



National Pg 3

Water engineers dismissed from employment



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Sesame growers call for better prices



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Easy conditions for farmers' loans



Long delay in AU \$9m dues leads to humiliation of Juba diplomats

ADDIS ABABA

REPRESENTATIVES of South Sudan will no longer take part in African Union meetings as the Juba authorities have piled up unpaid membership fees to the tune of \$9m.

South Sudan diplomatic officials were caught by surprise on Tuesday last week when they were asked to leave an AU meeting here.

The AU sanctioned South Sudan after it failed to pay annual membership dues for the past three years, stated a June 17 letter to the South Sudan Foreign Affairs ministry.

It was signed by Ambassador James Pitia Morgan (pictured), South Sudan's permanent representative to the African Union and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

"We were barred from participating in the AU meeting as of June 16, 2020," the letter noted.

He described the scene in the meeting as "dramatic and embarrassing" when the chairperson of the meeting stopped the proceedings to inform South Sudan's diplomats that their participation was unprocedural.

"We should not allow our country to be



We were barred from participating in the AU meeting as of June 16, 2020, said Morgan

embarrassed at this regional, continental and international stage," said Morgan, who called South Sudan "a proud nation and proud people."

South Sudan owes the AU slightly more than \$9m, with the deputy Foreign Affairs minister Deng Dau Deng blaming the government's years of overdue payments on the current situation the country is facing. He cited the Covid-19 pandemic, noting that South Sudan made partial payments to the AU late last year.

"South Sudan was due to deliver on a commitment slated for December to January, as we paid 40 per cent of our contribution and membership [fee] to the African Union. We are committed as a country to pay our contribution but it's just delayed because of the situation that we are in," he elaborated.

Deng insisted that South Sudan will be ready to pay what it owes the AU once the coronavirus crisis "normalises."

Nhial Tit Mammer, a policy analyst with the Sudd Institute, a think tank in Juba, said that the government should avoid using the civil war and the pandemic as

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Confusion reigns over 'Covid-19 school fees'



Residents of Nanjaru village accord Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa a hearty welcome as he arrived there yesterday during an ongoing official tour of Ruangwa District in Lindi Region. Photo: PMO

By Henry Mwangonde

THE government yesterday warned school owners intent on benefiting from the Covid-19 pandemic by forcing parents to pay schools fees for the three months when students were not in schools.

Dr Leonard Akwilapo, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, told The Guardian that the government was aware of people who are taking advantage of the situation.

He said: "This is intolerable and the government will not allow this to go unchecked. All people who are behind this should stop immediately as punitive measures will be taken against those who go against the government's directives."

Dr Akwilapo insisted on the use of wisdom between school owners and parents over paying fees for children in the post Covid-19 reopening after complaints that schools are demanding too much from them, contrary to ministerial directives.

A number of parents who send their children to private schools have raised concern that they are forced to pay premiums above what they were supposed to give before the pandemic broke out.

"This matter is so simple that it can be solved in 30 minutes if the two sides (parents and school owners) take it positively."

"You know, the problem is that each side is pulling towards itself. The government directed

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'Deliver land title deeds the week after payment'

By Guardian Correspondent, Tanga

THE Minister for Lands, Housing and Human Settlements Development, William Lukuvi, has directed the issuance of title deeds within one week after the applicant finalises all procedures for acquiring a title deed for land occupancy.

He also instructed that people be given their land title deeds from district councils after having paid for them, to remove inconveniences and costs to applicants following up the documents at regional land offices.

The minister gave the directive here

yesterday when inaugurating the Tanga Regional Land Office at a brief ceremony also attended by Health minister Umyy Mwalimu, the Permanent Secretary in the Lands ministry Mary Makondo, Tanga Regional Commissioner Martine Shigella, Commissioner of Lands Nathaniel Nghode, Tanga Regional Administrative Officer Judica Omari and the region's district commissioners.

Lukuvi said the ministry has put to effect the vision by President John Magufuli of removing unnecessary hardships for Tanzanians seeking to obtain title deeds

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EACJ dismisses Mbowe's plaint vs Attorney General

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THE Arusha-based East African Court of Justice has refused to grant interim orders sought by the national chairman of Chadema, Freeman Mbowe and four other applicants against Tanzania's Attorney General.

In Application No. 2 of 2019 Mbowe and the other leaders of political parties sought orders to restrain the government from applying certain provisions of the Political Parties (Amendment) Act 2019.

The applicants, led by Mbowe, lodged their application to the first instance division of the court, which still has to adjudicate on matters in the plaint

brought up as reference.

The court has meanwhile granted an application in Taxation Reference No.1 of 2019, involving the EAC Secretary General vs Margareth Ziziwa, the former Speaker of the East African Legislative Assembly (EALA).

The application challenged instruction fees of \$359,376.99 awarded to the former Speaker on 4th June 2019 in Taxation Cause No. 1 of 2019.

The EAC secretary general sought orders setting aside the amount of fees for a more reasonable and lesser award in the interest of justice.

The court granted the application and

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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 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 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 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.



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



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Several government employees in Kagera Region in police hands yesterday in connection with allegations relating to fraud and misuse of public funds. Photo: Correspondent Allawi Kaboyo

'Deliver land title deeds the week after payment'

FROM PAGE 1

for their land plots as well as removing long distance travel and often the need for accommodation in following up on the documents.

He urged district executive directors to ensure that where title deeds in their areas are complete, they ensure that the assistant registrar in the regional land office hand over the documents

for onward transmission to the rightful occupants.

All land records in what were zonal land offices have been sent to the relevant regions, the minister noted.

Since opening the new Tanga Region Land Office more than 300 title deeds have been prepared and registered in the region, he observed.

Establishing regional land offices

shall remove hardship in following up title deeds and thus also reduce land Permanent Secretary Makondo said efforts by the government in establishing regional land offices will simplify government plans to plan, survey and effect land occupancy titles, to shed most land conflicts in the country.

RC Shigela urged DEDs executive

directors to ensure they fully make use of the regional land office. People should obtain title deeds within the local council premises instead of pursuing the matter in the regional offices, he emphasised.

Land experts in the regional land office must also be sought out to resolve land conflicts in various districts, he added.

Confusion reigns over 'Covid-19 school fees'

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school boards to sit with parents to reach a consensus sensitive to the interest of everybody and we expect that to happen," he stressed.

Parents should also agree that schools are opening up and fees will be needed, he said.

Some parents who spoke to 'The Guardian' said they had received notices from schools which show that they are supposed to pay school fees for the time their children spent at home.

Some said that they are being pushed to pay an increased amount of fees, but to their surprise the notices do not give a breakdown and reasons for the increase.

One parent said that he is forced to pay 1.5m/- in fees between June and November, including three months when his child was at home. "I'm supposed to pay 900,000/- from June to August and 600,000/- from September to December.

It is the same annual school fees I was required to pay if it wasn't for the outbreak of coronavirus," said Michael Kayuni, a city parent.

"I'm wondering why I pay school fees when my child was at home. He didn't use any school facilities. We're paying for what?" he queried.

He urged that the government intervene in the situation, taking into account that there are many parents who have lost jobs and businesses due to the pandemic.

"I have a child at a private school in Dar es Salaam. I was supposed to pay 900,000/- but I have received a notice that I am supposed to pay 1.2m/- without telling me in details what the

increase is all about," said one parent who declined to be named.

A school owner in Coast Region sent a message to parents urging them to pay the school fees in full upon arrival come Monday next week.

"There is no change on the fee for the remaining half of the academic year. If you have paid any advance at the beginning of this academic year 2020, then you are expected to clear any difference as shown on your invoice. We hope you understand that school fees cannot be re-negotiated in any way as school management operations and tasks have to be carried on by all means," reads part of the message.

"We clearly understood government directives, but some schools are still demanding that children should carry sanitizers and water pales contrary to the directives," said Moses Lupa, another parent.

The government has allowed schools to reopen on June 29, setting off a flurry of activity as households prepare to send their kids back to class.

Prof Joyce Ndalichako, the minister for Education, Science and Technology had on Tuesday last week assured parents that they would not be required to pay fees for the time their children spent at home.



I'm wondering why I pay school fees when my child was at home. He didn't use any school facilities. We're paying for what?

EACJ dismisses Mbowe's complaint vs Attorney General

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awarded \$175,000 plus VAT, and also ordered that each party bear its own costs.

The same division of the court dismissed Reference No. 1 of 2017 where Erick Kabalisa challenged the Rwanda Attorney General.

The applicant claimed to have been wrongfully dismissed by Rwandan Utilities Regulatory Agency (RURA), but the court held that his termination was pursuant to a performance appraisal exercise and was in compliance with Rwandan domestic law.

However, having succeeded in one of the two substantive issues and considering that he was self-represented, the court exercised its discretion under Rule 127 of the Rules of Procedure to award him one third of the total costs he incurred in prosecuting the case.

The EACJ also dismissed Reference No. 4 of 2017 where Niyongabo Theodore and two others challenged the Burundi Attorney General, and ordered each party to bear its own costs. The reference faulted the Burundi authorities over alleged violation of property rights on account of a decision of the Tribunal de Grande

Instance of Bujumbura that nullified legal interests it ruled that they were wrongfully acquired.

The court disallowed an application that sought orders compelling the Governor of the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK), Dr. Patrick Njoroge to appear as a witness in a claim before the court, Reference No. 8 of 2017.

The reference filed by Pontrilas Investments Ltd faults the role of CBK and the Kenya Attorney General in the closure of Imperial Bank (in receivership), placed under the supervision and management of the Kenya Deposit Insurance Corporation (KDIC).

The Court however allowed the partial production of documents within the possession of CBK by the head of the Bank Supervisory Department.

The First Instance Division started its sessions via video conference on Monday this week and will continue with sessions up to the end of next month.

The judgments and rulings were all delivered via video conference by Lady Justice Monica Mugenyi (Principal Judge), Justice Audace Ngiye, Justice Charles Nyawello, and Justice Charles Nyachae.

Long delay in AU's \$9m dues leads to humiliation of Juba diplomats

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excuses in paying its annual dues.

There will be a larger price to pay when South Sudan is absent from meetings where important strategic decisions are made by the regional body, he cautioned.

"As it is said, 'If you're not on the table, you're on the menu.' So, if South Sudan is not going to participate in those meetings where important decisions are going to be made then of course it's a huge problem.

"And it also has implications on our pride as a nation. You know it's embarrassing and that in itself has a huge impact too," he declared.

He emphasised that it is important to remain a member in good standing of organizations like the African Union, the East African Community and the United Nations, where every member country is treated equally.

"Even if we are in a situation of war we

must try, and others will also know that we are trying. Our situation is different but if we default completely, we don't pay anything, this is something else," he specified.

Still the AU could have been a little more lenient with South Sudan given the fact that it recently emerged from a long civil war in which hundreds of thousands of people were killed and millions were displaced, the analyst intoned.

South Sudan paid 15 per cent of the amount it owes the AU, or about \$3.5m in December last year, the deputy minister affirmed, insisting that the AU should have informed the government earlier that its representatives would be banned from attending all future AU meetings. It should not have waited until its delegates were already seated at last week's meeting for the AU secretariat to issue them an expulsion order, he added.



Principal Judge Dr Eliezer Feleshi unveils a plaque yesterday to inaugurate a Simiyu Resident Magistrate's Court building. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

RC orders arrest of 34 govt employees over alleged embezzlement of 307m/-

By Guardian Correspondent, Biharamulo

KAGERA Regional Commissioner Brig Gen, Marco Gaguti has instructed the region's Police Commander and the Prevention and the Combating of Corruption Bureau (PCCB) Commander to arrest 34 officials of Biharamulo District Council including ward and village executives for allegedly failure to bank 307m/- collected as the council internal revenues.

The instruction was issued yesterday during his official visit to the district that aimed to be given some explanations as to why the Council

had not met its revenue collection target, but instead there was rampant embezzlement of public funds.

Apart from ordering the arrest of the officials, the RC directed the Council authorities to suspend the acting Treasurer Sospeter Makene, IT officials Justine Banula and Rogers Semukoko; and Trade officer Beatrice Gurusya.

Gaguti took the decision after he had issued seven day ultimatum to the officials to pay back the embezzled funds during the Councilors meeting held on June 5 that sat to deliberate audit queries from the Controller and Auditor General (CAG).

"I came to issue directives for the arrest all those who were collecting government revenue via POSS machines without banking and I gave them seven days to pay back but the money paid back was only 2 per cent, and in this way we cannot go on, we must put in place solid foundations to improve ethics in the public service, here I have a list of 30 officials that I am giving the list to RPC to ensure that they are arrested wherever they may be and for the four workers I order for their suspension but must remain under the supervision of the Defence and Security Committee for investigations

to be conducted," said RPC Gaguti.

He added that public servants are supposed to be diligent and supervise public funds and pledged to take action against all those who will be found to have embezzled and called upon the ward and village executives to supervise well revenue collections under their guard.

RC Gaguti also said there are some public servants who deliberately refused to register the sources of the income collected but later went back to the business persons and clandestinely took money hence loss of government revenue.



Outgoing Chadema legislators Ester Bulaya (2nd-L) and Halima Mdee (4th-L) and supporters of the opposition party leave the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday after the adjournment of a case they are facing. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Polycarp Machira, Dodoma

98 water engineers dismissed from govt employment for shoddy work

At least 98 water engineers in the country have been sacked for shoddy work, the deputy minister for Water, Jumaa Aweso has said. He said most of them are those who either delayed or neglected village projects due to flimsy reasons including superstition. "It is strange to hear an engineer saying that there are evil forces that destroy ongoing water projects in some villages in the country," he said. The deputy minister noted that the government is committed to ensure all villages in the country get access to clean and safe water. He said the government has disbursed 119bn/- for some 300 village water projects, adding: "The government has employed water experts in the ministry and other authorities; let them use their knowledge to help solve water woes in the country."

managers of the rural water authorities to work on challenges facing efficient supply of the precious liquid in rural communities, maintaining the decision is the government's topmost priority. Officiating a review meeting for the UK funded forth-phase payment held here, the deputy minister said although there has been some positive headways in implementing a number of water projects some councils had not been performing well. "There is a need to undertake a special review to understand factors pushing councils to underperform," he said. "The board of directors must be ready to take actions should there be the problems as a result of reckless managers."

The government established the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Authority-RUWASA strategically targeting to improve supervision of water projects as well as increase access and supply of water in rural communities. But the deputy minister noted that 153 water projects worth over 66bn/- had been struggling threatening to dent the image of the ministry. Besides, Aweso said residents in rural communities are tasked to pay as high as 5,000/- per water unit while urban areas such as Dar es Salaam the price per unit is only 1,800/-. "We want to achieve the 'Big Results Now' slogan. We therefore need all players to be active to ensure we deliver the government promises."

Principal Judge for respect for ethics by all Judiciary officials

By Guardian Correspondent, Simiyu

PRINCIPAL Judge Dr Eliezer Feleshi has said court buildings now under construction should go in tandem with provision of better services to the people. Inaugurating the new building for Simiyu Resident Magistrates Court and the Bariadi district court, the Principal Judge also called on court officials in the country to change their habits that violate public service ethics so as to provide good services to the people. "I appeal to all court officials to ensure the offer services that go in tandem with the beauty of the buildings they operate from, to avoid harsh language to our clients who are citizens and stakeholders; we should shun corrupt activities as corruption is always an enemy of justice," he said. He said the Judiciary will not hesitate to take stern disciplinary and/or legal action against any court official who will be found to be engaging in corrupt activities. He called upon regional and district commissioners through magistrates ethics committees to educate the people to use the committees to air their complaints on any uncouth behaviour by some of the magistrates who violate professional ethics when dispensing their judicial duties. The Principal Judge said the presence of Simiyu Resident Magistrates Court is a relief and a savior to Simiyu residents because in the past they used to travel over 140 kms to Shinyanga region to get court services. He said the long distances affected them

as they used a lot of their monies in search of justice while others were denied the justice by losing hope due to failure of the costs involved. He said among the strategies by the Judiciary is to ensure the construction of courts in every new administrative area established as legal services are as important as any other public services. Meanwhile, the principal Judge appealed to the Regional Commissioners in the country to enable the Prisons in their areas to have IT equipment for video conference to support efforts by the High Court to hear cases online. He said the Judiciary has also put in place IT systems in various regions in the country for hearing cases via video conference so long as the stakeholders will enable the Prisons department to conduct court trials in this manner. He added that the Judiciary has tried to some extent to send video conference equipment to some of the prisons "but since we did not have budget for that, we as our stakeholders should support us to enable the prisons to have such equipment." Simiyu inaugurated Resident Magistrates building complex is a modern one and many judicial work will be conducted online after it is joined up with the national communication network that will simplify the work. The building complex will house the Resident Magistrates Court, the District Court and offices for other affiliated stakeholders including prosecutors and private advocates.

'Cooperate with investors to tame poverty'

By Guardian Correspondent, Iringa

Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Investment) Angellah Kairuki yesterday appealed to Iringa, Njombe and Mbeya Regional Commissioners to work together with investors in their respective regions to increase agricultural production and get out peasants from abysmal poverty. Minister Kairuki made the appeal here yesterday after touring ASAS Dairies Farm Limited, GBRI Solutions Tanzania Ltd and Farm for the Future establishment, saying the investors had done a great job in improving dairy and crop value chains in the three regions. The trio is grouped together as Ithem cluster with the aim of transforming the regions' agricultural productivity. "It would also be a good thing for regional commissioners in the corridor

to cooperate with the Tanzania Investment Centre (TIC) to solve emerging problems. There is ample proof to show that investments put in this area had yielded positive results and have increased national incomes," the minister said calling on TIC to ensure the projects in the cluster are registered with the centre. She also commended the Southern Agricultural Growth Corridor of Tanzania (Sagcot) for mobilising investors who, she said, had confidently invested in the corridor. The minister assured investors that the government valued their contributions to the nation and that was the reason the government was working hard to improve the investment climate and also improve the environment of doing business. ASAS Dairies Farm Limited

director Fuad Abri commended the government, saying it was supporting the private sector with concrete steps. GBRI Solution Tanzania Ltd managing director Hadija Jabiri said she secures foreign markets but fails to meet their demands for lack of capital and infrastructure. SAGCOT, in partnership with investors, had formed clusters in order to provide opportunities for small farmers and help them engage in profitable Agricultural activities. SAGCOT Chief Executive Officer Geoffrey Kirenga said the three regions had many investments and opportunities for crop and dairy farming. SAGCOT, he said, was doing all in its power to contribute to the national efforts of making Tanzania a middle-income industrial nation.



