golf on television in 66 days.

This was different. They were not wearing microphones and their caddies were at their sides, including Harry Diamond, who had been quarantined at McIlroy's guest house in Florida the last two weeks. They will be playing for a \$7.5 million purse, along with more ranking points than have ever been distributed at Colonial.

This was real. It just didn't seem that way. With no spectators and limited access, it felt like Colonial had been rented out for a corporate outing, only the employees happened to be the best players in the world – McIlroy and Johnson, Brooks Koepka and Justin Thomas, Jon Rahm and Xander Schauffele – all eager to return to work.

Golf is back. It's just not back to normal, and there's no telling how long that will take, or what that will even mean.

"You can't go into this thing thinking it's going to be normal because it's not," Thomas said. "I would say 2020 is beyond a bizarre year so far, and especially in the world of sports. If we all want to get back and play the game that we love – and not just for us but for the fans and everybody at home – we're just going to have to get over the fact that it's going to be different and be a little weird."

Weird was having a cotton swab on the end of a long, skinny stick that reached deep into the nasal cavity. This is a "condition of competition." In medical terms, it's a PCR test to detect active infection of the coronavirus, and every player, caddie and essential personnel has to take one upon arrival.

Ropes were in place, even without fans. Television cables run along the rope lines, and this helps keep mowers away.

Signs at Colonial preach social distancing, and this being golf, the signs said 6 feet (2 meters) was roughly two club lengths. Violations were plenty on Tuesday, from caddies and players riding next to each other in carts to the range, or a coach, caddie and player huddled together to set up a putting camera.

Then again, they're all in the "bubble" the tour is trying to create for the return to reduce as much risk as possible. All have been tested.



Rory McIlroy, right, smiles during practice for the Charles Schwab Challenge golf tournament at the Colonial Country Club in Fort Worth, Texas, Tuesday, June 9, 2020. The Challenge is the first PGA tour event since the COVID-19 pandemic began. (AP)

Ryan Palmer, a Colonial member chosen to hit the first tee shot, says he has been ultra aware of precautions during the three months the COVID-19 pandemic shut down golf. That didn't alleviate his anxiety after his test.

"I won't lie to you, I was kind of nervous waiting for the results," he said.

Players talk about needing to get it right with more eyeballs than usual – motor sports is the only other major sport that has resumed in America. But there's only so much they can do. That's why Commissioner Jay Monahan said he was confident in the plan to return, but "we won't be comfortable until we're told we can be comfortable."

More than one player said he felt a responsibility for golf to get it right. But that goes beyond the course of play, even with no one watching.

"I think golf is probably the most likely and best chance for things to be successful as possible over probably any other sports, just given you're outside," Jordan Spieth said. "And then this weekly testing should keep

guys clear. It's really up to you. It's on the individual. If you're going to go out to eat or go out to crowded places, you're going to risk potentially missing a few weeks.

"I have faith in the guys that are playing and that are within that bubble that they're going to do what it takes within the week to ensure that they stay healthy," he said. "And I think it'll work well."

Even in the quiet of a practice round that normally would be bustling with activity outside the ropes, the relief of being back to work was evident. Some players haven't seen each other in three months. Barring injury, this is as long as anyone has gone between tournaments.

Analogies to opening day are not far off. The year starts on Maui for tournament winners who at most have gone two months without playing. The new season typically starts a few weeks after the previous one. Even when the tour announced in April its plan to return at Colonial, there was no guarantee it would happen.

"It would be nice if we could get some fighter jets flying over the first tee shots, something like that," Spieth said. "But yeah, it's got a little bit of that kind of excitement to it."

The excitement will be internalized like never before. No spectators means no noise. Even for television, CBS anchor Jim Nantz said golf broadcasters often rely on the crowd reaction to determine the pitch in their voice.

Imagine a 20-foot putt on the 18th hole on Sunday and the celebration that follows – maybe not a lack of one, but certainly unlike anything golf has experienced. It will be like that for five weeks, assuming the return goes smoothly and there's no reason – inside the world of golf or around the country – that it needs to shut down.