Zitto Kabwe, Leader of the opposition Alliance for Change and Transparency (ACT-Wazalendo), in a police van yesterday shortly after being arrested while attending an internal meeting of the party in Kilwa District, Lindi Region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Legal notices from WADE RAIN EAST AFRICA LIMITED (UNDER VOLUNTARY LIQUIDATION) and WILFRED SAWAYA MAWALLA (ADVOCATE) regarding the liquidation process and appointment of a liquidator.

Advertisement for TradeMark East Africa (TMEA) seeking proposals for consultancy services for Media Tracking, Monitoring and Analysis. Tender Title: CONSULTANCY SERVICES FOR MEDIA TRACKING, MONITORING AND ANALYSIS. Tender Number: PRQ20191289. TMEA cannot answer any query relating to this tender five days or less prior to the submission deadline.

State devotes 700m/- to construction of distinctive girls' secondary school

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has allocated 700m/- for construction of a special girls' secondary school, Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa said on Monday.

He said the intention is to improve girls' education countrywide to ensure they reach higher levels of education.

The premier who is in Ruangwa district for an official visit, made the remarks when addressing residents of Chikwale, Nangurugai, Machang'anja, Narungombe and Liuguru villages in the district. He said construction of the school will address challenges which had been facing the school thus failing to achieve their life dreams.

"We are determined to improve the education sector; we want to make sure girls achieve their targeted education goals," he said.

According to him, school girls are also protected by the law which imposes stern punishment for anyone

impregnating them.

He said apart from construction of a special girls' secondary school, the government is set to repair and construct dormitories for the Liuguru secondary school in Ruangwa district which will be transformed into a girls' school. He said the government has already allocated 180m/- for construction of a dormitory and a dining hall at Liuguru secondary school.

"With the dormitories at school, students are likely to concentrate with their studies, hence better performance in the national examinations," he said.

Majaliwa said that boys students currently at Liuguru secondary school will be shifted to Narungombe secondary school which shall also accommodate construction of a dormitory. Construction work had already started at the cost of 80m/-.

He however urged villagers interested in investing in farm projects to make sure they follow available by-laws. His

statement followed complaints from Chikwale villagers claiming that some people from Liwale and Kilwa districts had been cultivating on their land.

On drop of simsim prices, the premier said the price had also dropped at the world market. He encouraged the residents to continue cultivating the crop as the government was planning to construct a factory which will process various crops including simsim.

He said the fifth phase government is determined to improve the agriculture sector to ensure food security as well as adequate supply of raw materials for industries. He said crops prices are determined by the market, insisting the government was closely monitoring prices for all the food and cash crops.

PM Majaliwa thanked the residents for continued support appealing for more support in the coming five years. He said it was through the cooperation they had been able to bring about development in the area.



National Environment Management Council staff including East zone manager Arnold Mapinduzi (L) clean up Dar es Salaam's Selander Bridge beach yesterday in commemorating Public Service Day in Africa. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

CFR sets aside 12bn/- for its expansion programme

By Guardian Reporter

THE Tanzania-Mozambique Centre for Foreign Relations (CFR) will set aside 12bn/- for expansion programme in order to raise student intake from the current 1,500 to 4,000 students a year.

The acting CFR director, Dr Jeremia Ponera, said in Dar es Salaam yesterday that at the end of the expansion programme, the Dar es Salaam campus alone would host 4,000 students from current 1,500.

"The government has generously set aside 12bn/- for the expansion of the centre. We are very grateful to the government led by President Dr John Magufuli for this welcome and pertinent move because the expansion programme will allow us to have new buildings, renovate others and establish Dodoma, Arusha and Zanzibar regional campuses," Dr Ponera explained.

He said the centre would also build lecture and seminar rooms, modern library, language laboratory and hostels and increase courses, explaining that the centre was already offering long and short courses that were in high demand.

Dr Ponera said a plot for Dodoma campus had been secured and was being cleared, adding that students would stop coming to Dar es Salaam once zonal campuses were in place.

The centre currently offers one-year basic technician certificate in international relations and diplomacy; two-year technician certificate/ordinary diploma in international relations; three-year diploma higher diploma/bachelor degree in international relations and diplomacy; one-year diploma in the management of foreign relations and has introduced a one-year post-graduate diploma in economic diplomacy.

'Govt is determined to connect all villages in Ruangwa district to the national electricity grid'

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister, Kassim Majaliwa yesterday said that the government is determined to connect all villages in Ruangwa district to the national grid.

The premier urged people to be patient as contractors had already been sourced.

Majaliwa made the remarks when speaking to villagers of Nanjaru, Nambilanje, Mkaranga, Namichiga and Mbekenyera during his official tour in Ruangwa district, Lindi region.

According to him, the district has 90 villages, whereby out of them, 25 haven't been connected to the national grid.

He said that contractors had been sourced, urging them to make preparations for their residential and business premises to be connected with electricity.

"Our President Dr John Magufuli wants to see every Tanzanian home is connected to power, that's why he reduced connection charges from 380,000/- to 27,000/- so that every person can afford the fee," he said, adding that citizens will not be charged for electric poles and connection forms.

Majaliwa also said that the government had improved health services delivery by ensuring that medical facilities are available at health facilities.

President Magufuli had increased budget on medicines from 31bn/- to 269bn/- in a move aimed at improving the sector. "So, we don't expect a patient go to a dispensary without being given medicines," he said.

As government, he said: "Drugs must be available at all health facilities including dispensaries, health centres and district hospitals."



VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Ariel Glaser Pediatric AIDS Healthcare Initiative (AGPAHI) is a non-governmental organisation that plays a pivotal role in complementing the Government of Tanzania's efforts towards the attainment of its development goals. AGPAHI strives to provide quality and integrated HIV/AIDS health services to children and families. AGPAHI supports the provision of high-quality HIV and other health services and ensures that efforts are well-integrated into existing regional and district health systems.

AGPAHI is looking for a motivated, result driven, qualified and competent staff to fill the position of Senior Compliance Officer.

Job Title : Senior Compliance Officer
Location : Dar es salaam
Reporting to : Finance, Audit and Risk Committee of the Board

Purpose of the post

Provide the organization with guidance on financial accuracy, internal controls and regulatory compliance. To examine and improve operating practices, financial and risk management processes of the organization.

Senior Compliance Officer is expected to (but not limited to as well):

1. Check the compliance to US Government regulations, organization policies & Procedures
2. Examine and consider the adequacy of Internal controls throughout the accounting cycle
3. Evaluate and check the reliability and integrity of financial and operational information;
4. Evaluate the effectiveness and efficiency of AGPAHI's operations at all levels
5. Review the information systems environment and government statutes;
6. Review, appraise and report on:
 - Adequacy and proper application of controls while considering exposure to fraud or /and irregularities
 - The extent of compliance, relevance and financial effect of policies, plans and procedures.
 - Economy, efficiency and effective use of resources
 - The safeguarding of assets;
 - Report on any serious weakness, significant fraud or major accounting breakdown.
7. Evaluate the achievement of established operational goals and objectives;
8. Check on reliability, usefulness and integrity of performance information.
9. Follow up on implementation of External Audit recommendations and the Internal Auditors' recommendations.
10. Recommend improvements to systems and procedures;
11. Ensure organization compliance to Donor reporting as stipulated in the Award and rules and regulations
12. In collaboration with PMU unit assess the organization Performance to Donor's targets and overall organization KPIs
13. Follow up on implementation of Risk Register and report any new identified risks and identify potential risks of non-compliance by AGPAHI
14. On regular basis recommend improvements in AGPAHI operations based on identified risks
15. Develop a training plan to educate employees on compliance issues to improve their understanding of the terms and conditions of the Award by providing donor compliance advice and training so that programs are delivered responsibly with minimized compliance risk.
16. Conduct investigations and make recommendations in non-compliance cases.
17. Maintain legal, financial and regulatory knowledge and update compliance register of AGPAHI.
18. Review and follow up on updating of internal policies on compliance matters.
19. Prepare and file required official documents in compliance matters.

Qualifications:

- A university degree finance, accounting, Business Administration or a related field
- ACCA/CPA
- Certified Compliance & Ethics Professional (CCEP) is an added advantage
- 3 - 5 years' proven experience in compliance/internal or external audit officer role.
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Highly-analytical with strong attention to detail.
- Experience in risk management
- Previous experience providing compliance training.
- Demonstrated knowledge and prior experience working with a variety of USG agencies such as USAID, CDC, etc;
- Project Management experience

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and CV (not exceeding four pages) and names and contact information of three referees before close of business on **Friday 03rd July, 2020** to the Human Resources and Administration Manager, Ariel Glaser Pediatric AIDS Healthcare Initiative, by e-mail to recruitment@agpahi.or.tz. Please mention the title of the position in your email and do not attach any document other than the CV and cover letter.

AGPAHI is an equal opportunity employer, only shortlisted candidates will be contacted.



Singida regional commissioner Dr Rehema Nchimbi speaks at the launch of a nutrition project being implemented by Action Against Hunger, an NGO. She is with regional administrative secretary Dr Angelina Lutambi (L) and regional medical officer Dr Victorina Rudovick. Photo: Correspondent Dotto Mwaibale

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

THE government has instructed China Geo Engineering Corporation that was given tender for the modification of Songwe International Airport in Mbeya region to work day and night to complete the work in time.

The directive was given yesterday by the Deputy Minister for works, Transport and Communications Elias Kwandikwa during his inspection of the progress of the project.

Kwandikwa said even though the work was behind schedule due much time lost due to Covid-19 pandemic and prolonged seasonal rains, the company

'Songwe airport contractor should work day and night'

must make good use for the time lost by working day and night.

Tanzania Roads Agency (TANROADS) Mbeya manager Eliazary Rweikiza said the project's contract agreement was signed in August last year and was for eight months. He said the project costs 14bn/- that will be used for refurbishing the airport's runway, the perimeter fence and parking area for the aircraft in distress.

Rweikiza said the project is faced by the challenge on the delay by the contractor to send essential equipment to the project site.

The project's manager Qin Lihua said some of his experts failed to come into the country due to the pandemic.

He said after the government opened the country's airspace, the experts are expected at any time from now to complete the work.



Rural Electrification Agency board member Henry Mwimbe pictured at the weekend inspecting a transformer awaiting installation at the site of a project in Singida Region. Photo: Correspondent Jumbe Ismail

‘Govt has paid contractors, they need to keep working’

By Guardian Reporter

CONTRACTORS of the ongoing road infrastructures projects in the country should not suspend work because they have already been paid by government.

This directive was given by the Deputy Minister for Works, Transport and communications Elias Kwandikwa during his visit in Njombe Region where he inspected the 107.4 km Njombe-Makete road built at tarmac level of which the 53.9km Njombe-Moronga section is 62 percent complete whilst the Moronga-Makete section is 45 percent complete.

“The construction of this project is being funded by public money and you contractors have already been paid your money, what we want is the road as people are anxiously waiting for its completion,” stressed the deputy minister.

Kwandikwa explained that soon after its completion, the government has allocated in its FY 2020/21 budget to construct another 93km road from Makete to Isonje also at tarmac level.

“The aim of the government is to ensure all regions in the country are joined by a network

of tarmac roads, hence I would like to assure you - residents of this region that you can now reach Mbeya Region through this safe, robust road at all times considering that this region is extensively mountainous,” he said.

He called upon Tanzanians to walk upright as their taxes enables them to have many infrastructural projects in road, air and water transport, as well as in other sectors including health, education and agriculture.

The Njombe Regional commissioner Christopher Ole Sendeka said as of now residents in the region will greatly benefit from this road for transport of their agricultural crops especially the avocado fruit.

Tanzania Roads Agency (TANROADS) Njombe Region’s Manager eng Yusuph Mazana said part of the Njombe-Moronga road section will be completed in October this year and the Moronga-Makete will be ready by April next year.

He promised the Deputy Minister to closely supervise the contractors to ensure the road is completed in time and to required work standards.

The 107.4 km Njombe-Makete road project costing 217bn/- is 100 percent government funded.

Financial institutions urged to have loan conditions not too hard for farmers to meet

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

FINANCIAL institutions that provide loans to farmers have been advised to set easy conditions to enable more farmers to get loans for agricultural and economic development.

The advice was given at the weekend by the Mbeya Regional Commissioner, Albert Chalamila when opening the Private Agricultural Sector Support Trust (PASS Trust) meeting attended by stakeholders from the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors.

Chalamila advised the financial institutions to put at the fore front farmers interests instead of their own business interests in order to assist them abandon traditional farming methods that use crude farming implements to modern farming equipment.

Representative of Agricom Africa Ltd dealing in the distribution of various farming equipment Cecilia Julius advised farmers to abandon using crude farming implements including the hoe and instead go for modern equipment that will enable them cultivate large farms to increase their incomes.

She said due to advances in science and technology in the world, Tanzanians are supposed to go in tandem with these advances to enable them produce more crops.

She said her institution has various modern farming equipment that are used from land preparation to harvesting, performing much work in short time.

“We sell the machines in cash or on loan and we are already working together with Pass Trust to make easy for the people to get loans for our machinery as they guarantee the loans,” Cecilia said.

She mentioned some of the farming equipment they deal in as including tractors, combine harvesters, ploughs as well as maize and rice planting machines.

She advised farmers to take loans to get these machines as loans repayment takes several years.

Pass Trust Managing Director Nicomed Bohay said apart from working together with Agricom Africa, they also work together with various banks including the agricultural bank to assist farmers get loans.

TPC sugar company resumes production

By Guardian Correspondent, Moshi

SUGAR production at Tanzania Planting Company (TPC) factory in Kilimanjaro Region has resumed after a three-month suspension to allow renovation of plant and equipment, while it intends to increase sugar production from 89,000 to 93,000 tonnes per year.

The factory has resumed production despite being faced with floods from prolonged seasonal rains that affected cane production in its farms.

This is contained in the report of TPC chief executive officer (Administration) Jaffary Ally presented to the Regional Commissioner Dr Anna Mghwira on the start of new sugar production season for 2020/21.

“Sugar production has officially resumed and we expect to produce additional sugar compared to the previous season. We now aim to produce 93,000 tonnes from 89,000 tonnes we produced in the last season, and the purpose is to reduce sugar scarcity in the country,” he said.


He said the biggest challenge they face is floods caused by seasonal reasons, the water that is still in the farms have destroyed cane plants therein.


He added that the floods also destroyed some infrastructures including roads and the railway line used to transport cane from the farms to the factory.

The Kilimanjaro regional commissioner said: I congratulate the TPC management, but I must say the start of their new production season will no doubt alleviate sugar shortage and relieve consumers from its hiked price by dealers.”

The RC stressed that the situation arose when some sugar dealers imported the commodity and sold it at high prices.


She also called on sugar dealers to abide by moral values by following regulations and procedures issued by the Sugar Board including adhering to sugar indicative prices.






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By Guardian Reporter

Coalition faults new guidelines for CSOs

THE Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) has faulted the newly released Tanzania national NGO Coordination guidelines, calling on the government to amend the guidelines for the sector to grow.

The coalition has more than 200 NGOs across the country, as the current ones are not participatory.

The new guidelines were inaugurated recently in Dodoma by Ummu Mwalimu, the Minister for Health, Community Development, Gender, Elderly and Children.

According to Mwalimu, the guidelines seek to lay the foundations for smooth cooperation and for distinguishing responsibilities of ministries from NGOs.

The minister assured CSOs that the new guidelines weren't to undermine them but ensure that people were benefiting from the funds requested by the organisations.

It is estimated that 3.9 trillion/- had been dished out to NGOs between December 2018 and May this year for executing different development projects across the country.

But, NGOs through their coalition, said that the launched guidelines excluded them in its formulation.

THRDC Coordinator Onesmo Olegurumwa proposed for amendments to the guidelines.

For instance, he said that the full interpretation as it is in the law should be shown without reducing its words or lose its legal interpretation.

"The guidelines must recognise 'CSOs' wider interpretation for improvement in order to protect and strengthen all groups in the CSOs.

In addition, the government should not formulate regulations or policies without first involving those

targeted for their own views. Stakeholders concerned, non governmental organisations (NGOs) and the private sector in particular must be incorporated in the formulation of the guidelines as they target these important stakeholders," said Olegurumwa in the statement.

"We insist on the CSOs in particular THRDC members to abide by the laws and regulations formulated but we also ask them to continue to go through the guidelines so that they are fully understood for simplifying their implementation.

"Some sections of the law should be amended to enable the guidelines' implementation as well as to be meaningful - for example the section that says the life of an NGO is 10 years should be amended to go in tandem with the law's requirement," the statement further pointed out.

THRDC proposes that financial agreements should be submitted to the registrar alone and in case the ministry of Finance needs them, it should communicate with the registrar for the documents.

"In addition the agreements should be submitted for information and not for the permit purposes. To submit them as conditions for the issuance of permits is an interference of CSOs independence. The guidelines should have an additional section on the position of the National NGOs Council in the entire process, and it should also adhere to the Non-Governmental organizations Code of Conduct.

"THRDC also proposes that since the guidelines have given Kiswahili translation of some of its sections that were vague, it would be better if those

sections should be amended in parliament. For example on page 5 paragraph 2.3 (ii), the guidelines clearly state that an international organisation must have two Tanzanian founder members, but Section 7 of the law that amends section 12 of the NGO law says "two of whom shall be residents of Tanzania" - the word 'resident' does not necessarily mean a Tanzanian, but any foreign national residing in Tanzania with a legal resident permit."

The statement further said education on CSOs concept and their responsibilities to the society should also be given to the Registrar so as to remove misconceptions on CSO groups especially those engaged in civic education, human rights, and accountability.

"On the issue of allocation of activities among the CSOs and the areas thereof - this is only possible to those CSOs engaged in say, building schools etc, as you cannot build a school where there are schools already. Those dealing with mobilisation and human rights issues should not be included in this procedure. Those whose activities cover the entire country and whose head offices are in towns should be excluded in such arrangement," the statement said.

According to the statement CSOs should remain independent to work in accordance with section 20 of the Tanzania Constitution. Once a CSO is registered in accordance with the law, it enjoys autonomy that should not be interfered with, and adds: "The guidelines should recognise international protocols Tanzania being a member."



Bishop Emmanuel Makala (R) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania's Eastern and Southern of Lake Victoria Diocese pictured at the weekend presenting sets of handwashing items to Pastor Patrick Zengo, who represented clerics based in Simiyu and Shinyanga regions. The items are meant to help in the war on Covid-19. Photo: Correspondent Marco Maduhu

NGO donates supplies worth 38.2m/- to support country's healthcare providers

By Guardian Reporter

PLAN International Tanzania has donated medical supplies worth 38.2m/- to support the government's endeavours towards improving the health services and fight against Covid-19 pandemic in the country.

Speaking during the event in Dar es Salaam over the weekend, director of programmes for Plan International Tanzania, Peter Mwakabwale hailed health service providers for the great work they have been doing to save lives of people, especially during

the difficult time of Covid-19 pandemic.

"The equipment we have handed over today comprises thermometers, goggles, coveralls, hand sanitisers, surgical masks, disposable shoes and gloves. The main focus of the initiative is to support public health care workers to effectively work on the prevention of Covid-19 while providing medical care to any identified patients," he said.

Mwakabwale added that despite recording significant decline of Covid-19 infections

in the country, the organisation reminds the communities to continue taking safety measures as instructed by the Ministry of Health and World Health Organization (WHO), believe ending the pandemic will be successful if everyone takes an active role of being safe and protected all the time.

Receiving the contributions, Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Prof Abel Makubi commended the stakeholders for mobilising efforts and resources to ensure that hospitals and health centres are supplied with enough medical

equipment. "We appreciate all the contributions given by stakeholders and companies as the donations are highly needed this time when the country is increasing the number of new hospitals and health centres to reach more people in both urban and rural areas," he said.

Prof Makubi further hinted on the importance of strengthening collaborations and partnerships between the government and private sector to improve medical service delivery in the country.



Construction of a sewage system in progress beside Dar es Salaam's Chang'ombe Road yesterday under the oversight of China Railway Group contractors. Photo: Correspondent Jumanne Juma

Investor's failure to conform to environmental laws irks Zungu

By Guardian Correspondent, Kisarawe

THE Minister of State in the Vice-President's Office (Union and Environment) Mussa Azzan Zungu on Monday visited the kaolin mining site at Pugu hills in Kisarawe District, Coast Region where he was not satisfied with the investor's environmental compliance.

Minister Zungu was surprised to see the mining company-Rakkadlin Co. Ltd operating without obtaining an environmental assessment certificate from the National Environment Management Council (NEMC).

Zungu was accompanied by Kisarawe District Commissioner, Jokate Mwegelo, NEMC Eastern zone Manager, Anorid Mapinduzi, environmental lawyers from the Vice President's Office and several other government officials from Kisarawe District. During the tour, the officials witnessed mining of kaolin which is used as a raw material in manufacturing of ceramic.

Kaolin is also used as an input in industries to manufacture paints, finished leather, paper industries, tooth paste, pharmaceuticals, fertilizers, ceramics, chalk rubber and many others.

"We have gone through the investor's documents as well as recommendations by our environment officers given since 2018, but the investor has not improved anything in regard to environment

protection," said the minister.

Zungu said there are still complaints from residents living near the mine. He said they will review their findings and handover the report to the district commissioner.

Kisarawe District Commissioner, Jokate Mwegelo called upon the residents to obey country's laws and regulations. She said there should be a system that will ensure proper mining of the minerals which involves demarcation of mining sites. "We are rich in various natural resources but there is no proper mechanism for mining of the minerals," said Jokate.

Mapinduzi insisted on the investor to adhere to country's laws as well as the environment protection guidelines. He said adhering to the regulations would save the environment and avoid various effects likely to happen in future. "It is important for the investor to adhere to our directives because he cannot be able to pay all the residents who will be reported to have serious health complications caused by his mining activities," said Mapinduzi.

Owner of the mine-Rakkadlin Co. Ltd, Adam Iremu has promised to work on all the government recommendations as soon as the dispute between him and the villagers is resolved. The company has operated at the area for many years but it has been reluctant in adhering to government's directives on environment conservation.

Govt to construct major warehouse at Holili border for banana exports

By Guardian Correspondent, Moshi

THE government is set to construct a state-of-the-art scientific warehouse at Holili border in Rombo District, Kilimanjaro Region for storing banana bunches before export.

The facility to be constructed alongside a special centre for attaining additional value chain for the country's key cash crop stands among a series of future efforts by the government to penetrate banana to diverse international markets.

Instead of continuing letting traders from neighbouring countries, especially Kenya, landing in to purchase banana, the government now focuses to directly start exporting the crop to outside markets.

Rombo District Commissioner (DC) Agnes Hokororo said in an interview that the authority has already approached some potential donors, being in possibility to acquire funds for the setting up of the project.

"Our target is to install an equipped warehouse, one which will allow

banana to be stored in a more scientific manner and thus, reaching the far outside markets while fresh and at recommended international standards," she expressed.

She said there's expanded demand for banana in many countries, a crucial opportunity which must be used soberly by farmers in the district and the government as a whole.

"We're currently sensitising the farmers to organise themselves in special groups so that they may stand a better chance to benefit from the

future plans," she briefed.

Apart from enabling many banana growing households to accelerate diverse socioeconomic development, according to the DC, the envisaged plan will play vital role in assisting the district to realise more revenue collections.

In recent years there has been an impressive development in the banana industry within the region following inception of several interventions that assisted the farmers to adopt best agronomic practices.

Dr Stephen Sebastian, Manager for Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI-Tengeru), expressed that the future of banana industry was promising as most farmers in Kilimanjaro region have are now cultivating professionally.

For instance, he said the Banana Agronomy Project which has directly reached out to at least 5,000 farmers in Rombo district has played commendable role in improving banana farmers' performance.

Through financial support from

Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the ambitious project is being implemented by TARI in cooperation with Bioversity International, International Institute for Tropical Agriculture (IITA), Makerere University and Uganda-based National Agriculture Research Organisation (NARO).

As of 2017, production of banana in Tanzania was at 9 tonnes per hectare but presently, due to several interventions, the production has increased substantially to at least 19 tonnes per hectare.

Prof Ndalichako underlines need to ensure safety of infrastructure

By Guardian Correspondent, Mpwapwa

THE Minister for Education, Science and Technology, Prof Joyce Ndalichako, has directed authorities, teachers and leaders at Mpwapwa Teachers College to ensure that all new and renovated infrastructure at the institution are well protected for long-term benefits.

Speaking soon after inspecting the construction progress of the college's infrastructures in Mpwapwa District, Dodoma Region, Prof Ndalichako said that the government has invested and spent billions of money to improve buildings of the college, so protecting them remains a serious role.

"The government has decided to invest a total of 2.8bn/- to improve infrastructures at the institution so as to increase the availability of quality education to Tanzanians, we also work to ensure that the institutions are equipped with all essential learning and teaching equipment,"

she said.

She mentioned the infrastructures as a storey building for the Department of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), one-storey building for female teachers (interns), a food hall and two staff houses whereby one house has the capacity to accommodate three families.

For his part, acting District Administrative Secretary (DAS) Said Mwaliego commended the government for dishing out the funds for the construction of the building where he vowed to work closely with the college management to ensure that the project is completed on time.

Gerald Richard, the college's principal said that most of the infrastructures were in devastating state as they have been there for a long time.

"The completion of the buildings will among other things, improve enrolment and service delivery at the college," he said.



Students of Dodoma Region's Msalato Secondary School follow a briefing by a teacher on preparations for their upcoming final examinations. Photo: Correspondent Ibrahim Joseph

By Guardian Reporter

THE government has resolved the dispute involving former workers engaged in the construction of Kilombero River Bridge by China Railway 15 Group that lasted for four years and assured that justice will be accorded to each worker.

The dispute was mediated by the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Works, Transport and Communications Elius Mwakalinga including experts from the works sector.

Mwakalinga directed the company's officials to pay 109 out of 269 workers

Govt settles workers-contractor row over Kilombero Bridge construction

whose details were verified and said that the remaining 160 verification should be finalised as soon as possible so that they receive their benefits.

Meanwhile, the deputy minister in the Works Ministry Elias Kwandikwa talked with the workers at a meeting convened at Ifakara District Council

hall during which he stressed the government is always on the side of its citizens.

"I must thank you, as you are patriots because without you we could not have got the bridge and your long time demands are now finalised," he said.

He said the exercise is continuing

among various groups that emerged, and added that everyone will be paid his due benefits as the contractors have agreed to pay all of them.

He also thanked the office of the district commissioner and the Morogoro Region's Labour Office for their cooperation that ensured the

former workers get their rights.

In the meantime the chairman of workers who built the Kilombero Bridge Alex Ndagaro said in 2013 they discovered that they were being short paid their salaries compared to the rates set by the government regarding daily wages.

"We thank the government for deliberate efforts in assisting the workers get their dues," he said.

The Kilombero District Commissioner James Ihunjo said up to now only 109 former workers have been paid, these are those whose work hours were below 500 days and those exceeding this figure and other groups will continue to be heard by the contractor.

"We have agreed to listen to the claims of all former workers with statistics and other exhibits from various groups that emerged," stressed the district commissioner.



Nairat Abdallah Ali (L), a women empowerment officer with the Zanzibar office of the Tanzania Media Women's Association (Tamwa), pictured yesterday checking a basket made by entrepreneurs from Cheju in Zanzibar yesterday. Photo: Rahma Suleiman

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

FARMERS growing orange-fleshed sweet potatoes (OFSP) in Songwe Valley in Mbeya District have appealed to the government to educate and mobilise the people to use the potatoes as food for children due to their high nutrient value.

Some of the farmers told this paper at the weekend that the potatoes have vitamins and many minerals essential in children's growth.

One of the farmers Joseph Mshani said they started to cultivate the potatoes after they were taught to

Farmers stress need for more education on benefits of OFSP

do so by the Uyole centre of the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI-Uyole) during which they were given the seeds thereof.

He said they have been using the potatoes for food and as cash crop and that as of now its demand has been growing following many people

realising its nutritive value.

"We have made juice from the potatoes for sale but sometimes we sell them whole for cooking or roasting, we also teach them the health benefits they get from them," he said.

Another farmer, Roda Chaghi said since she began cultivating the potatoes

two years ago she has earned big profit - economically and as nutritious food for her children.

She said the potatoes helped her to purchase a plot of land on which she started building a house and believes that if people are educated on the benefits of the crop, she can earn much bigger profit.

Africa's agriculture value chains need to go digital to transform production

By Special Correspondent, Abidjan

AFRICA must seize the opportunity of the Covid-19 pandemic to deepen the digitalisation of agricultural value chains and transform the sector, speakers at a webinar jointly hosted by the FAO Investment Centre and the African Development Bank (AfDB) said.

The webinar held recently is the first of a four-part series discussing transforming agriculture in Africa through digitalisation. It explored digital responses that can be quickly deployed to address the disruptions to food systems, caused by Covid-19. It also examined the requirements for digital transformation in agriculture on the continent.

Nearly 500 people, representing agri-tech, telecom, government agency implementers, policymakers, farmers and development partners, participated. The panelists included Wuraola Jinadu, Business Development Manager, Vodacom Business, Nigeria; Myriam Said, Digital Adviser, Office of the Prime Minister, Ethiopia; Mao Yohannes, Agricultural Transformation Agency, Ethiopia; Benito Eliasi, Programme Officer, Southern African Confederation of Agricultural Unions, and Chris Lukolyo, Digital Country Lead, UN Capital Development Fund, Uganda.

They identified potential investments for the digital transformation of African agriculture during and after Covid-19, ranging from digital profiling of value chain actors to mobile payments and e-commerce. The participants also discussed the necessary policy and regulatory frameworks for inclusiveness, scalability and viability, including for data governance and protection, digital financial products, digital ID systems, e-contracts and e-extension services. The meeting proposed the bundling of digital services, agri-tech innovation challenges and open systems to help build financially viable supply capacity.

"Efforts need to be catalysed on both the policy and investment fronts for digitalization to help make agri-food systems more productive, more inclusive and more sustainable in

the future," FAO Investment Centre Director Mohamed Manssouri, said

Before the Covid-19 crisis, digital technologies were changing the global economy, and agri-food systems were part of that transformation. "With Covid-19, this trend has accelerated," Manssouri noted.

Like elsewhere, the spread of Covid-19 has disrupted agri-food systems across Africa. Key supply chains have been interrupted, markets closed and movement restricted, resulting in agricultural labor shortages. Farmers are missing planting seasons, while agribusinesses are facing liquidity constraints.

Demand for catering has dwindled and consumer preferences have shifted away from highly perishable foods, like fruits and vegetables, meat and fish, to ones with longer shelf-lives.

"We must also use this wave of interest to build digital platforms that facilitate linkages between value chain actors at much-reduced transaction costs," Martin Fregene, the Bank's Director of Agriculture and Agro-Industries, said.

As the pandemic gradually shifts from an emergency response to recovery and resilience, there is an opportunity to build back better in the agricultural sector, FAO Investment Officer Gerard Sylvester said, noting that financial inclusion will be a game-changer in rural communities.

"We need to ensure that costs are not a barrier, that small-scale farmers can adopt and apply digital advisory and other knowledge products and that the content is relevant, localized and actionable."

Ed Mabaya, Manager of the Bank's Agri-business Division, said that "population growth, coupled with the expanding middle class, youth bulge, and changing diets could drive the value of the African food market to \$1 trillion by 2030.

The growth of digital, data-driven and tech-enabled solutions can trigger a new green revolution for Africa, addressing some of the challenges and constraints along the entire value chain, from input supply to the consumer end, he noted.

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WEDNESDAY 24 JUNE 2020

Taking A New Look
At The News
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It is time to end stigma, silence around abortion

FOR many women all over the world the right to access modern contraception, is essential for their maternal health, sexual and reproductive health and rights and well-being. It allows women and couples the right to decide freely if and when to have children.

Especially for the many women who have unsupportable pregnancies, abortion is a vital yet normal medical procedure during their reproductive lives. When performed properly, abortion procedures are safe and can save women's lives. However, unlike other reproductive health services, abortion is enveloped by stigma and silence, which leads to many women in Africa and globally lacking access to this crucial health service.

It is indeed a dichotomy that abortion remains such a highly stigmatised issue in countries that have the most progressive abortion laws around the world. Our much-celebrated choice on termination of pregnancy regulations in many African countries promote the reproductive rights and freedom of choice of women by allowing them to have a safe and legal abortion. Such regulations have saved the lives of many women.

This laxness stems from and feeds on the silence and stigma associated with abortion in African countries. This stigma due to religious, cultural or moral beliefs that abortion is wrong is one of the biggest barriers in the complete implementation of the African laws. It subjects women to judgmental attitudes, curtails their right to access safe services and drives them to illegal and unsafe abortion providers.

We already know that many healthcare providers - due to their own moral or

religious beliefs - are reluctant to conduct abortions and provide pre- and post-abortion emergency care to women. The stigma related to abortion is so strong that some providers who may want to receive training on abortion or provide these services hesitate to do so as they fear being ostracised by their community. This has led to a shortage of health facilities offering safe abortion services in Africa, and the impact of this on women's health and well-being cannot be overstated.

Stigma, in turn, perpetuates silence. Fear of harsh judgment and ostracism by the community can prevent women from sharing their abortion experiences with their friends and families. Oftentimes, women use silence as a coping mechanism as they believe that if no one knows about their experience, they cannot be stigmatised. Due to this severe stigma and silence, even today many women are unaware of their legally recognised rights and lack information about where, how and when to access safe and legal abortion services. In fact, many of them believe that informal/illegal and possibly unsafe abortion service providers are their only option in the event of an unwanted and/or an unsupportable pregnancy.

Unsafe abortion procedures can lead to serious health complications for women and, all too frequently, death and disability. Therefore, addressing this stigma around abortion is the need of the hour if we are serious about reducing maternal mortality in Africa.

Towards this end, we need to empower women with easily accessible and accurate information to enable informed decision-making about their body, health and well-being.

Policies promising sustainable availability of food a necessity

MORE than 50 years after independence, despite apparent commitment to policies and strategies to transform the agriculture sector, performance in agricultural output and productivity has been disappointing. Policies and plans, such as 'agriculture is the mainstay of the economy' and Kilimo Kwanza (agriculture first), have remained slogans to the public as there is so little experience of reforms that have improved livelihoods and millions in the agriculture sector remain in poverty.

Tanzania is endowed with considerable fertile agricultural land and inland fresh water resources that can be utilised for irrigation, but much of the land is underutilised and what is utilised often exhibits very low productivity.

In this sense Tanzania has yet to achieve the traditional 'structural transformation' whereby increasing agricultural production provides a platform for manufacturing and economic growth.

Understanding the factors that can expand production and enhance agricultural productivity in Tanzania is critical for ensuring 'structural transformation' and economic growth, boosting development and reducing poverty (given that the majority of the poor are in rural areas and in agricultural activities).

Food production in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda has to increase significantly to feed the population that is growing at an average of three per cent in Tanzania and Uganda and 2.5 per cent in Kenya.

Adoption of climate smart production, harvesting and processing methodologies is key to improving productivity and efficiencies of the existing food crop production and supply systems.

Achieving an increase in food production however requires concerted efforts and joint investments by supply chain actors, service providers and public sector partners, working in the different targeted value chains to support effective adaptation and mitigation strategies.

A five-year multi-country project for Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda is investing two million euros in grants to 14 agribusinesses in the three countries. The

investment from the Climate Resilient Agribusiness for Tomorrow (CRAFT) project is specifically targeting companies and farmers working in the sunflower, soybean, sesame, common beans, potato and sorghum value chains in the three countries.

The private sector is one of the key strategies identified by the project to achieve sustainable results and increase availability and accessibility of climate-resilient food.

Through its Climate Innovation and Investment Facility the project will support performance-based investments so as to build the resilience of private sector agribusinesses and service providers in the targeted value chains.

So far four Tanzanian companies (Nondo Investors Co.Ltd, Rogimwa Agro Co. Ltd, Jack Ma Enterprises Ltd and Mwenge Sunflower Oil Mills) have signed partnership agreements worth 567,135 euro.

The companies have demonstrated from their own internally generated funds as well as from third party providers (i.e. financiers and beneficiaries) that their businesses are viable.

The project will thus work with and through the private sector to promote climate smart agriculture related innovations at farm and value chain level and support public sector partners in creating the institutional environment for wide-scale adoption of practices.

The project contribution is not an end in itself but rather a means for attracting commercial funding for follow-on investments and scaling. The agri-businesses invest their own funds and then leverage off the CRAFT grant to attract additional investment from commercial financial institutions. This not only boosts their credit worthiness and relationship with the financial institutions but ensures business continuity beyond the life of the project.

The CRAFT investment facility will be able to reduce the financial risks of new business initiatives including those of small-medium scale (women and youth-led) agri businesses and of cooperatives, thereby contributing to an increase in the level of investment and private sector engagement in climate resilient food systems in East Africa.