For now, they'll tee it up on Thursday. No mulligans. No gimmies. "The 4-footer I have on the first hole matters," Thomas said.

Just like normal. And that might be the only normalcy left.

AP

Federer to miss rest of the season following further knee surgery

NEW YORK

ROGER Federer will miss the rest of the season – including two planned grand slams – after undergoing a second round of surgery on his right knee.

The record 20-time major champion confirmed on Wednesday he had suffered "a setback" in his recovery from a February operation he had hoped would ensure he was fit for Wimbledon.

Tennis's biggest event was subsequently cancelled due to the coronavirus crisis, with the French Open – which Federer had been poised to skip – provisionally moved to September and October.

That would mean it starting just a week after the US Open, although both grand slams remain in doubt due to Covid-19, while Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic last week expressed reservations about competing in New York.

The absence of his two biggest rivals would have given Federer, who turns 39 in August, a huge opportunity to keep ahead of them in the race to end up with the most men's majors in history.

Nadal is just one victory behind Federer, while Djokovic's Australian Open triumph in January took him to 17 grand slam wins. Federer said in a statement: "A few weeks ago,



Roger Federer

having experienced a setback during my initial rehabilitation, I had to have an additional quick arthroscopic procedure on my right knee.

"Now, much like I did leading up to the 2017 season, I plan to take the necessary time to be 100 per cent ready to play at my highest level.

"I will be missing my fans and the tour dearly but I will look forward to seeing everyone back on tour at the start of the 2021 season."

Wimbledon was cancelled in April for the first time since the Second

World War, with organisers deciding against staging it behind closed doors.

It had been due to be played between June 29 and July 12.

Djokovic, meanwhile, has threatened to snub playing at the US Open and instead focus on clay ahead of the rescheduled French Open.

He told Serbia's state broadcaster RTS: "For me, currently, as things stand, most probably the season will continue on clay at the beginning of September."

The world number one reiterated

his opposition to "extreme" restrictions that could be in place in New York, including a 14-day quarantine for people arriving from outside the US, restricted access to courts, and limited ability to move around the city.

Defending US Open and French Open champion Nadal last week said he was not currently prepared to travel to play in New York.

The US Tennis Association could make a decision as early as next week about whether to hold the US Open at all.

AP

Premier League clubs lost £600 million in season before virus, says report

LONDON

PREMIER League clubs made a combined loss of £600 million in the 2018/19 season, even before suffering the financial pain of the coronavirus pandemic, a report revealed on Tuesday.

Analysis from football finance experts Vysyble shows the 20 clubs in the English top-flight combined to post the huge loss despite record revenues of £5.15 billion (\$6.6 billion).

The financial impact of COVID-19 is set to have a huge impact on the Premier League, even if plans to complete the current season behind closed doors go smoothly.

Premier League sides face paying a reported £330 million to broadcasters in rebates as matches could not be completed on schedule.

An estimated £126 million could also be lost in matchday income from gate receipts and hospitality.

"The COVID-19 virus is not the cause of football's financial distress. It is merely the accelerator on what our data has very clearly and very correctly identified as a much longer-term problem," said Vysyble director Roger Bell.

"The 2018/19 numbers are a disturbing and profoundly worrying financial outcome from England's senior football divisions and is symptomatic of the deeper issues with the overall financial model."

Wage costs for Premier League clubs have risen to £3.12 billion. Everton posted alarming losses

of £111 million, while Chelsea's failure to qualify for the Champions League saw the Blues lose £96 million.

Yet the most worrying sign for the future financial health of the league may come from Tottenham. Spurs posted a league-high profit of £68.6 million for the 2018/19 season on the back of a run to the Champions League final.

But the London club announced last week they had borrowed £175 million from the Bank of England.

They fear they could lose £200 million over the next year due to the loss of matchday income, cancellation of non-football events such as NFL matches and concerts and rebates owed to broadcasters.

"Our data has consistently demonstrated that football has been the master of its own misfortune with an over-reliance on TV revenues, staff cost-to-revenue ratios regularly in excess of safe operating limits (UEFA guidance recommends 70 per cent) and a failure to recognise key financial dynamics and trends," added Bell.