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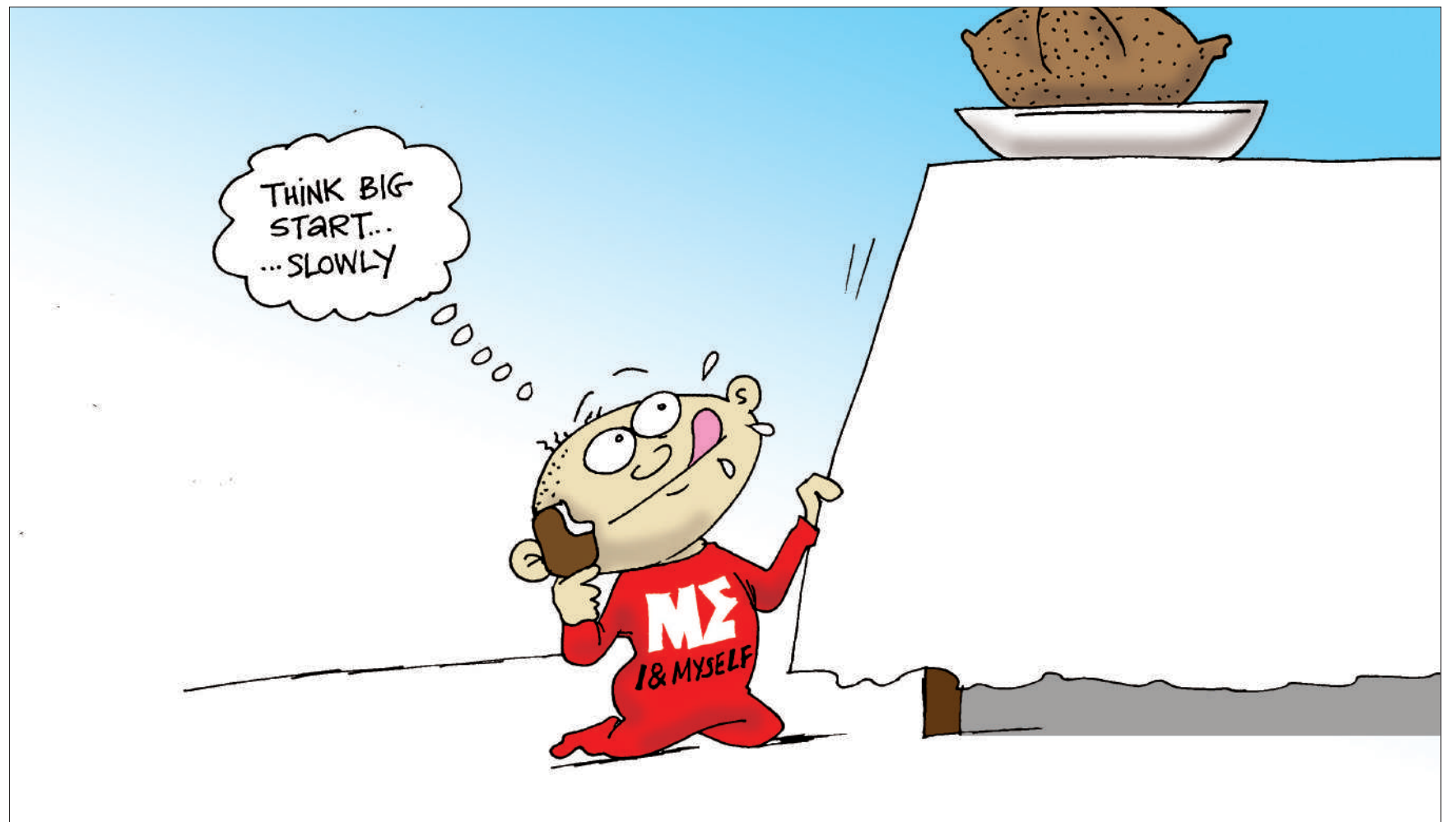
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By Special Correspondent

THE Daily Observer has, since President George Weah assumed office, continued to warn him about the inherent danger in allowing others to lead for they could lead him to an uncertain and unkind fate. It has continued to urge President Weah to take charge and lead. Despite such persistent prodding and pleading to President Weah to curb excesses and corruption in his government, it appears that such pleas are falling on deaf ears at least, it seems, for now.

His tenure of six years may have from the onset, appeared to be several light years away. To the contrary, in such a short space of time, President Weah has already clocked three (3) years - half of his six-year tenure. Three years of his stewardship of the nation has not produced the much hoped for upturn in the lives of the people which he had pledged to do. Instead the material conditions of life for most Liberians have worsened.

The Daily Observer is not unaware that much of the problems being experienced now were inherited. But President Weah now has the task to set things right. However, those to whom he has entrusted the tasks of turning things around for the better appear clueless as they continue to register one failure after the other. Moreover, they all appear driven by blind self-interest and greed. And this is coming at high cost to the people.

Perhaps President Weah, being a novice to politics and being surrounded by a host of parasitic praise singers who continue to suck the life blood of the nation, is still trying to find his footing. But so was former President Doe, a barely literate soldier though. But Doe had many shortcomings notwithstanding. However he was nonetheless generally and widely perceived by Liberians as a decisive leader in charge of the nation, quite unlike President Weah who despite his world acclaimed status and popularity as a mercurial football star, is not publicly perceived in the same light.

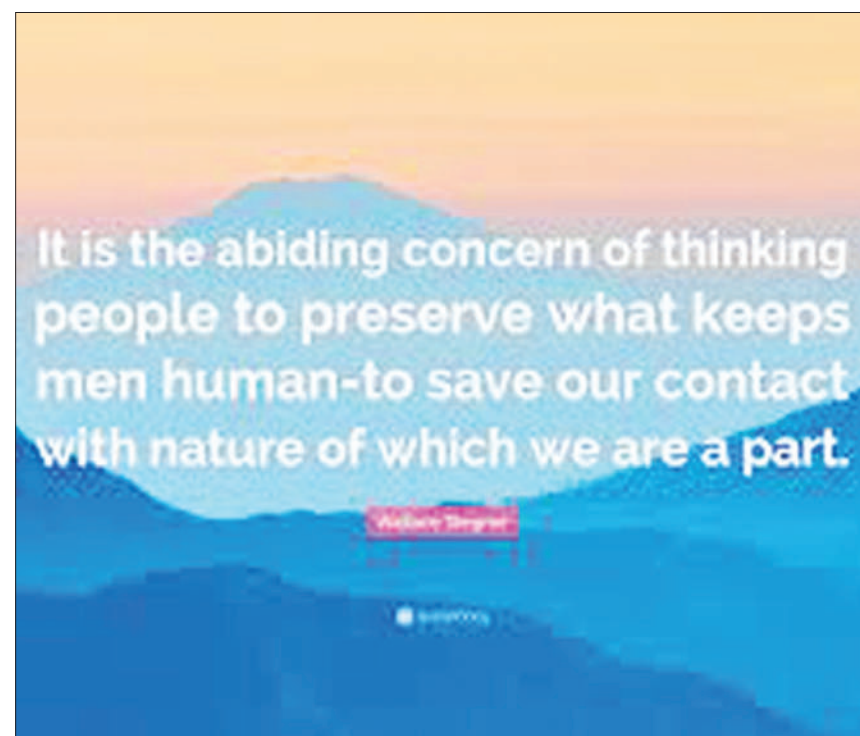
And this seeming lack of leadership at the highest level is not going unnoticed by the people. In retrospect, secretly recorded off the cuff remarks by Bong County Superintendent, Esther Walker declaring that the government of Liberia is being run by a triumvirate made up of Minister of State Nathaniel McGill, Finance Minister Samuel Tweah and Monrovia City Mayor Jefferson Kojjee, clearly suggested at the time that President Weah was in her eyes, little more than a titular head of state and government.

And of course, her uncensored remarks created and provoked intense

An abiding concern



President George Weah



public debate about national decision making and earned her a dismissal although, she was later reinstated to her post. The point being made here is that there seems to be a growing sense of public unease and irritability about the gross lack of accountability and the direction in which things appear to be heading under the leadership of President Weah.

Such is creating a potentially dangerous disconnect with the people as confidence in the leadership of President Weah continues to erode.

And it appears that nearly all his top officials and advisors are afflicted by a group-think psychosis which impairs their ability to engage in critical thinking and reflection, and most of all to dare tell the President the truth for fear of falling out of favor with the leader.

And so the purveying of lies and half-truths has become standard fare of this government's information dissemination strategy. This is largely because officials of the CDC led government are finding it extremely

difficult reconciling themselves to what is fast becoming apparent that after three years, the CDC government appears more likely than not to be voted out of office.

Thus, it is leaving no stone unturned apparently to ensure that such a possibility never obtains, and it appears that all options are on the table including the use of reactionary violence to wheel opposition elements in line. The inclusion, for instance, of former rebel generals as part and parcel of national security forces to quell public demonstrations is well documented and reflective of such thinking.

And this is because just the thought of losing such perks and privileges becomes so unsettling that they could go at any lengths to ensure that they maintain their grip on power. Perhaps this can explain why any little criticism of this government whether or not well intended is greeted with knee-jerk responses suggestive of high levels of intolerance.

Perhaps it can also explain why there appears to be a concerted effort to fill the National Elections Commission (NEC) with surrogates who they believe can guarantee their victory at the polls in future elections especially the senatorial elections as well as the 2023 general and Presidential elections.

From examination of the facts and circumstances and from hindsight and from the experience and lessons of history, the Daily Observer is of the firm opinion that those considering and contemplating such prospects of stealing elections results are courting disaster because there will definitely be push-back and some may come from the least expected sources.

In short, the patience of the Liberian people, this newspaper warns, is being severely tested and could reach breaking point should President Weah fail to make a change in direction. Very difficult times, it is forecast by experts, lie ahead for the Liberian people in view of the looming and imposing economic hardships induced by World Bank/IMF Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPS).

And eventually, public resistance, as experience from other countries shows, popular resistance to such imposed hardships could put paid to CDC dreams of victory at the polls in 2023 and well before then, the senatorial elections due sometime later this year.

President Weah has a choice to make as leader of the nation. He will have to be decisively bold and to change things around, take hard decisions which, if not taken, could lead to his eventual undoing and in the process, earning for himself, a place in history shared by villains. This is just an ABIDING CONCERN, Mr President.

TARI Ilonga applauded for taking research results from lab to farmers

By Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

MINISTER of agriculture Japhet Hasunga has directed TARI to speed up research and production of improved seeds of different crop varieties to enable smallholder farmers' move from subsistence economy to commercial agriculture. He has also directed farmers to dictate market price for their crop.

He was speaking to researchers and staff of TARI Ilonga before visiting and opening agribusiness expo demo plots hosted by TARI Ilonga at Majambaa village, Kilosa district, Morogoro region.

The agribusiness expo themed "Mapinduzi yenye tija kwa kilimo endelevu kupitia ubunifu, uwekezaji na biashara" brought together researchers, district council, farmers, seed companies and other value chain stakeholders.

The Minister said the Ministry of agriculture has decided to invest and prioritize research activities in order to improve agriculture and this can only be done if there will be adequate improved seeds for the farmers.

"Farmers in this country need improved seeds and it is TARI to make sure that the research activities are enhanced to get adequate improved seeds. We want TARI to do this work very successfully for the county's industrial economy," he said.

Citing an example, he said England started with improved seeds during agrarian revolution, a situation that helped the country to move into industrial revolution.

"Many farmers in the country farm without directives of research as such the productivity has always been low. They actually need improved seeds that are tolerant to drought, resistant to diseases and with high yielding so that they can increase production," he said.

In the just ended agricultural season, improved seeds requirement in the country was 186,500 tones, but until recently when closing the year, we had only 71,000 tones of improved seeds, which means, we have not even reached half of the goal. This also mean that many farmers did not use the improved seeds, instead, they used local seeds in their farms," he said.

He continued explaining that out of 71,000 tones, about 66, 000 tones which is equivalent to about 92 percent was produced in the country and the rest was imported.

"TARI is doing a great job but we need to speed up our work so that many farmers can access the improved seeds," he said.

"We can say that we stand a better chance to stop dependency of improved seeds," he added.

Commenting on the research activities being carried out at TARI Ilonga centre, he said that the research institute is doing a great job that should be promoted.

"You are doing a big job than many other research centres in the country, but the problem is that you have not promoted and advertised yourself in the media," he said.

He called on TARI to find alternative source of income for research activities such as writing project proposal for funding.

He said the Ministry of agriculture will capacitate TARI to perform research activities including modern laboratories with international standard.



Agriculture minister Japhet Hasunga with TARI directors, researchers and Kilosa District council officials as they visit the agribusiness expo demo plots hosted by TARI Ilonga at Majambaa village in Kilosa District, Morogoro Region. Photo by Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

"The country that decides to export raw materials from crops and other goods instead of processing them, that country has decided to choose abject poverty," he said.

In another development, the Minister directed TARI to work on the title deeds for their respective centres to prevent locals from invading the research area.

While visiting the agribusiness expo, the Minister emphasized the need for organizing and conducting such shows regularly at farmers' field in the village so that they can lean and get first hand information.

He said despite the achievements, agriculture faced several challenges such as shortage of inputs. Improved seeds, fertilizers and pesticides, are one of the challenges. Others are climate change particularly drought and flood which sometime cause crop diseases and oil infertility. Other challenges are post harvest loss, lack of reliable markets, and lack of capital. The research conducted by TARI in collaboration with other stakeholders aimed at addressing such challenges. The research are conducted to increase efficiency and

productivity, encouraging the use of inputs, provision of education through demo plots, agribusiness expo, the use of media on the best agriculture practices and technology transfer.

Director General for Tanzania agricultural research institute (TARI) Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo said the research being conducted in different research centres, multiplication and dissemination of improved seeds and technologies are basically trying to address farmers' need so that they can increase productivity and contribute positively to the current industrial economy. TARI has put in place comprehensive plans and strategies to conduct fruitful research that will benefit farmers, processors and other stakeholders along the value chain. "We have written many project proposals to make sure that we get enough funds for our research work in different fields," he said.

TARI Ilonga centre Director Dr. Joel Meliyo said that Ilonga is an excellent centre that has always been taking research from laboratory to the farmer field. It is a centre for research and production of different crop varieties and technologies in the country and always the

centre has been close to the farmers.

"Our demo plots at Majambaa farmers' field have demonstrated that when the farmers work directly with researchers, they learn different technologies and increase production. Our research work at this centre has gone beyond local farmers, beyond the region. We have national programs. We have produced improved seeds that are high yielding, tolerate drought and resistant to crop diseases," he said.

He called on the Minister to help address different challenges facing the centre such as dilapidated infrastructures and laboratories, house wares, shortage of researchers and shortage of funds for research and development activities.

TARI Ilonga Centre has a national mandate to research and coordinate different strategic crops such as sorghum, cassava, maize, millet, and sunflower among many others. For example, the Centre has accelerated breeding and delivery of new sunflower varieties which high yield potential.

The Centre has already developed the strategic breeding program for sunflower which intends to keep sunflower sector

in Tanzania on track overtime and which allows to respond to changes while remaining faithful to sustainable edible oil production. The purpose of this strategic plan is to ensure sunflower breeding program in developing and delivering high quality seeds which are resilient in demand by smallholder farmers and processors in various geographic regions of Tanzania.

The Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) was established by the Parliamentary Act No. 10 of 2016 to enhance the strengthening of agricultural research system in Tanzania. TARI as a semi-autonomous body under the Ministry of Agriculture is responsible for all agricultural research activities conducted by the National Agricultural Research System (NARS) in the country.

TARI goal I to contribute to increased agricultural productivity through development and deployment of improved agricultural knowledge and technologies by adopting innovation systems approach

Healthy ageing is not enough to fight Covid-19

By Shin Jie Yong

AGE represents the number one risk factor for severe Covid-19. "Adults over 65 years of age represent 80 per cent of hospitalisations and have a 23-fold greater risk of death than those under 65," Harvard researchers stated in a published review in Aging.

The risk is independent; it remains even after adjusting for confounds, including medical comorbidities. It seems that even healthy older adults are at risk for severe Covid-19.

This is by no means surprising as ageing alone is an independent risk factor for many diseases like cancer, Alzheimer's and respiratory virus infections like influenza and SARS.

The most common explanation for the direct causal link between ageing and diseases is that the immune system gradually becomes inefficient. The organ where cancer- and virus-fighting T-cells mature - it's called thymus - decreases in size as people age. Other mechanisms include immunosenescence, inflammaging, epigenetic and glycome changes, as the Harvard researchers pointed out.

But the immuno-ageing process can be attenuated with lifestyle factors to a certain extent. "Conversely, individuals who live healthy lifestyles and consume geroprotectors such as metformin, resveratrol and NAD+ boosters may have a decreased risk of fatality of Covid-19," the Harvard paper admits. Geroprotectors are anti-ageing substances.

Living a healthy lifestyle - marked by regular exercise, not smoking, not drinking alcohol, and maintaining a healthy weight - reduces the risk of



being hospitalised for Covid-19 by 50 per cent, according to a UK population study. And this protective effect is adjusted for age and other confounds.

If a healthy lifestyle blunts immuno-ageing and lowers the risk of severe Covid-19 and chronic diseases such as obesity or diabetes, surely it can mitigate the effects of age in Covid-19 severity. But it doesn't, at least not entirely. There must be something else besides immuno-ageing, lifestyle or chronic diseases.

Fibroblasts synthesize protein fibres - such as collagen, reticular, and elastic fibres - that

form the extracellular matrix (ECM). ECM holds cells together to maintain the structural integrity of tissues and organs.

Protein fibres that fibroblasts make, however, accumulate with age. They take up space and increases tissue stiffness. Scientists call this phenomenon the stiffening of fibroblasts.

"We found that fibroblasts from old donors exhibited an increase in rigidity of about 60 per cent with respect to cells of the youngest donors," said a 2010 experiment published in Biophysical Journal.

Likewise with lung tissues that became stiff,

or less elastic, with age. "The respiratory system in ageing individuals is characterised by fibroblast dysfunction, which results in increased deposition of extracellular matrix (ECM) and in local differences in tissue stiffness," Switzerland bioengineer professors wrote in Nature Reviews Molecular Cell Biology.

"We hypothesize that coronaviruses can potentially take advantage of the altered mechanical state of cells in ageing hosts for their replication and propagation," they said.

The professors then cited a series of experiments showing that stiff and relaxed fibro-

blasts - or old versus young - have a distinct gene profile. This is because, as the mechanical state of the cell changes, so does its genetic expression and cell functions.

To illustrate this mechanical-gene-function concept, consider types of sponge that absorb water more readily owing to the different kinds of material used that result in different mechanical states. Or consider how less elastic skin (from ageing) gets bruised more easily as it loses its potency to blunt external forces.

Similarly, stiff and relaxed fibroblasts respond differently to the same stimulus (or the external environment) at the genetic level. And there is an "overlap between genes that are differentially regulated by coronavirus infection and the mechanical state of cells", the professors noted.

They proposed that the stiffness of lung fibroblasts - acquired via ageing - could shape lung tissues in such a way that is more conducive for coronavirus infection.

What makes ageing the number one independent predictor for severe Covid-19? The current consensus is immuno-ageing. But lifestyle factors and chronic comorbidities - both of which are also independent risk factors - could explain some of its effects. The chances are that immuno-ageing is not the sole factor for the causal link between age and severe Covid-19.

Stiff fibroblast as a result of ageing could be another prominent factor. It doesn't have to be just Covid-19 but other respiratory infections like influenza virus where age is also an independent predictor of poor disease outcomes.

Blunting fibroblast stiffening would require much more than a healthy lifestyle, such as stem cell therapy or substances containing fibroblast growth factors. Imagine skin wrinkles brought about by less elastic and stiff dermal fibroblast, for example. No amount of exercise of healthy eating could prevent that.

A published academic author, Shin Jie Yong is a young neurobiology postgraduate student.

SA passes Kenya the baton in UN Security Council relay

BY GUSTAVO DE CARVALHO

IN January 2021, Kenya will replace South Africa as one of the three elected African members (A3) on the United Nations Security Council, joining Niger and Tunisia. Kenya was elected for the 2021-22 term, together with India, Ireland, Mexico and Norway.

Member states need to ensure the council's responses to peace and security problems are relevant and effective. For Africa in particular, membership is an opportunity to showcase coherent leadership in the world's most important decision-making organ.

Joining the Security Council isn't an isolated act for any African member state, but rather part of an ongoing relay to ensure collective African interests are effectively addressed. In recent years, the A3 have shown that, when presenting unified positions, they are more influential on the council, especially on African matters.

African countries usually have their candidacy endorsed by the African Union (AU) summit. Historically this has been a fairly uncontroversial process. Based on continental rotation, South Africa's replacement was due to come from East Africa. In August 2019, Kenya secured an endorsement by the AU's Permanent Representatives Committee (PRC), the organ comprising all member state delegates to discuss day-to-day AU affairs.

The A3 have shown that unity enables them to be more influential especially on African matters.

Djibouti questioned Kenya's legitimacy, claiming the AU couldn't delegate its author-

ity to the PRC on this matter and that it should have been approved by the AU Summit instead. During the summit in early 2020, member states couldn't reach an agreement. From there an unusual and controversial campaign, the first among African countries since 2011, was undertaken by both countries.

Djibouti called on its links to the International Organisation of La Francophonie, the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation (OIC) and the Arab League. By questioning the AU's endorsement process, it had important supporters from the UN Security Council permanent members, the P5 and France in particular.

Kenya engaged with a wide range of countries from the Commonwealth, Latin America, the Caribbean, Europe and the Pacific, often using the PRC endorsement as an entry point for its legitimacy argument. It seems this approach paid off.

Despite the controversy with Djibouti, Kenya comes to the council as a regional power that frequently champions peace and security initiatives in Africa. It previously served as the UN Peacebuilding Commission chair, and was a key African voice in the negotiations for the Sustainable Development Goals. Kenya's success during its term will however be determined by how it crafts a relationship with the P5 and navigates complicated council dynamics.

During the campaign, both Kenya and Djibouti claimed they had China's backing. China was expected to be more favourable to a Djibouti victory, being heavily influential in the Red Sea through its only overseas military base.



To influence global decisions, African states on the council must strive to present unified positions. File photo

However Kenya is also a relevant regional player, and a vital Chinese trading hub in Africa. So the extent of China's influence in Kenya shouldn't be underestimated.

An unusual and controversial campaign for the UNSC seat was undertaken by both Kenya and Djibouti.

France may be the biggest loser of this year's council elections. In 2021, the European Union (EU) group will be reduced, with only three members - Estonia, France and Ireland - down from five in 2019. France's ability to influence the A3 will be key. If Djibouti, a close French ally, had won, all the A3 would have been Francophonie members. Kenya's position on the council won't necessarily share French interests

in Africa.

There are many lessons that Kenya can learn from previous A3 members on how to maximise its term. A Security Council analyst in New York told ISS Today that the sooner it completes its staffing process in New York, the better. When South Africa joined the council in 2019, it struggled to get its house in order in a timely manner, so it had a slow start.

Joining the council as an observer from October 2020 should give Kenya the chance to learn, practise and craft partnerships. It can identify the division of labour in its mission early on, and find ways to quickly and effectively develop positions in Nairobi, Addis Ababa and New York.

Emerging countries often

have smaller missions in New York, so Kenya will need to beef up its mission to the UN. It will also have to be clear on where to focus its attention through an effective internal division of labour and balanced positions.

Working with past and current members is not a luxury - it is a necessity.

Kenya is expected to continue the role played by South Africa, and previously by Ethiopia and Egypt, to foster A3 unity based on AU positions. However, recent examples already show the difficulties it will face.

The A3 was divided in approving a new political mission in Sudan, which is billed to replace the UN-AU peace operation in Darfur. Kenya has a key role to play in ensuring that the

strategic partnership between the AU and UN is sustained.

Kenya has been active in the UN Peacebuilding Commission, and is expected to be a champion for the sustaining peace agenda. This will be particularly relevant for Kenya's immediate region, which should dominate its strategic engagements on the council.

Somalia, South Sudan, Sudan and Abyei are all key issues on the council. Kenya will likely be an active member regarding negotiations in these countries. It should ensure the council supports the Horn of Africa as the region tackles its long-term peace challenges.

Kenya shouldn't join the Security Council just for global visibility or to pursue only its national positions. Rather the term

should be seen as an opportunity for coordination among African stakeholders. The two years on the council are short, and while it may seem like a sprint, if countries work together, the relay can transform the term into a coordinated marathon. Working with past and current members is not a luxury; it is a necessity.

In preparing for its term, Kenya has a great opportunity to learn from current A3 members in setting up its internal decision making and staffing systems, and to develop positions on specific issues. This will confirm that African member states can become more influential on the council, and effectively contribute to sustainable peace and development on the continent.

Agencies

What if Covid-19 and flu both flare up this autumn?

By Robert Roy Britt

EXPERTS say that, if the Covid-19 case curve continues to flatten and decline in the United States as hoped, the credit will go to physical distancing, improved hygiene awareness, and other preventive measures.

But we should not presume that the virus will be licked any time soon. In fact, many infectious disease experts are worried about a comeback - a second wave that could strike more quickly and harder than this initial wave of infections.

Worse, it could arrive just as flu season is ramping up, potentially exacerbating symptoms and causing fresh havoc for the healthcare system and the economy.

"Once we start opening things back up, we're going to have a lot of individual cases that are still brewing under the surface. If we don't put out all the flames, then we'll have this smoldering number of people that will all be able to ignite outbreaks at once," said Michael Mina, assistant professor of epidemiology at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, on an April 28 conference call.

Mina explains that the math of a second wave could be much different. The initial outbreaks were isolated, starting mostly in a few cities, where one case might have led to four other infections - then 16. In a second wave, you could have, say, 100,000 cases at the start that spread all over the country and lead to 400,000 new infections, then 1.6 million, and so on.

Mina says the 1918-1919 influenza pandemic offers a lesson on how viral outbreaks can come in waves. The first US outbreak was in March 1918. The spread subsided that summer but then resurged in the fall, creating a far deadlier second wave of infections.

After a third wave during the winter and spring of 1919, some 675,000 Americans had died at a time when the total population was just a third of what it is today.

While the 1918-1919 pandemic was caused by the flu virus and therefore does not offer an apples-to-apples comparison to the coronavirus,

Covid-19 is not the first coronavirus-caused disease to make waves.

Exactly 17 years ago, "we were smack-dab between two waves of SARS infections in Toronto", points out Mark Cameron, PhD, an immunologist and medical researcher in the School of Medicine at Case Western Reserve University in Ohio.

On March 26, 2003, the government of Ontario, Canada, declared an emergency due to an outbreak of the coronavirus SARS-CoV. By late April, Toronto's mayor said the city was safe, inviting tourists back. On May 17, Ontario lifted the emergency.

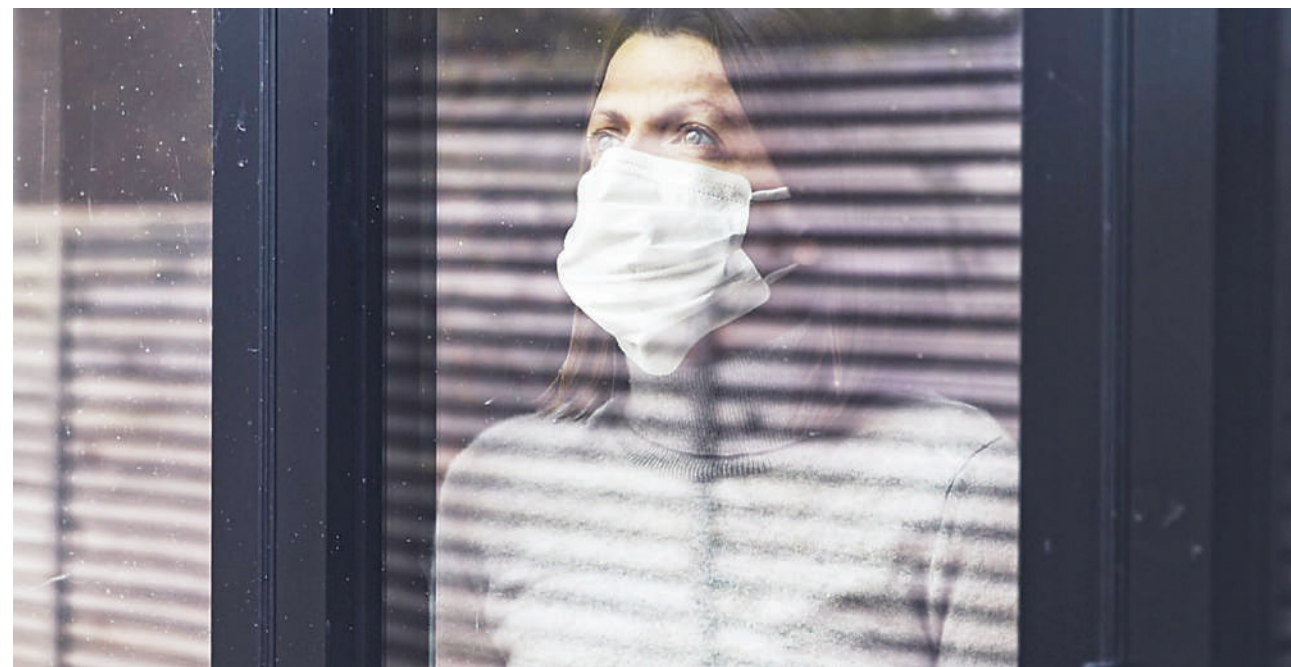
"Within two weeks, the second wave came roaring back, just as strongly as the first and for just as long," says Cameron, who studied the disease while working at Toronto General Hospital at the time. He worries that a second wave of Covid-19 infections could come well before autumn if politicians and businesses rush too quickly to get back to normal.

"We have not bent the curve enough to travel down the other side of this pandemic and release precautions in a rapid manner," Cameron says, adding: "I share some of the optimism in planning a return to some everyday activities, but to do this at the peak of an outbreak, no matter how flat the curve has become in some states, is inviting a second wave."

Cameron further noted that if the virus is unleashed in a second wave, whether now or this, the ramp-up could be much quicker.

He warns: "It would be crushing. We won't have the slower city-by-city spread pattern we experienced this spring as the first wave of the pandemic ran its course. It will seem like it is hitting us from all directions. ... The clock would be reset to zero, and the same precautions would need to be put back in place."

Meanwhile, if we were worried about overwhelming the healthcare system back when businesses were closed and people were ordered to stay home, "then we should be more worried now", says Marc Lipsitch, PhD, a professor of epidemiology and



A woman wearing a mask looking out the window from her home. Photo: Justin Paget/Getty Images

director of the Centre for Communicable Disease Dynamics at Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

"Though we've slowed down the increase, we're in a worse position now than we were then because there is more virus spreading now," the professor warns, adding: "Viruses don't know where they were in the past. They only know where they are in the present."

Lipsitch doesn't think summer will have a tremendous effect on the coronavirus. He points to Australia and New Zealand, where the virus took hold during their summer, clearly showing that it can spread in warmer weather.

"We can expect a little bit of reduction in transmission in the Northern Hemisphere but not by itself enough to stop transmission this summer," Lipsitch told a group of reporters on April 30.

Virologist Andrea Amalfitano, dean of the College of Osteopathic Medicine at Michigan State University, says that a serious resurgence of Covid-19 is far from a given.

While it's almost a sure thing that there will be at least some cases this fall, too little is known to predict the scope with any accuracy, Amalfitano argues.

He says some locations might have had enough cases to develop some level of herd immunity, meaning that a high percentage of people would be protected and therefore not catch or spread the disease - thus, pushing down the rate at which one person infects others and squelching the spread.

Mina agrees that herd immunity may have been achieved in specific locations, including individual nursing homes or even densely populated neighbourhoods. But he thinks that any collective protection will be highly localised, not serving the population in general.

Even if 10 per cent of the US population has been infected, which Mina thinks is on the high side and is 30 times the current roughly 1 million diagnosed cases, "it still isn't enough to stop this virus from roaring back".

"Depending on how contagious an infection is, usually 70 per cent to 90 per cent of a population needs immunity to achieve herd immunity," researchers at Johns Hopkins University say.

There are other wild cards. It's not yet known how robust or long-lasting a person's Covid-19 immunity will be. Experts expect some immunity, but they also know that it tends to wane over time, and every virus prompts a different immunity response, which in turn varies by individual.

The pandemic is likely to last 18 to 24 months, according to an analysis led by Kristine Moore, medical director of the Centre for Infectious Disease Research and Policy (CIDRAP) at the University of Minnesota.

In the report, released April 30, Moore and her colleagues say Covid-19 "appears to spread more easily than the flu" and "likely won't be halted until 60 per cent to 70 per cent of the population is immune".

Meanwhile, there's no guarantee that a useful Covid-19 vaccine can be discovered and mass-produced by this autumn, though hopes are high. Researchers at Oxford University are fast-tracking a vaccine candidate and say it could be ready by September. Amalfitano, who has worked on efforts to create vaccines for the flu and HIV, says that the Oxford group is "very well esteemed" and could deliver - but notes that promising vaccine candidates sometimes flop completely during the clinical trials aimed at proving their effectiveness.

Lipsitch points out that somewhere between one-third and a half of vaccine candidates aimed at other diseases in past ef-

forts failed in the late stages of testing.

However, he is "hopeful - but only cautiously hopeful" that a vaccine will be ready by this autumn, putting the odds at somewhere between 1 in 3 and "maybe 1 in 2 if we're lucky".

Other vaccine experts predict that even having one ready in 18 months is highly optimistic.

Like many epidemiologists, Lipsitch is concerned that states may open back up too quickly and too fully amid a lack of testing to reveal how many people actually have Covid-19 and without antibody tests that would begin to provide clues as to who might have some immunity to the disease. "In the absence of much better testing capacity, it's a dangerous thing to start lifting restrictions," he says.

It's not clear what would actually happen if influenza and Covid-19 reared their ugly heads together. Robert Redfield, director of the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, says that "there's a possibility that the assault of the virus on our nation next winter will actually be even more difficult than the one we just went through".

That said, it's possible that one viral infection could actually serve to protect a person from getting another viral infection at the same time.

"If one virus elicits an innate immune response, that might help shield cells against viral entry," Mina explains. But Amalfitano doubts this would be the case, since the two diseases develop distinctly different antibodies, the immune-system proteins that fight the respective viruses. Or people might catch both. "One virus distracts your immune system, and then the other virus comes in," Mina says. Amalfitano agrees that this is possible.

And it could be disastrous for an individual, given the compounding of symptoms. In fact, a similar and common double infection of bacterial pneumonia is what actually kills many flu victims.

Science & health journalist and author Robert Roy wrote this piece for *Elemental*, a new Medium publication about health and wellness.

Collapse of construction firm leaves thousands jobless in East Africa

By Guardian Correspondent

A recent BBC Eye documentary about a former infrastructure company—Spenco has brought to light a number of questions on the business tactics and motivation of private equity (PE) firms in Africa.

Spenco was an East African civil engineering and construction company that provided construction and engineering services for buildings, roads, bridges, power transmission and water supply infrastructure.

The company, which also operat-

ed in Tanzania, Uganda, Sudan, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia, was established 41 years ago in Kenya.

Founder of the company, Jitendra Patel said that at its prime, the company had a workforce of more than 5,000 employees across Africa.

In an emailed interview, Patel said the company successfully executed over 200 infrastructure projects across nine Eastern and Southern African countries including Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Malawi.

At that time, the firm's projects in Tanzania were Kilimanjaro sub-stations and Transmission lines (US\$26.2million),

Singida sub-stations and transmission lines (US\$20million), Musoma Water Supply and Sanitation (US\$25.6million), Kigoma Water Supply and Sanitation (US\$19.9m)

He said: "Spenco developed solid relationships with a number of financial institutions including state backed development finance institutions (DFI) such as the Dutch Development Bank, FMO and was among the most reputable construction companies in the region for over 35 years."

Patel said the construction firm has for years enjoyed solid relationships with all its stakeholders

including governments, ministries, donor agencies, consulting engineers, suppliers and staff.

He said that in 2006, the US private equity fund, Emerging Capital Partners (ECP), invested US \$ 15 million into the company with the aim of listing Spenco on the Nairobi Stock Exchange by 2012 - 2014.

Initially the relationship with ECP was positive until mid-2011 when ECP conspired to take control of the company from its founders by manipulating findings of internal audit reports with the sole aim of forcefully acquiring all

of the company's shares in order to 'flip' the company at a huge profit.

Unknown to the founders at the time, ECP was in secret negotiations with, amongst others, one UAE based competitor who had expressed interest in acquiring the company for which ECP offered to sell 100 percent of the company's shares.

However, the sale did not go through as it was blocked by two of the founders; had it done so, ECP would have yielded huge profit of over 200 percent.

Patel added: "ECP again conspired to defraud the founders in

2012 by forcing them to accept a US \$ 6m loan, which was just another ploy to forcefully acquire the founder's shares."

According to him, the founders were then forced to enter an arbitration process in a last ditch effort to subvert and/or delay ECP's predatory intentions to forcefully acquire 100 percent of the company.

However, ECP rejected the founders' proposals for an equitable win-win solution. Instead, upon validating their Put Option right in the arbitration, they unceremoniously ousted all the found-

ers and took over full ownership and management of the company in early 2014, according to Patel.