The economic outlook for the Championship is also bleak.

Four Championship clubs have yet to release their full 2019 accounts, but the second tier of English football has so far combined for economic losses of £307 million.

The final economic loss total for all 24 EFL Championship clubs is expected to be at least £350 million.

AFP

A year to go but postponed Euro leaves UEFA with plenty to ponder

PARIS

IN different circumstances, the eyes of the football world would have been on Rome for the opening game of Euro 2020 this Friday, but instead the tournament was postponed by a year and UEFA are considering changes to the unprecedented format in a Europe shaken by the coronavirus pandemic.

The competition will still officially be called Euro 2020 when it finally kicks off on June 11, 2021, presumably at the Stadio Olimpico which was supposed to host the first match between Italy and Turkey.

That was before the health crisis forced European football's governing body to take action in mid-March and delay the tournament by 12 months as the continent became the epicentre of the pandemic.

Fast forward almost three months from then and Europe has been traumatised by the impact of Covid-19, with more than 180,000 confirmed deaths and well over two million cases in total.

Italy, supposed to be the first port of call for a European Championship staged for the first time in 12 different nations, has suffered 34,000 deaths.

Only the UK among European countries, with over 40,000 deaths, has been harder hit. The semi-finals and final of the Euro are due to be played at Wembley in London.

Many European countries are gradually coming out of lockdowns but their economies are reeling and there remain fears of a second wave of infections.

It will take time for international travel restrictions to be lifted and possibly longer before governments consider it safe to allow gatherings large enough to fill the large stadiums set aside to host matches during the Euro.

- Changes to venues? -

These are two major unknowns that UEFA must deal with. The body was already facing criticism, including from climate change activists, for its decision to spread the 24-team tournament across the entire continent, with games being played in venues as far apart as Dublin and Baku.

However, UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin recently hinted that the number of host cities could be reduced. In an interview with beIN Sports, he admitted to having "some issues" with three cities.

"So we will discuss further, and in principle, we will do it in 12 cities. But if not, we are ready to do it



Euro 2020 was supposed to start this Friday in Rome before being postponed by a year because of the coronavirus pandemic (AFP Photo)

in 10, nine or eight," Ceferin said.

A key UEFA Executive Committee meeting set for next Wednesday, June 17, could see an announcement made regarding that as well as regarding a likely change of venue for this year's postponed Champions League final.

It is not clear which host cities are being called into question, although organisers in Glasgow have insisted that the Scottish city is not affected.

UEFA have plenty more to consider, including the issue of reimbursing supporters who had bought tickets for matches before the postponement.

It must still work out when to reschedule the play-offs to decide the final four qualified nations for the Euro, but

it says that the 2020/21 Nations League competition will still go ahead as planned.

Meanwhile, the postponement was not necessarily bad news for competing sides.

England manager Gareth Southgate might have been without injured captain Harry Kane and his fellow striker Marcus Rashford, of Manchester United, had the tournament gone ahead this year. Now he can look ahead in the hope that all his key men will be raring to go in 2021.

"At one point we were possibly looking at being without Marcus Rashford and Harry Kane, or at the very best both of those not having a lot of football," Southgate told Sky Sports.

"The age of the team you would hope would be better in a year's time but we

have to go and prove that on the pitch."

Currently the top ranked team in the world, Belgium recently moved to tie down coach Roberto Martinez, extending his contract through to 2022.

The Netherlands, another of the co-hosts, should have Memphis Depay, one of their standout players, fully fit again after a knee injury, and coach Ronald Koeman will hope to be back on form after being hospitalised with a heart problem in May.

However, the delay may not be great news for holders Portugal, whose talisman Cristiano Ronaldo will be 36 by the time the finals eventually come around. All going to plan.

AFP

Neymar faces criminal complaint for homophobia

SAO PAULO

A BRAZILIAN gay rights activist has filed a criminal complaint against Neymar for homophobia, after the football superstar called his mother's boyfriend an anti-gay slur in comments leaked to the media.

The Sao Paulo prosecutor's office confirmed to AFP it had received the complaint, which it must now examine to decide whether to open a case against the Paris Saint-Germain and Brazil star.

Neymar's communications team declined to comment on the complaint.

The case was brought by activist Agripino Magalhaes, who said on Instagram he planned to press charges against Neymar and his friends for "criminal homophobia, hate speech and death threats" over comments made in a private conversation on a gaming site.

In the audio recording, Neymar, 28, can be heard using slurs against

his mother's new boyfriend, Tiago Ramos, as he and his friends discuss a supposed fight between the couple.

Ramos, 22, and Neymar's mother, Nadine Goncalves, 52, announced in April they were dating. Brazil's tabloid press was soon running lurid stories about Ramos, a model who is openly bisexual.

Neymar and his friends were discussing rumors that the new couple had had a violent fight, after Ramos was hospitalized last Tuesday with arm wounds sustained at Goncalves's house, according to police.

Neymar said his mother had lied to her family, indicating he did not believe her story that Ramos had tripped on the stairs and cut himself on a pane of glass.

One of his friends can be heard saying that they should assault Ramos with a broomstick in the anus.

Neighbors reportedly said they heard screaming from a fight at Goncalves's house the night Ramos was injured.

French court upholds end to the country's soccer season

PARIS

FRANCE's highest administrative court on Tuesday upheld the decision to cancel the rest of the domestic soccer season amid the coronavirus pandemic and suspended the relegations of Amiens and Toulouse to the second division.

The Conseil d'Etat issued its ruling after Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas and the two demoted clubs took the case to court. Amiens and Toulouse pleaded to have their relegation overturned while Lyon hoped it could get a favorable ruling forcing the league to play the remaining 10 matches of the aborted season.

The league was canceled on April 30 with Paris Saint-Germain declared champion, while Lyon finished outside the European places in seventh.

The Conseil d'Etat ruled that there was "no serious doubt as to the legality of the decision" to end the season prematurely. However, it suspended the relegation of Amiens and Toulouse, ordering the French league to rethink the format of the 2020-21 season before June 30.

Amiens and Toulouse have pro-

posed a 22-team league next season. They had argued that their relegation was unjust because there were no statutes in place for such a scenario, and that it was an arbitrary decision considering the standings could have been different if the pandemic had led to the league shutting down earlier.

In its ruling, the judge considered that the French league's board could not base its decision to demote the last two Ligue 1 teams on the fact that the agreement concluded with the French football federation (FFF) provided for a limit of 20 clubs. The court pointed out that the current deal with the FFF expires on June 30 and that a new accord will have to be signed.

The French league and the FFF both said they took note of the court's request and did not elaborate on further steps.

Last month, Aulas had written to French Prime Minister Edouard Philippe and Sports Minister Roxana Maracineanu to plead his case, arguing that the premature conclusion of the season would have catastrophic financial consequences for French clubs.

Lifelines for Hazard and Suarez as La Liga title race looks to forgotten stars

MADRID

WHEN La Liga stopped they were not expected to play any part in the rest of the title race but when the season resumes on Thursday, Eden Hazard and Luis Suarez could be set to decide it.

Hazard was looking beyond Real Madrid to the Euros after undergoing surgery on his right foot in March while some felt Suarez had played his last game for Barcelona after having a knee operation in January.

Instead, both have been thrown a lifeline, Suarez to preserve his career at Barca and Hazard to kickstart his with Madrid.

After Real Madrid paid 100 million euros (\$108.4 million) to sign him from Chelsea last year, fans sprinted outside the Santiago Bernabeu to beat the queues for Hazard's unveiling, and around 50,000 made it inside.

However questions were soon being asked about his weight in pre-season, and he has struggled with injury all season.

Every time he has come back, Hazard has needed time to find form, initially lacking that burst of speed and change of direction that at his best, can leave a defender for dead.