ECP then engaged a hostile and wholly ineffectual 'management' team to forcefully take over the founders remaining assets. Aside from grossly mishandling the business, the said team, led by ECP, engaged in massive bribery payments of over US \$4m to Ugandan government officials within the first year alone.

These payments were reported to the authorities in the US and UK as well as to ECP's donors - DFID, CDC and EIB, amongst others."

Scottish genetics firm in a new initiative to improve East Africa's farmed tilapia strains

By Guardian Reporter

The Scotland-based genetics firm Xelect is undertaking a project aimed at improving east Africa's farmed tilapia strains.

The project is funded by Msingi East Africa—an industry development organization that supports the transformation of high potential industries in East Africa to provide genetic analysis and consultancy to the breeders of Nile tilapia around Lake Victoria in Kenya and Uganda.

"Msingi aims to develop competitive, inclusive and resilient industries over the long term and has identified aquaculture and textiles as their two initial priority industries," explains Tom Ashton, operations director at Xelect.

The project helps local hatcheries lay the foundation for potential long term cutting-edge selective breeding programmes in the region. Currently there are four producers involved who are all engaged in breeding native strains of tilapia.

"For the smaller farmers, in particular, genetic analysis and updating their breeding programmes is a huge investment. However, this is something that partners like Msingi can assist with and better performing genetic strains would greatly spur growth and competitiveness of the regional industry," explains Ashton.

Tilapia farming in the region has been slow to take off on a commercial basis. However, although there are now a growing number of producers who are adopting a more progressive approach, they don't always have access to vital components, including high grade feeds and quality seed.

"Many of the farmers in the area want to be in control of their own broodstock, but this is not always possible and some resort to importing fry from other countries"



says Ashton. He points out that importing strains from Asia can sometimes bring biosecurity risks if not managed carefully and is not always possible from a regulatory perspective.

The first phase of the project involved Xelect conducting site visits to participating farms, and providing training in DNA sampling to local farmers. They then

took the samples back to Scotland for analysis. "We took DNA samples back to Scotland and developed bespoke genetic marker tools for the East Africa tilapia strains, which have their origins in the lakes Victoria, Kyoga, Albert and Turkana," says Ashton.

Since then Xelect has managed to genotype and analyse a selection of fish from each farm and

evaluate the genetic structure of the stocks in the region.

"The early signs are very positive, in terms of the breeding programmes that the farms we assessed already have underway and these represent a healthy base for future genetic-based breeding programmes," Ashton reflects.

Last month Xelect returned

to Kenya to present their results to the participant farms and to Msingi.

The next step will involve trying to establish a business plan for the project as well as finalise the traits that the farmers are looking to incorporate into their breeding programmes.

"We know that the farmers want us to select for growth, sur-

vival and improved FCRs but we're not yet sure whether it would be better to establish a centralised hatchery that could produce seed stock for all farmers in the region or to develop individual hatcheries on each farm," Ashton explains.

"Either way, we are looking forward to providing long term support and helping deliver generational gains through selective breeding," he adds.

Women traders in Zanzibar feeling pinch of COVID-19

By Guardian Reporter, Zanzibar

The gendered impact of Covid-19 continues to play out in African countries and around the globe, with acute effects on women, who are the main caretaker in most families.

Covid-19 hasn't spared women entrepreneurs in Zanzibar who are currently counting loss in their businesses as there are no more buyers of their merchandizes.

The most affected ones are women who are engaging in making and selling handmade crafts to tourists.

Mwanaisha Hashim Abdallah of Vikokotoni, Zanzibar said in an interview that the virus has immensely affected their business as most of them have ended up accumulating losses due to low price of the products.

She said that as the number of tourists declined drastically, the price of their products such as handbags are currently sold at 10,000/- compared to the previous 30,000/-.

"We were doing so well in the business, but after the Covid-19 pandemic, things are no longer the same, our income has been affected, our business focused on the tourist market," said Hidayat Ali Rajab, one of the women traders from Cheju village.

According to her, the market has changed and they are now selling the handbags to normal people and they are forced to sell them at a cheap price.

"Our major market centre was Stone town; this is the place where most of the tourists prefer to visit. I was earning 200,000/- as my monthly



income due to the trade but I cannot get that amount now due to the situation, the number of guests and tourists has dropped," she said.

In Zanzibar, large number of women works in the informal sector as entrepreneurs running small and medium enterprises.

Women in the Indian Ocean archipelago often depend on public spaces and social interactions, which are now restrict-

ed to curtail the pandemic. Asha Makame is another entrepreneur, who said: "We're producing a lot of handcraft products designed in a very natural way to attract tourists to buy them."

"After the government resumed all activities to continue after Coronavirus, we expect things will become normal and our economy will improve. I am also preparing to increase production of the handbags be-

cause I'm sure tourists will also start flowing in the island," he said.

Maulid Suleiman, director of the Zanzibar Youth Forum urged the government to think on supporting the entrepreneurs with capital and loans.

"Most of the entrepreneurs, especially youth have lost their capitals due to Coronavirus outbreak, it is better to think on how to help them improve their businesses," Suleiman

UNESCO to organise virtual meeting on illicit trafficking of cultural property amid Covid-19

By Guardian Reporter

THE United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is tomorrow expected to gather together on-line experts to discuss illicit trafficking of cultural property during Covid-19, particularly illegal excavations and online trade.

According to a statement issued by the UN agency, faced with an unprecedented global health crisis worldwide, a vast majority of countries enforced quarantine and lockdown measures to combat Covid-19. The focus on sanitary measures and restriction of movement reduced the surveillance of cultural sites and museums, which lead to increased illegal excavations of archaeological sites and trafficking activities including online transactions.

In the framework of the celebration in 2020 of the 50th anniversary of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, UNESCO has organized the online meeting to discuss increased looting and illicit trafficking in cultural property during the coronavirus lockdown, in order to explore measures to be undertaken in support of countries' efforts to protect their cultural property.

The expert meeting aims to understand how the illicit trafficking of cultural property and its online sales are organized during the current Covid-19 crisis, and identify the measures taken by the different actors to reinforce the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property and their contribution to preventing this scourge.

Opened and moderated by Ernesto Ottone, UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Culture, two respective panels of international experts on illegal excavations and online trade will share their views and experiences, and will prioritize measures to be undertaken. Amongst panellist will be Katie A. Paul and Amr Al Azm (ATHAR Project), Corrado Catesi (INTERPOL), Vincent Michel (University of Poitiers), Mariya Polner (World Customs Organization) Eva Martinez (Honduran Institute of Anthropology and History, Honduras), and Christos Tsirogannis (University of Aarhus, Denmark), among other experts.

This online meeting targets cultural heritage and museum professionals as well as a general audience in order to raise awareness on the issue of illicit excavations and trade of cultural property.



In the framework of the celebration in 2020 of the 50th anniversary of the 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import

It is a challenge to provide disability-inclusive education. But it is worth it

PARIS

MANY countries in sub-Saharan Africa get bad press for their progress in providing inclusive education. Just two in three children complete primary school on time, while the number of out-of-school children and youth is 97 million and growing. Less is said, however, about the range of tools many countries in the region are deploying to include some of those furthest behind in mainstream schools: students with disabilities.

These efforts should be celebrated and there seems no better time to think about inclusion than now. Inequalities in education are always blatant, but the new 2020 Global Education Monitoring (GEM) Report by UNESCO shows that the Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated exclusion. About 40% of countries in sub-Saharan Africa have not been able to support disadvantaged learners during school closures, notably students with disabilities.

Many of the countries looking to move from segregated towards inclusive systems need to overcome management challenges. They need to think how to better share specialist resources between schools so that all children can benefit.

Prior to the pandemic, countries in the region were taking different approaches to inclusion. Data from the continent shows that 23% of countries have laws calling for children with disabilities to be educated in separate

settings. Most countries, however, combine mainstreaming with separate arrangements, usually for learners with severe disabilities.

Many of the countries looking to move from segregated towards inclusive systems need to overcome management challenges. They need to think how to better share specialist resources between schools so that all children can benefit. Examples of this can be found across the continent.

Angola and Nigeria, for instance, are looking at transforming special schools into support bases for children with disabilities in mainstream schools, as well as providing training for teachers. Angola set a target in 2017 of including 30,000 children with special education needs in mainstream schools by 2022.

Kenya also recognizes special schools' pivotal role in the transition towards inclusive education. At present, almost 2,000 primary and secondary mainstream schools provide education for students with special needs.

Malawi tries a twin-track approach. Those with severe disabilities are educated in special schools or special needs centres, while those with mild disabilities are mainstreamed. Special schools at each education level are being transformed into resource centres.

Instead of resource centres, Tanzania is mobilising itinerant teachers offering specialist services. These teachers are trained and managed by Tanzania Society for the Blind and provided with a motorbike. They also



perform vision screening, refer children to medical facilities and organize community sensitization and counselling.

While the political will for change seems clear, there is often a gap between theory and practice. This is where the emphasis between now and 2030 must lie. Throughout sub-Saharan Africa, teachers mention that implementing inclusive education is hard because they lack resources.

Take Malawi for instance. While it is increasingly encouraging learners with special needs to enrol in mainstream schools, a lack of facilities forces many to transfer to special

schools. In Namibia, the shortage of resource schools in rural areas, a lack of accessible infrastructure and unfavourable attitudes towards disability are just some of the barriers to successfully implementing its inclusive education policy. Similarly, in the United Republic of Tanzania, only half of children with albinism complete primary school. Because they lack support, they often end up being transferred to special schools.

The same story can be found in South Africa. It has a law from 1996 stating that the right to education of children

with special needs is to be fulfilled in mainstream public schools. But recently it reported back to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that it had new segregated schools in basic education and a lack of provisions for children with severe intellectual disabilities.

Ghana is another case. It is the only country in the region to make provisions for all learners in its education law. Its 2015 inclusive education policy framework envisages transforming special schools into resource centres, while maintaining special units, schools and other institutions for students with severe and profound disabilities. But children with intellectual and developmental disabilities must perform the same tasks within the same time frame as their peers without disabilities, occupy desks placed far from teachers and are often physically punished by teachers for behavioural challenges, even in inclusive schools in Accra.

While all these efforts are commendable, simply laying the groundwork for inclusion in education will not suffice. Implementing the ambitions spelled out in education policies will take a new wave of efforts. The 2020 GEM Report looks at the different steps needed to provide disability-inclusive education, providing ten recommendations for policy makers, teachers and civil society over the next ten years. We hope it will prove a useful resource for countries in the region to move to the next stage.

Agencies

South China's Hainan Province cultivates grassland under the sea

By Zhao Peng, Zhu Rongpeng

IN 2018, an institute of marine ecology under Hainan Academy of Ocean and Fisheries Sciences in south China's Hainan Province was given a novel task - planting seagrasses on the ocean floor.

This was because earlier that year, Hainan decided to restore eco-environment in Qinglan port, Wenchang city, in the northeast corner of Hainan Island, which was previously destroyed by channel expansion and sea reclamation. The task of restoring seagrass resources was one part of the restoration projects.

In recent years, land-based pollution and a large amount of suspended sediments from offshore projects have entered the sea, causing natural wetlands to diminish and seagrass beds to vanish at a faster pace.

Without seagrass beds, the basic "vegetation" under the sea, the sea floor was turning into a desert.

"The loss of seagrass beds has exerted an enormous impact on marine ecology," Wu Zhongjie, director of the institute told the People's Daily.

"This is because seagrass beds boost the circulation of marine life in the ecological environment, while purifying ocean water by absorbing the sediments," Wu added.

Seagrass beds in the channel of Qinglan port in Gaolong Bay have suffered continuous degradation these years. According to local fishermen, seagrasses were fairly lush in the 1980s. One-meter-long *Enhalus acoroides* could be seen everywhere while *Thalassia hemprichii* sprawled in shallow waters.

However, the degradation of the seagrass beds has caused the loss of shelters of many fish, biodiversity loss and decrease in the species density. The fish-

ermen now find it more difficult to catch the fish in nearshore waters than before.

Later, the decision to restore a barren area of the sea floor in Gaolong Bay was made according to a research, for the area was covered mainly by coral reef debris and sediments.

The institute tried different species of seagrasses, such as *Enhalus acoroides*, *Thalassia hemprichii* and *Cymodocea rotundata*, and tested and analyzed their survival rate and growth. Then *Enhalus acoroides* and *Thalassia hemprichii* were chosen as the species for trial based on a comprehensive analysis.

The next step was to decide how to cultivate grass. The institute came up with a two-prong method.

One part is about transplantation. The researchers first planted the seagrasses in different man-made carriers made of coconut shell, clay and bamboo, and then placed these carriers with seagrasses in the barren area deep down the sea.

The other part of the method was focused on restoring ecological environment in a more natural way. The researchers planted the seeds of *Thalassia hemprichii* in the sea bed of nearshore areas, and applied fertilizer to them. Then the seagrasses grew spontaneously.

Moreover, China's desert control method - grid of straw squares, inspired the researchers to make a similar version, which consisted of fishing nets and iron plates.

The nets, together with the grid of iron squares placed on it, could hold the sea bed together well enough to resist the currents in the sea, enable the sediments to precipitate, and capture the nutrition. As a result, both the sea floor and the seagrasses were stabilized.

"When the sea bed is fully recovered, the nets and grid will



Researchers of the institute restore seagrass meadows.

be disassembled and recycled. The recovered seagrasses will emerge in an orderly pattern as they grow. Little by little, vast stretches of seagrass beds will be formed," Chen Shiquan, a key member on the research team, explained to the People's Daily.

"Seagrass beds serve as a

natural ecological barrier for coastal areas. In the coral reef-mangrove-seagrass complex, often been described as one of the most biologically diverse and productive systems in the world, seagrasses support and link the other two," said Chen.

Chen added that long stretches of seagrass meadows could weaken wave energy and current energy and stabi-

lize sea bed, which play an important part in consolidating the sea bed and maintaining the coastline.

The institute announced in March that in the one-mu pilot area (1 hectare is 15 mu), the average survival rate of *Thalassia hemprichii* exceeded 56 percent, with an average coverage rate above five percent.

The results of *Enhalus acoroides*

were even better, with an average survival rate exceeding 89 percent, and an average coverage rate above 22 percent.

In the next month, ecological restoration in Qinglan Port passed a third-party evaluation.

"Seagrass meadows, a typical eco-system in tropical ocean, provide marine life with shelters, nutrition, and nurseries. They are also the gene pool and home to rich fishery resources. The successful restoration carries great significance for ecology," Chen remarked.

People's Daily

BUSINESS

BLESSING-IN-DISGUISE

Govt's position on lockdown in wake of Covid-19 helping exporters of pulses

By Beatrice Philemon

PRESIDENT John Magufuli's refusal to lockdown the country during the January to May period to contain the coronavirus outbreak has benefited pulses exporters in the country, enabling them to earn US\$70 million during the five months.

Tanzania Pulses Network's Policy and Planning Advisor, Junior Ndesanjo said in Dar es Salaam yesterday that the exports were mainly sent to United Arab Emirates, India, China, Uganda and Kenya most of which were under lockdown for months.

Ndesanjo said the COVID-19 outbreak has had a positive impact on the country's pulses trade thanks the

government's bold decision to defy a global trend in lockdowns to stop the virus from spreading faster.

"We expressed gratitude to the government for making the right decision in containing the coronavirus outbreak because a lockdown would have had a negative impact on our pulses markets," he said saying the global pulses market had grown from 20 percent to 48 percent.

He named the pulses which dominated the exports as chickpeas, beans, green grams, pigeon peas and cowpeas which are widely consumed in the stated countries which were under lockdowns during most of the period.

The TPN Advisor pointed out that



Pulses on display at a foodstuff market in Tanzania.

during the period, most exporters had smooth shipments of their consignments from up-country farmers to Dar es Salaam Port where business was going on as usual hence facilitating efficient transportation to international markets.

"Testimony by most exporters revealed that they didn't get any dif-

iculties in accessing services at Dar es Salaam Port where they received very good cooperation to ensure their pulses exports are shipped to targeted markets," he added noting that lockdown countries disadvantaged their farmers because movement of cargo and people were curtailed.

Backing Ndesanjo's observations,

TPN's National Coordinator, Zirack Andrew said because of the government's bold decision, the pulses subsector in the country has been boosted with production projected to grow to two million metric tons this year although heavy rains have also hindered increased production.

"Rainfall has effected beans produc-

tion in areas where farmers cultivate it in abundance hence production will slightly decline," warned Andrew.

According to Tanzania Investment Centre's report of 2016, the pulses subsector has employed over three million farmers in the country and generate US\$200 million annually.

BACKLASH

PepsiCo to change 131-year-old brand rooted in 'offensive racial stereotype'

NEW YORK

PEPSICO plans to change the name of its Aunt Jemima pancake mix and syrup, acknowledging that the 131-year-old brand is rooted in racially problematic tropes. The company's Quaker Oats unit will also remove the image of a black woman from its packaging and marketing beginning in the fourth quarter, according to a statement.

"We recognise Aunt Jemima's origins are based on a racial stereotype," Kristin Kroepfl, chief

marketing officer of Quaker Foods North America, said in the statement. "While work has been done over the years to update the brand in a manner intended to be appropriate and respectful, we realise those changes are not enough."

Mars Inc., which owns the Uncle Ben's rice brand, said it's "valuating all possibilities" regarding changes to its product line, which features an image of a smiling black man. "We recognise that now is the right time to evolve the Uncle Ben's brand, including its visual brand iden-

tity, which we will do," it said in a statement.

Some of America's oldest and best-known consumer brands are under scrutiny as the country reflects on the systemic racism in the business world and broader society. Many companies have donated money, pledged to boost hiring of black workers and taken other steps to support the black community following protests sparked by the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis last month.

'Long overdue'

The Aunt Jemima change "is not only welcome in the world of retail brands, but long overdue," James O'Rourke, a management professor with the University of Notre Dame's business school, said via email. The brand's reputation "was built on a racial and cultural stereotype that is widely regarded as offensive."

Other brands could face a similar backlash, said O'Rourke. B&G Foods Inc., maker of Cream of Wheat, did not immediately respond to a request for com-

ment on its brand imagery including a black man. This year butter maker Land O'Lakes decided to remove the image of a Native American woman from its products.

The Aunt Jemima name dates back to 1889 and was inspired by a song and character from a minstrel show, which featured white performers in blackface. The Aunt Jemima character's appearance changed over the years, removing a headscarf and adding pearl earrings. In 1994 Gladys Knight appeared in a commercial for the syrup.

The changing traits suggest brand managers recognised the character could be offensive, O'Rourke said. "But the effect, because of the name, is the same."