But reports from Valdebebas have been positive, with Thibaut Courtois saying on Sunday he had been surprised by the Belgian's "rhythm" before adding a note of caution. "We can't expect him to be on top form without playing," he said.

Barca coach Quique Setien has been similarly circumspect over Suarez, who is also not renowned for quick returns to sharpness after time away.

- Fitness questions -

"He is better than we expected," Setien said on Sunday. "But the question is how ready he is after so long out and whether he is ready to start."

Despite winning the Clasico on March 1, Madrid were in a slump before the hiatus, that 2-0 victory over Barcelona their only win in five games.

They lost the defensive steel that saw them go 21 matches unbeaten either side of Christmas and a familiar bluntness, still lingering from Cristiano Ronaldo's departure, remains.

Hazard was supposed to help fill the creative void but 11 games over five and a half weeks offers no room for rustiness and, unlike Suarez, this is still a new team to him. Fifteen appearances in 10 months hardly breeds familiarity.

Barca meanwhile need bodies as they have only 19 fit senior players, which leaves them surprisingly ill-equipped to capitalise on two extra substitutes.

The club sold back-ups in January to raise funds for a striker that never arrived and instead they were left to exploit La Liga's emergency signing rule in February to poach Martin Braithwaite from Leganes.

But Suarez brings experience and quality, not to mention the best out of Lionel Messi.

In full flow, Messi could see off Real Madrid but the Argentinian has had his own injury problems this

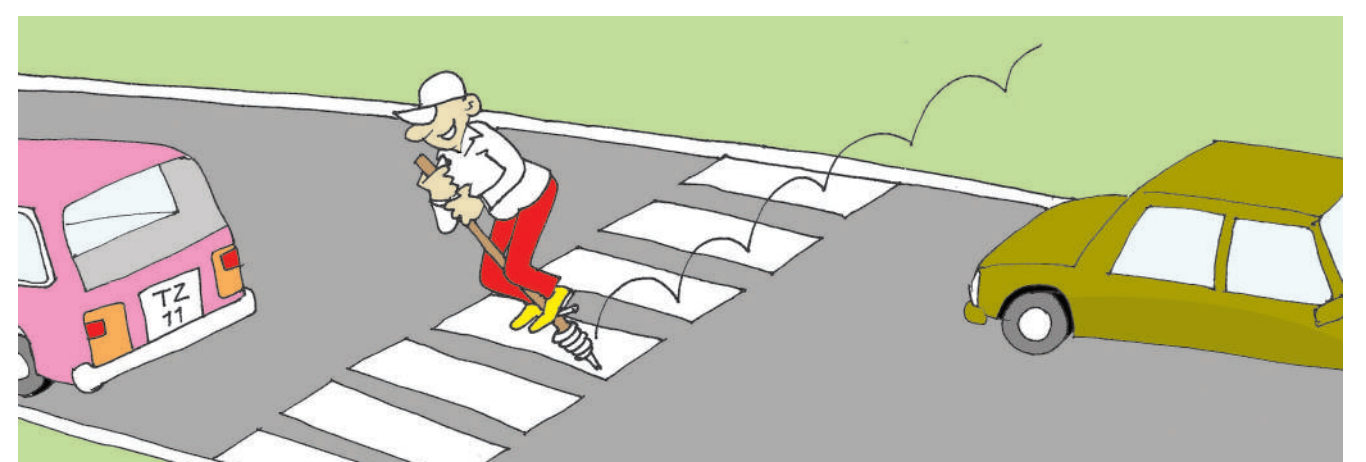


Eden Hazard has endured a nightmare first season at Real Madrid but could make amends in the final 11 games. (AFP Photo)

season, the latest a minor thigh complaint that led to him missing three training sessions last week.

Barcelona have a two-point advantage and the marginally more favourable fixtures, particularly as the usually heated

Gwiji by David Chikoko



AFP

Coast Union coach now wary of Namungo FC prowess

SPORT

A year to go but postponed Euro leaves UEFA with plenty to ponder

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Coastal Union's head coach Juma Mgunda

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

COASTAL Union's head coach Juma Mgunda is wary of the challenge his side is to face against Namungo FC in a Vodacom Premier League match scheduled for Saturday at Mkwak-

wani Stadium in Tanga.

Coach Mgunda said although his troops are preparing well for the encounter, he is not underrating the visitors who are occupying the fourth position in the league standing.

Mgunda said he knows that Namungo FC will come out flat for revenge after his side had beat them in the league's first phase encounter played at the latter's backyard, Majaliwa Stadium, in Lindi.

He said morale in his club's camp is high, but he has advised his players to play their lungs out as Namungo FC are not mere pushovers.

Coastal Union are holding the fifth position in the top flight log, having registered 46 points from 28 games.

Namungo FC are placed fourth in the table with 50 points from the same number of games.

"It will not be an easy match, our opponents Namungo FC are a strong side with good players, we are training very hard so as we can collect the required three points and close the gap with them," the coach disclosed.

Namungo FC head coach

Thierry Hitimana is reported in the media to have stated that his charges are looking forward to winning all of their remaining matches in the league.

The Burundian tactician said his aim is to finish the league on one of the top four spots.

"For now we are looking forward to winning all of our remaining Premier League matches so as we can be on the top four, everyone in our camp is ready for that challenge," he said.

Coastal Union, as it is the case for Namungo FC, will participate in their first clash in the top flight after the competition's resumption.

The domestic top flight and the rest of sporting events were suspended on March 18 due to the Covid-19 pandemic, but the government announced that sporting activities should resume, starting with football tournaments.

Vodacom Premier League, First Division League (FDL) and Second Division League (SDL) sides started taking part in training from June 1 to shape up for the rest of their respective competitions' fixtures.

Ndanda FC in pursuit of 12 points to cling on to VPL

By Correspondent Faustine Feliciane

NDANDA FC head coach, Abdul Mingange, believes his squads needs 43 points to nail a place in the Premier League next season.

The coach said his club is, therefore, out to register 12 points in the squad's remaining nine games in this season's Vodacom Premier League.

Mingange pointed out he is lately working hard to see to it his players get back to full fitness before their coming top flight clash.

"My outfit's two friendly clashes with Namungo FC have given me opportunity to effectively assess my club's form, a section of my players are not fit, I'm trying to use the remaining few days to improve their fitness," the coach stated.

He was adamant he believes his squad will maintain its place in the Premier League next season, should the squad post the needed 12 points.

"I believe 43 points will have us compete in the Premier League next season, which is so far our prime target," he disclosed.

The former Azam FC coach stated financial constraints that Ndanda FC currently face are, though, the squad's biggest challenge.

"A player will hardly be in better state psychologically if he won't get his salary, this is a problem in our squad," he stated.

Ndanda FC has been placed 16th in the Vodacom Premier League's standing, having notched 31 points from 29 matches.



Ndanda Football Club

They have come out with seven wins, managed draw in 10 matches and lost 12 games.

Meanwhile, Yanga's Congolese forward, David Molinga, seems to have come into collision course with his side's leadership after he was left out of the squad's trip to Shinyanga, where they will lock horns with Mwadui FC in a Vodacom Premier League clash penned for Saturday.

Yanga, consisting of 22 players, headed for Shinyanga yesterday morning to confront Mwadui FC in the duel.

Molinga was earlier said to have refused to join the rest of the side in the trip with no reasons for his move, although assistant coach, Charles Boniface Mkwasa, had included the player in the list.

Molinga's absence in the side was brought to light, given he was at his home whereas his team mates had slept at the camp and made the trip early Wednesday.

The forward, nevertheless, pointed out he was not included in the squad and that is why he stayed at his home.

"It is not true, I was not in the list of players released by the coach, that is why I made my way back home, leaving the rest to make the trip," Molinga said.

"I'm surprised I was told to prepare for the trip with few hours remaining. I'm here to play soccer, why should I refuse to travel with the team? There is something the officials are hiding from me."

The forward stated he has been featuring in

training with the rest of the squad and has never missed even a day in the drills but he was not mentioned in the list of those that were to make the trip.