Growing criticism

The brand had faced growing criticism, with Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian tweeting "how is Aunt Jemima not cancelled?" and linking to a video critical of the character. The viral clip, titled "How To Make A Non Racist Breakfast," has millions of views online. PepsiCo also said Tuesday that it would

donate \$400 million over five years measures to promote racial equality. The Aunt Jemima brand specifically will donate \$5 million over that span.

"As we work to make progress toward racial equality through several initiatives, we also must take a hard look at our portfolio of brands and ensure they reflect our values and meet our consumers' expectations," Kroepfl said. PepsiCo has owned Aunt Jemima since it bought Quaker Oats in 2001. The name change will be announced at a later date, the company said.

INNOVATION

Refurbished Tigo Rusha product debuts sales at Dar's retail shops

By Guardian Reporter

A revamped Tigo Rusha electronic reloading services which allows customers to buy airtime and packages at retail shops and partners has been launched in Dar es Salaam.

Tigo Tanzania's acting Chief Commercial Officer, David Umoh said the improved service will also be readily available at Tigo shops, TigoPesa Wakalaa and point of sales agents all over the country.

"As a company that champions digital lifestyle, we are committed to developing innovative mobile and financial services solution that offer mobile users in Tanzania flexibility of choice, convenience and ease of use to complement today's fast-paced lifestyles," Umoh said.

He stated that the company's customers should look forward to a simple and easy way of purchasing airtime and packages through Tigo's shops and trusted retailers across the country. "Tigo Rusha is risk free, in contrast to scratch cards for which a customer has to



Tigo Tanzania's acting Chief Commercial Officer, David Umoh speaking to reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo courtesy of Tigo.

ensure the safety of the airtime voucher. Furthermore, electronic reload service removes the need to carry scratch airtime vouchers anytime one decides to top up," he added.

He noted that Tigo Rusha gives customers value for their money because they buy airtime in real-time electronic top-up which has never been so simple, secure and convenient."

Every Tigo customer that buys any pack-

age through Tigo Rusha is guaranteed an instant bonus," the Tigo Tanzania's acting CCO explained.

He also pointed out the positive impact the new product will be for Tigo's retail partners and thousands of scratch card suppliers across the country.

"I would also like to reassure our scratch cards suppliers that this is a new revenue stream and an opportunity to grow together with Tigo," Umoh noted while assuring scratch card distributors of the telco's continued support.

Established in 1995, Tigo Tanzania is the domestic market's leading digital lifestyle telecommunications company a diverse product portfolio in voice, SMS, high-speed internet and mobile financial services.

The telco has pioneered digital innovations such as the first smartphone in Kiswahili, free Facebook in Kiswahili, TigoPesa application, Tigo Mobile application as well as the first East African cross-border mobile money transfer with currency conversion.



I&M Bank CEO Baseer Mohammed (2nd R) briefs Chief Medical Officer Professor Abel Makubi (2nd L) when donating special hand washing tanks and liquid soap worth 10m/- to the Health ministry to help in efforts to fight the coronavirus outbreak. This was at a ceremony held in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent.

BORROWING

SA eyes green infrastructure bond worth tens of billions in bid to drive growth

PRETORIA

SOUTH Africa's government is considering selling a green infrastructure bond worth tens of billions of rand as part of its biggest drive ever to kickstart private investment in projects ranging from energy to water reticulation.

The proposed instrument is one of several mechanisms the country could use to raise finance for projects worth as much as R1.5 trillion over the next decade, said Kgosisentso Ramokgopa, head of the South African presidency's investment and infrastructure office.

"An idea that's finding traction is a green infrastructure bond," he said in an interview on Monday. "It will be substantial."

The infrastructure program will be officially unveiled at a symposium in Pretoria on Tuesday, where President Cyril Ramaphosa will announce in-

vestment commitments by private investors and international finance institutions. It is seen as a way of trying to counter the fallout of the coronavirus outbreak, which the central bank expects to cause a 7% economic contraction this year.

Rising debt

With a debt-to-gross domestic product ratio that's expected to exceed 100% by 2025, according to a Treasury document, the state has little room to fund infrastructure despite South Africa's need for everything from power plants to additional housing and water supply. State companies

also have limited scope to fill the gap because they too are already saddled with billions of dollars of debt.

Ramaphosa has previously announced plans for a R100 billion infrastructure fund and is now pushing for more involvement from private investors, who have

more funding capacity. Privately held mutual funds oversee about R2.5 trillion in assets, according to the Association for Savings and Investment South Africa, while the Public Investment Corp., which mainly manages the pensions of state workers, has R2.1 trillion.

OUTSTANDING

StanChart CEO Rughani becomes chair of IFAC Professional Accountants

By Guardian Correspondent

STANDARD Chartered Bank Tanzania's CEO, Sanjay Rughani, has been appointed Chairman of the Professional Accountants in Business Committee (PAIBC) for the International Federation of Accountants (IFAC).

A press statement issued by the bank yesterday said Rughani, who becomes the first Tanzanian and leader from Africa to be appointed to the helm of the PAIBC, will hold the post for an initial term of three years.

The statement said IFAC is the global organisation for the accountancy profession dedicated to serving the public interest by strengthening the profession and contributing to the development of strong international economies.

It comprises more than 175 members and associates in more than 130 countries and jurisdictions, representing more than 3 million accountants in public practice, education, government service, industry, and commerce.

Founded in October 1977, IFAC seeks to achieve three strategic objectives: speaking out and engaging as the voice for the global profession, leading and developing a future-ready profession; and promoting the development, adoption and implementation of high-quality international standards for accountants.

PAIBC, which is an advisory group of professional accountants with extensive and diverse experiences, was set up to enable IFAC to perform its duties and meet its targets. The committee considers key global trends in the context of the issues facing chief financial officers and finance functions as well as boards and their audit committees.



Sanjay Rughani

Rughani was nominated to the committee in 2015 through the Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA), and his contribution to the committee has been significant - including challenging the status quo of Accountancy and creating awareness on the future of the profession. He also mentors and coaches a number of young accountants and encourages the 'Girl Child' to study Accountancy.

IFAC chief executive officer Kevin Dancy said he thanked Rughani for having agreed to lead the PAIBC, saying the committee is "a very critical forum to drive the accountancy profession forward." "Sanjay is a globally respected leader and an asset to the global accountancy profession. In his role as PAIBC chair, he will lead discussions on the role of accounting and finance professionals in today's rapidly evolving world," Dancy said.

"With his leadership, the PAIBC will continue to provide guidance, best practices and new thinking to help accountants navigate challenges and identify emerging opportunities in their diverse roles within organisations," he added.

Pius A. Maneno, Executive Director of the National Board of Accountants and Auditors Tanzania (NBAA), congratulated Rughani on the appointment - which he described as "a great mark of respect not only for Tanzania but for the whole of the Africa Region."

"Rughani is the first Tanzanian to have been nominated to lead the PAIBC from the time that it was introduced in 1977," said Maneno, adding: "This is a great mark of respect for him and for Tanzania, and I congratulate Rughani, who is also a member of NBAA, on his appointment."

"I have worked closely with him and I admire his passion for the profession. He has always championed the cause of elevating accountants into better business and financial leaders, strategic partners and advisors to create sustainable value," noted Maneno.

Rughani meanwhile thanked Dancy and the IFAC's Leadership Team generally, including members of the committee, for having entrusted him to steer the advisory group. "I thank the IFAC leadership for having appointed me to chair the PAIBC. I am indeed grateful for the opportunity to play a role to lead the committee, which makes significant contributions to sustain and elevate one of the world's truly honourable professions," he said.

"Accountancy is my passion. I take pride in being able to contribute to this global profession which is bound by a firm commitment of professional standards and ethics," he added.

Rughani further noted that, as was the case with many other professions, "accountancy is also seeking more significant relevance and ability to meet the expectations of our stakeholders in an ever-changing world."

"I am confident that, through IFAC and the advisory group, we will continue to exploit opportunities and collaboratively confront the challenges that continue to come our way," he noted.

Rughani was last year awarded and named the Best Leader - Banking, Tanzania for Global Brand Awards 2019. The award, which falls under the Leadership Awards Category, is in acknowledgement of key players who strive for fineness and reward their performance with the ultimate global recognition.

CONTROVERSY

AngloGold Ashanti in bitter community dispute

JOHANNESBURG

A CONFLICT over the control of a mine dump rehabilitation is brewing between a Klerksdorp community and AngloGold Ashanti which is in the process of selling-off its remaining assets in the country.

Members of the Khuma community have laid claim to a tailings project which they say was donated to them by the company, although no such transaction has taken place, according to AngloGold Ashanti.

Aggrieved members of the community fear that the dispute would be left unresolved after the conclusion of the sale of the company's mine to Harmony which is expected to be finalised next week. At the centre of the dispute is the rehabilitation Scott Rock Dump, a waste rock produced during the mining process which has traces of gold.

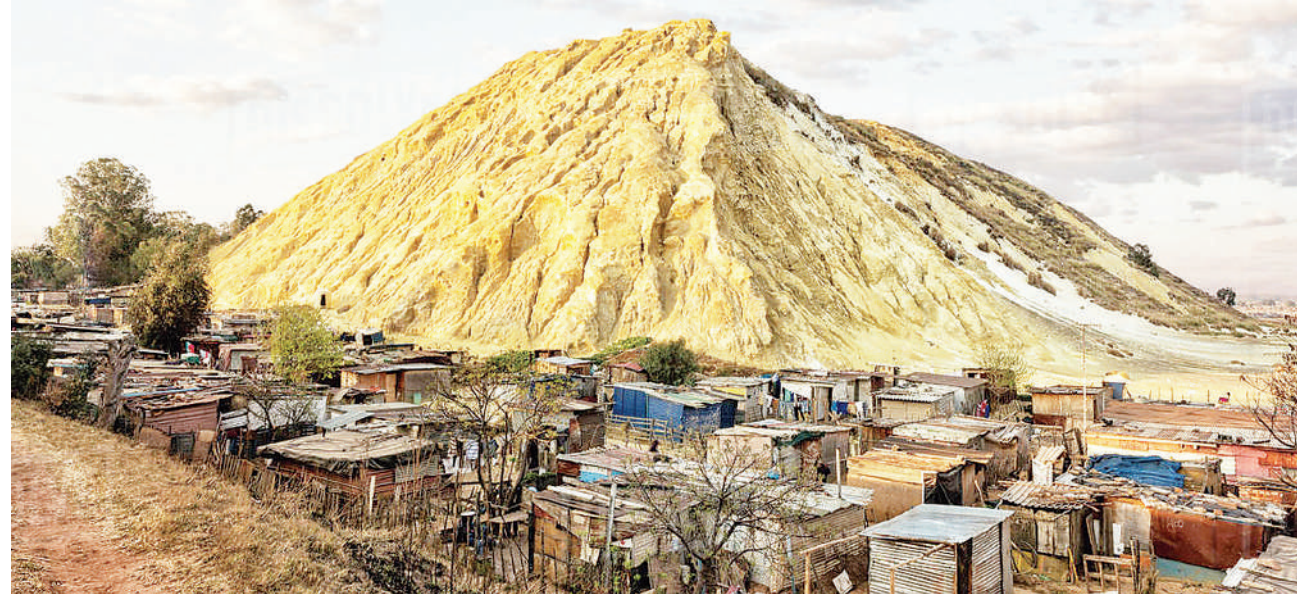
While AngloGold Ashanti is still operating the site, the company says it had set up a trust fund account for the Scott Rock Dump proceeds, which are intended for the community once the

potential donation of has occurred.

The mining group, on the other side believes that the project should be used to promote socio-economic activity and accuse a grouping of individuals within the community of trying to wrestle control of the project for themselves.

"The donation of the mine dump is meant for the benefit of the Khuma community as a whole and not for any single individual," said the company. "AngloGold Ashanti remains the owner of the dump until it has been donated to the community as a whole." The company said there had been numerous community disruptions at its various operations including the Scott Rock Dump since 2017, as a result the company has "not been able to process the adjacent dump, which it also owns, due to these community disruptions."

The disputed took a new turn early this month when AngloGold Ashanti sought an interdict against members of the community, barring them from accessing the project after threats and demands were made against employees on site and the company over



A slum built at AngloGold's Klerksdorp mine.

payments from mining activities. It is alleged that a grouping of individuals demanded that funds from the trust account be transferred to their attorney's trust account. But according to Neo Marumole, one of the community members, the

company which has operations in various parts of the African continent, Australia and South America of wanting to "run away" with the Trust Fund money.

"AngloGold Ashanti now wants to transfer the dump to another commu-

nity," said Marumole. The parties are expected to appear in the Mafikeng High Court on Thursday for the interdict hearing, while an independent mediator has been appointed to help iron out differences in the matter.

OPPOSITION

Zim move to pay civil servants USD allowances is 'crazy'

HARARE

THE Zimbabwean government's move to pay its workers US dollar-denominated allowances as the southern African country struggles to stabilise its local currency has been described as "crazy" by an economist and member of the central bank's monetary policy committee.

Fin24 previously reported that President Emmerson Mnangagwa's administration had hiked civil servants' salaries in local currency by 50% and also awarded them a US\$75 Covid-19 allowance. Government pensioners will also be paid a flat, non-taxable, Covid-19 allowance of US\$30 per month. Using the parallel market exchange rate of 75, the allowance is more than the US\$40 government workers, including teachers and nurses, are currently earning. Officials have called the measures "transitory."

In response, economist and MPC member Eddie Cross said there was not enough money in government coffers to support such a move, which would cost more than \$20 million in total. The Zimbabwean dollar was introduced early in 2019. It was previously pegged at 1:1 to the US dollar. The falling currency has resulted in a return to hyperinflation as businesses put up prices to keep up with

an exchange rate in free fall, as they are reliant on imports of raw materials and finished products.

Inflation reached 785.55% in May, according to official statistics released last week by Zimstats. Officials in Zimbabwe are however calling these economic challenges "transitory" and blamed the worsening economic fundamentals on the Covid-19 pandemic.

In a statement released Wednesday the Ministry of Finance announced that government workers will be paid "a flat, non-taxable, Covid-19 allowance of US\$75 per month." Cross said in addition to being unaffordable, the allowance would set a precedent. "What can you say, it's crazy, it's crazy. I don't think we have the money. I think the problem is it establishes a precedent for the private sector as workers will demand the same thing."

Cross added that the move was retrogressive in his view, as it violated a dedollarisation programme which was already facing resistance. He said allowing mines to pay workers in US dollars was already causing economic difficulties, and applying the same principle to the biggest workforce in the country would complicate matters further.

Imara Asset Management Zimbabwe said the only other sustainable currency

option for Zimbabwe would be a combination of a Government of National Unity, a hard currency regime and extensive institutional reform.

In a research note for the month of May 2020, Imara's Chief Investment Officer Jonathan Chew said the current multiple exchange rate system would keep the "show on the road for a while" but will eventually lead to dollarisation.



Cross added that the move was retrogressive in his view, as it violated a dedollarisation programme which was already facing resistance. He said allowing mines to pay workers in US dollars was already causing economic difficulties, and applying the same principle to the biggest workforce in the country would complicate matters further



Zimbabwean economist and MPC member Eddie Cross.

PARTNERSHIP

Former Wirecard CEO under arrest as regulators probe company accounts

MUNICH

WIRECARD'S former chief executive was arrested by Munich prosecutors after 1.9 billion euros (\$2.1 billion) went missing from the digital payments company, in a scandal that has rattled Ger-

many's financial industry.

Markus Braun, who resigned last week, was arrested on Monday evening in Munich as part of a probe into the company's accounting practices, prosecutors said in an e-mailed statement. A judge will decide on Tuesday how

long he will be held.

The company is fighting for survival after acknowledging that the funds probably don't exist, deepening its accounting woes. The payment processor said it's in discussions with creditors and is considering a full-scale restruc-

turing after pulling its financial results for fiscal 2019 and the first quarter of 2020. Previous descriptions of its business with third parties, which process transactions on Wirecard's behalf, were "not correct", according to the company.

In less than a week, the FinTech company once hyped as the future of German finance has lost most of its market value. "It's a complete disaster we're looking at," said Felix Hufeld, head of BaFin, Germany's top financial regulator, at a panel discussion Monday. "It's

DIVERSIFICATION

Nigerian tech firm launches expansion platform to bolster bus transportation

LAGOS

NIGERIAN solutions-based innovation tech firm Plentywaka has launched Logistics By Plentywaka (LBP), an expansion to the company's bus transportation network in the city.

According to a statement released by the company, the Lagos-based business-to-consumer delivery service was launched in response to the city-wide lockdown and restriction of movement. The B2C platform will provide customers with same-day service and range of logistical vehicles "from cooling vans, trucks and bikes, that can be easily selected depending on the requirements."

Available on Google Playstore and iOS App store, Logistics By Plentywaka app platform is targeted at a wide market of users who want to send packages, from everyday consumers as well as informal businesses, SMEs and enterprises. Plentywaka was established in 2019 and claims to have over 40,000 customers.

"Committed to embedding itself into the fabric of everyday Lagos life, the team began to look at how to keep goods and services moving, with the onset of COVID-19 and the ensuing restrictions on movement and State-wide lockdowns and curfews. Working with small businesses, it was clear that moving goods around the city was essential, in a safe, convenient, and time-efficient manner," the company has stated.

Johnny Enagwolor, Managing Director and Co-Founder of Plentywaka, says, "The effects of COVID-19 are being felt everywhere; the world has seen a mass loss of life, a sharp downturn to global economies and a fundamental shift in how people move about, work, and go about their domestic lives. In the midst of all of this, companies like ours have had to look at how we can continue to innovate and support both businesses, and people who need access to goods, by leveraging innovative technology to streamline the processes.

"We've worked with a number of partners, as well as many of our own drivers, to build out the infrastructure required to deliver a cost-effective and efficient logistics service. Furthermore, we're also pleased to be opening up new opportunities to those who've lost their regular source of income since COVID-19."

Logistics by Plentywaka is now looking for trusted partners and vehicle owners who will have the flexibility to earn money on their own schedule from an existing customer base of over 40,000 individuals and access to the technology infrastructure.

Customers using the app will choose a vehicle type closest to the pick-up location, with real-time delivery tracking and support. Plentywaka has also recently launched the Staff Bus Solutions for companies to commute staff to minimise the risk of exposure to COVID-19 and expanded to cover the route from Ikeja to Victoria Island.

PESSIMISM

Small islands' economies to shrink as tourism declines amid Covid-19 pandemic

LONDON

COUNTRIES that are highly reliant on tourism will face the greatest pressures on their economies as the Covid-19 pandemic reduces tourist arrivals, according to Moody's Investors Service.