"I was then told I should prepare for the trip, I know I'm probably not wanted in the squad, I will leave the squad after the completion of my contract."

Yanga leadership, nevertheless, maintain the player lacks discipline.

The club's director of competitions, Thabit Kandoro, stated it is not the first time for the player to opt out of the side's trips.

"He did the same when we went to Lindi to lock horns with Namungo FC, he apologised, he has repeated the mistake and he ends up blaming officials, this is not right," Kandoro said.

Yanga travel to Shinyanga minus David Molinga

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

YANGA have travelled to Shinyanga to face Mwadui FC in a Vodacom Premier League clash, slated for Saturday, with the former's forward, David Molinga, opting out of the trip.

Yanga information officer Hassan Bumbuli disclosed the side left for Shinyanga without the forward that has refused to make the trip for undisclosed reasons.

"Molinga was in the list of players that are to head to Shinyanga but he has refused to make the trip. We have yet to know reasons for his decision, team manager went to talk to him at his home, I don't know what happened," he disclosed.

"It looks like he has refused to make the trip, the leadership will meet to get to know reasons for his move much as this is not for him to do so."

Yanga's manager, Abeid Mziba, said he went to Molinga's house to inform the latter of his inclusion in the trip but the player refused to travel.

"He has problems, I think so. When the coach was releasing names of players making the trip, his team mates heard his name, will he be the only one that did not hear his name?" Mziba queried.

The team manager said he went to Molinga's room and pleaded with him to join his team mates but the player disclosed he does not want to travel as he did not hear his name in the list.

"I will present a report to the leadership, telling the latter he has refused to travel, they will know what to do," he stated.

"His name was on number 17 in the list of the players, why should he say he did not hear his name?"

Molinga conceded he refused to travel but disclosed he opted for the move given he got the news with few hours to go, whereas he was not in the list.

"I went to training yesterday evening, but I did not hear my name mentioned in the list, that is why I went to my house, I'm surprised I was then told to travel in the morning," the Congolese striker disclosed.

"I opted out given I can not be perceived as a normal player whilst I'm a disciplined professional."

He pointed out he is surprised to see players that had not trained with the rest in the team make the trip.



David Molinga

Luc Eymael jets into Dar

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

YANGA's head coach, Luc Eymael, arrived in Tanzania yesterday from his homeland, Belgium, where he went after the suspension of sporting activities due to corona virus outbreak.

The Belgian gaffer arrived at Mwalimu Julius Nyerere International Airport in Dar es Salaam.

Coach Eymael (pictured) said he is delighted to be back in the country for his job and pointed out he is looking forward to meeting his players.

"It is good that I'm back, I'm looking forward to resuming my work," the coach stated in a brief interview monitored online.

Eymael left the country mid March after the government had suspended all sporting activities due to coronavirus outbreak, he was expected in the country last Saturday but did not show up, saying he had some issues to sort with a travelling agency which was handling his trip.

Yanga information officer, Hassan Bumbuli, on Tuesday told this paper that the coach will board a flight today to join the team in Shinyanga.

"If he comes on Wednesday, he will rest to the following day then board a flight to join the team in Shinyanga," he said.

In his absence, the team was under the tutelage of his assistant, Charles Boniface Mkwasa, who guided the Jangwani Street-based side to three friendly matches.

Yanga are placed third in the on third place in the Vodacom Premier League's log.

They have accumulated 51 points from 27 games played so far, while Mwadui FC holds the 12th spot after notching 34 points from 28 games.

Meanwhile, Yanga left for Shinyanga by bus yesterday without three key players, captain Papy Tshishimbi, David Molinga and Erick Kabamba.

Bumbuli said Tshishimbi has been left as he is not feeling well, but could not give reasons why Molinga and Kabamba were left.

Unconfirmed reports say Molinga, who is a leading Yanga scorer this season with eight goals, was in the initial list of players travelling to Shinyanga, but his name was dropped due to disciplinary issues.



Flexibles by David Chikoko

HOW DO YOU KEEP A LOW PROFILE IN YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE PHOTO?