The decline in tourism-related revenue and export earnings will weaken the fiscal balance of tourism-dependent economies, especially those with limited resources to absorb the shock, Moody's said in a report on June 22.

"The shock to the tourism sector will matter most for those sovereigns with weak credit fundamentals combined with an elevated susceptibility to event risk," David Rogovic, Moody's vice president, said. The credit rating agency expects tourist arrivals to decline between 35 per cent to 50 per cent for most countries, with only a partial recovery expected in 2021. Overall, the Maldives, Bahamas, Belize, St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Montenegro are the most exposed to a coronavirus-induced decline in tourism, Mr Rogovic said.

Globally, the tourism sector has been among the worst affected by the coronavirus pandemic that prompted governments to shut borders and suspend air travel. After several months of unprecedented closures, the sector is slowly and cautiously beginning to restart in some countries. These governments have gradually eased travel restrictions, restored some international flights and imposed hygiene or safety measures.

Fewer tourist arrivals will directly reduce export earnings and

weaken the current accounts of tourism-reliant countries, Moody's said. Countries with structurally large current account deficits and where tourism represents the main source of foreign currency earnings are the most vulnerable.

In most cases, lower foreign exchange outflows amid lower oil prices, the high import content of tourism and lower domestic demand will not offset lower export earnings, the agency said. A decline in visitors, which is a major source of tax revenue for tourism-dependent governments, will lead to a deterioration in fiscal balances and a rise in debt burdens for most of these sovereigns, the report said.

"The extent of credit pressures stemming from an erosion in fiscal strength will depend on the ability of governments to limit the deterioration in debt metrics in the short term and stabilise and reverse debt ratios over the medium term," Moody's said. Despite larger primary deficits, most of these countries will see an improvement in fiscal balances that will stabilise debt as growth rebounds in 2021



Left is David Rogovic, Moody's vice president.

and borrowing costs remain low.

However, reducing debt burdens significantly would need sustained levels of high growth and substantial tightening of deficits, the report said. Tourism is a major lifeline for millions of workers and a backbone of many economies.

In April, a busy season due to Easter holidays, the introduction of travel restrictions led to a fall of 97 per cent in international tourist arrivals, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). This followed a 55 per cent decline in March.

Between January and April 2020, international tourist arrivals declined by 44 per cent, translating into a loss of about \$195 billion in international tourism receipts, the UN body said. The UNWTO identified three scenarios for global tourism in 2020,

which point to potential declines in overall international tourist numbers of 58 per cent to 78 per cent, depending on whether travel restrictions lift in July, September or December.

Overall in 2020, the UNWTO projects 850 million to 1.1 billion fewer international tourist arrivals, leading to a loss of \$910bn to \$1.2 trillion in export revenues from tourism. This puts 100 to 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk, the UN organisation said.

Earlier this week Saudi Arabia said it will inject 15bn Saudi riyals (4bn) into the country's tourism sector through a new fund. Dubai, where tourism contributes about 11.5 per cent of GDP according to government figures, said it will allow foreign visitors to return from July 7. The emirate had begun limiting non-essential arrivals from March to curb the spread of the coronavirus.

RELIEF

Virgin Atlantic set to resume flights in July

LONDON

VIRGIN Atlantic announced Monday that it will resume passenger flights to markets around the world, as countries begin to cautiously lift coronavirus pandemic travel restrictions.

Flights between Johannesburg's OR Tambo and London's Heathrow airport are scheduled to resume in September, it said. US and European airlines have seen some travel demand return through May and June, with forward bookings for the northern-hemisphere summer also picking up. However, the vast majority of that demand has been for domestic travel.

While this has allowed some mainline and budget airlines to add capacity to their domestic and short-haul networks and reconfigure their network plans, other airlines that focus exclusively on long-haul travel, have remained grounded.

For Virgin Atlantic, which operates long-haul flights through its UK hubs, options during the pandemic have been scarce. The airline had planned to build up a domestic network through its acquisition of regional airline Flybe in 2019, but the smaller carrier became the first airline victim of the pandemic when it collapsed in early March. Virgin Atlantic is 49% owned by Delta, with the remaining 51% owned by billionaire Richard Branson's Virgin Group.

As countries began imposing travel restrictions and quarantine requirements for border-crossers, Virgin suspended passenger flights effective April 20. The airline has continued to fly cargo using passenger jets.

Virgin has openly discussed its dire financial situation during the pandemic. The airline said in

May that it would cut more than 3,000 jobs and close its base at London Gatwick. It has appealed unsuccessfully for a bailout from the British government. Branson has offered his private island as collateral for a bailout or loan.

Delta CEO Ed Bastian has said that Delta would not offer a cash injection to save Virgin from a possible bankruptcy restructuring. UK foreign ownership laws would prevent Delta or any other foreign investor from increasing its stake.

Virgin will resume passenger flights from London Heathrow to the following destinations: Hong Kong - resumes July 20; New York JFK; Los Angeles - resumes July 21; Barbados - resumes August 1; Shanghai - resumes August 4; San Francisco - resumes August 4; Tel Aviv - resumes August 9; Miami - resumes August 18; Lagos - resumes August 23; Orlando - resumes August 24, subject to CDC approval (Virgin will also fly to Orlando from Manchester); and Atlanta - August 25.

The airline also announced a rough timeline to resume service from London Heathrow to the following cities: Washington, DC; Seattle; Las Vegas - resumes September, 2020; Mumbai; Delhi - resumes September, 2020; Johannesburg - resumes September, 2020; Boston - resumes October, 2020; Montego Bay, Antigua, Grenada and Tobago (via Antigua) - resumes October, 2020; and Barbados (from Manchester) - resumes October, 2020.

Virgin Atlantic will also resume routes to Hong Kong, New York, and Los Angeles, but several current travel restrictions could significantly limit demand for the earliest flights if the restrictions remain in place.



Virgin Atlantic Airline planes are pictured at the apron at Manchester Airport in north-west England, on June 8, 2020, as the UK government's planned 14-day quarantine for international arrivals to limit the spread of the novel coronavirus begins.



ISIDÍNGO MONDAY - FRIDAY STARTING 7:30 PM

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WORLD

Xi eyes more stable, China-EU ties in post-pandemic era

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Monday met via video link with President of the European Council Charles Michel and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen.

Since the COVID-19 outbreak, China and the European Union (EU) have supported and helped each other, Xi said, noting that China is willing to join hands with the European side to push for a more stable and mature relationship in the post-pandemic era and lift their ties to a new height.

"China wants peace instead of hegemony," said Xi, stressing that China is not only a country with a long history, but also a developing country full of vitality.

"The starting point of all our policies and work is to enable the Chinese people to live a happy life. We will steadfastly follow the path of peaceful development," Xi said, noting that China presents "opportunities, rather

than threats." He went on to say that China is "a partner, not an opponent" to the EU side, as China will continue to deepen reform and expand opening up, which will provide Europe with a new round of cooperation opportunities and development space.

"There is no conflict of fundamental interests between China and Europe. Cooperation far outweighs competition, and consensus far outweighs disagreement," he said, calling on the two sides to respect each other, and seek common ground while reserving differences.

The two sides should continuously enhance mutual understanding and trust, expand common interests in cooperation, solve difficult problems in development, and build a China-EU comprehensive strategic partnership with more global influence.

The world under the impact of the pandemic is undergoing profound changes and facing more unstable and uncertain factors, Xi emphasized, call-



Chinese President Xi Jinping

ing for fostering new opportunities in crises and creating new prospects in the face of changing circumstances.

As two major forces, huge markets and great civilizations in the world, what China and the EU advocate and oppose and in what areas they cooperate will have global significance, Xi said. China and the EU should serve as two major forces to maintain global peace and stability.

Xi said, noting that China is willing to communicate with the European side on major issues. "We believe that the EU will continue to move forward in the direction of unity, stability, openness and prosperity.

China is delighted to see that the EU makes a constructive contribution to international peace and stability, and is willing to strengthen strategic cooperation with the EU to jointly cope with global challenges," he said.

Meanwhile, China and the EU should serve as two huge markets that promote global development and prosperity, Xi said. "Our two major economies should play the role as dual engines of the world economy, drive the recovery of global economy, jointly support a scientific and

orderly resumption of work and production, strengthen macroeconomic policy coordination, and keep global industrial and supply chains stable and smooth," Xi said.

The two sides should maintain market openness to each other, accelerate the negotiation of the China-EU investment agreement, strengthen cooperation in the green and digital fields, and develop a partnership in green development, said Xi, calling on the two sides to enhance third-party cooperation in Africa.

In addition, China and Europe should serve as two great civilizations that adhere to multilateralism and help improve global governance, the Chinese president said.

"No matter how the international situation changes, China will take the side of multilateralism and adhere to the global governance concept of extensive consultation, joint contribution and shared benefits," Xi said. X

Xi said that China appreciates EU's firm adherence to multilateralism, participation in international anti-pandemic cooperation, and increasing investment in the World Health Organization and other international institutions.

He said that China is willing to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the EU on major international and regional issues, strengthen dialogue and cooperation on global public health governance, and promote the building of a community of health for all.

Xi stressed that he would like to maintain close communication with the two EU leaders, advance a series of major China-EU political agendas, and push bilateral relations to a new level.

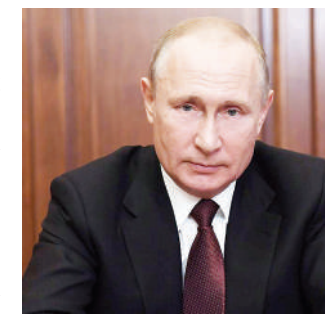
The two EU leaders said that the relationship between the EU and China is full of vitality, stressing that only through cooperation can the world cope with global challenges, and only dialogue and consultation can resolve conflicts and eliminate regional instability, as the world is facing great uncertainties.

The EU side is ready to conduct strategic dialogue with China to expand consensus in a candid manner, they noted.

Xinhua

Past three months drastically changed Russians' lifestyle, says President Putin

MOSCOW



RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin in his message to the nation said that the past three months drastically changed the people's mode of life.

"Just three months have passed. Usually a period that long, one quarter of a year, flies past quickly and unnoticeably. But in this case, during these hectic days, weeks and months we developed a very different sense of time.

They incorporated so much: a sharp change in the daily routine, forced restrictions on work and social contacts, alarm and fears and the grief of losses and of parting with relatives and friends and thoughts of what will happen tomorrow, what is to be done to protect the dearest ones from misfortune and to support the family and parents," Putin said.

Russian society did not find itself lost in the face of the coronavirus threat and was able to respond to this challenge, the Russian president elaborated.

"It is very important that there was no frustration in our country, in our society. On the contrary, like it was in our history more than once, clear understanding of the situation, the real threat, only consolidated people who saw that the threat could be confronted only jointly and that human life is what matters most," he said, adding that the authorities in their actions relied on these values. "That is why they could respond to the challenge of colossal difficulty," he stressed.

According to Vladimir Putin, strict restrictions allowed the country to hold back the peak of coronavirus epidemic by 1.5-2 months, which saved tens of thousands of lives.

"The fight against the epidemic began back on our borders. Protection measures were boosted immediately, and they played their part, allowed us to repel the first blow, holding the epidemic, its peak, back by 1.5-2 months.

Therefore, back in February and early March [they allowed us] to win precious time, which means doing everything possible to save tens of thousands of lives, tens of thousands exactly," the Russian leader addressed the nation.

South Africa's Zuma appears in court for resumed graft trial

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa's former president Jacob Zuma appeared in court yesterday to face multiple charges of racketeering, fraud, corruption and money laundering, as a decade-old trial delayed by procedural bickering resumed.

Zuma (pictured) is being tried on 16 charges relating to a US\$2 billion arms deal with French defence firm Thales in 1999, when Zuma was deputy president.

The charges were reinstated in March 2018, a month after the ruling African National Congress (ANC) party kicked him out of office after a presidency marked by graft allegations and sovereign credit rating downgrades.

The former leader, in power between 2009 and 2018, rejects all allegations as a politically motivated witch-hunt. But the case is a rare example of an African judicial system seeking to prosecute a former leader for alleged wrong-



doing. Zuma wore a dark grey suit at

the court in Pietermaritzburg and looked tense, frequently clicking his jaw.

Much of Tuesday's pre-trial hearing was focused on fixing a date for the trial to continue after multiple efforts by Zuma to cancel or delay it.

Judge Dhaya Pillay did not set a date for the trial proper to start. She adjourned the proceedings until Sept 8.

The court in November rejected Zuma's application for a perma-

nent stay of prosecution, and in February issued an arrest warrant for him.

Zuma is accused of accepting 500,000 rand (US\$34,000) annually from Thales from 1999, in exchange for protecting the company from an investigation into the deal.

Thales, known as Thompson-CSF at the time, has said it had no knowledge of any transgressions by any of its employees in relation to the award of the contracts.

Trump halts entry of foreign workers amid business objection

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump suspended the entry into the United States of certain foreign workers on Monday, a move the White House said would help the coronavirus-battered economy, but which business groups strongly oppose.

Trump (pictured) issued a presidential proclamation that temporarily blocks foreign workers entering on H-1B visas, which are for skilled employees, and L visas, for managers and specialized workers being transferred within a company. Trump also blocked those entering on H-2B seasonal worker visas, which are used by landscapers and other industries.

The visa suspension, which runs to the end of the year, will open up 525,000 jobs for US workers, a senior administration official said on a call with reporters. The official, who did not explain how the administration arrived at that figure, said the move was geared at "getting Americans back to work as quickly as possible."

But businesses including major tech companies and the US Cham-

ber of Commerce said the visa suspension would stifle the economic recovery after the damage done by the pandemic.

Critics of the measure say Trump is using the pandemic to enact his longstanding goal to limit immigration into the United States. The immediate effects of the proclamation will likely be limited, as US consulates around the world remain closed for most routine visa processing.

The proclamation exempts those already in the United States, as well as valid visa holders overseas, but they must have an official travel document that permits entry into the United States. Immigration attorneys were working on Monday to determine what the order might mean for some clients currently overseas.

The measure also exempts food supply chain workers and people whose entry is deemed in the national interest. The suspension will include work-authorized J visas for cultural exchange opportunities, including camp counselors and au pairs, as well as visas for the spouses of H-1B workers.

Republican Trump is running



for re-election on Nov. 3 and has made his tough immigration stance a central pitch to voters, although the coronavirus, faltering economy and nationwide protests over police brutality have overshadowed that issue. The president has faced pressure to restrict work visas from groups that seek lower levels of immigration, as well as some Republican lawmakers.

BSA, The Software Alliance, whose members include Microsoft and Slack, urged the administration in a statement to "refrain from restricting employment of highly-skilled foreign professionals," adding that "these restrictions will negatively impact the US economy" and decrease job opportunities for Americans.

Doug Rand, co-founder of Boundless, a pro-migrant group that helps families navigate the US immigration system, said the fact that H-2A visas used to bring in foreign farmworkers were exempt signals that "big agriculture interests are the only stakeholder with any sway over immigration policy in this administration."

H-2B visas, which were included in the suspension, have been

used by Trump owned- or Trump-branded businesses, including his Mar-a-Lago club in Florida.

Many business groups were lobbying against a temporary visa ban before it was announced.

Sarah Pierce, a policy analyst with the Washington-based Migration Policy Institute, estimated that the new ruling would block 219,000 foreign workers through the rest of the year.

"This is introducing more chaos into an already chaotic situation for a lot of US companies," she said. "The administration is making the assumption that these companies did not already look at the US labor market, which most of them do before they get involved in a complicated process of trying to bring in foreign workers."

Mitch Wexler, a managing partner at law firm Fragomen, said the order would hurt his social media and wireless communications clients and other tech companies.

Employers "wouldn't pay a lot of money to file these applications and hire lawyers like me if they could hire an American for these positions," he said. Xinhua

Beijing outbreak under control, number of new cases would dwindle - chief epidemiologist

THE chief epidemiologist of the China Center for Disease Control and Prevention said that Beijing's latest COVID-19 outbreak has already been brought under control, but warned that new cases will emerge in the next two days, but the number would dwindle.

When asked if Beijing's outbreak was under control, Wu Zuyou said it was, explaining at a Thursday conference that despite Beijing has been reporting confirmed cases every day, this does not mean that all cases are newly

infected. For example, the newly discovered 21 cases on Wednesday were all infected before June 12, Wu said.

Of the 21 new infections found in Beijing on Wednesday, none were considered serious, Pang Xinghuo, the deputy director of the municipal center for disease prevention and control, said at the press conference.

Pang said Beijing has already reported eight cluster infections linked to the Xinfadi mar-

ket, where the outbreak first emerged. One of the eight is from a restaurant, where an employee purchased food at Xinfadi market and transmitted the virus to a co-worker.

More cases are expected in the following days, but the number would dwindle, Wu said.

If Beijing had not taken timely measures to curb the spread, it would have been a repeat of Wuhan, he added. Beijing's outbreak could occur in any place as the virus is still ravaging the world, said

Wu, noting that it was unexpected that the outbreak happened again at a market, and led to so many cases.

Wang Guangfa, a respiratory expert at Peking University First Hospital in Beijing, told the Global Times on Thursday that cluster infections and even community transmissions of COVID-19 are unlikely in Beijing since China's capital applied strict and timely measures, including closed-off management of residential communities.

"All the cluster infections are linked to Xinfadi, so the infection is traceable," Wang said, noting all the cases are the result of active screening by the Beijing government. "Most of patients were classified as mild cases."

Beijing has completed nucleic acid testing for about 700,000 residents as of Thursday, including 355,000 people related to the Xinfadi wholesale market, media reported.

Xue Lan, a professor and former dean at the School of Public

Policy and Management of Tsinghua University in Beijing, told the Global Times on Thursday that although Beijing's outbreak is basically under control, people should always stay alert and mind personal hygiene.

Aside from the government, community workers and citizens should remain vigilant and report suspicious symptoms and undergo nucleic tests as soon as possible to cope with any possible situations in the future, Xue said. Jin Dongyan, a virologist at

Hong Kong University, still has reservations about the outbreak in Beijing, as "the curbing of Beijing's outbreak is based on the epidemiological investigation."

The investigation and screening are not completely finished. Since the virus transmission has the possibility of a "super spreader," the impact of an infected individual on the entire transmission curve cannot be ignored, Jin told China Newsweek on Thursday.

Agencies

Global Times

WHO urges balance between protection against COVID-19, minimising social damage

GENEVA

THE World Health Organization (WHO) has urged a delicate balance between protection against COVID-19 and minimizing social, economic damage therewith, as global daily new cases keeps hitting new record.

"It's not a choice between lives and livelihoods. Countries can do both," WHO Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Monday noting that all countries are facing a "delicate balance between protecting their people, while minimizing the social and economic damage."

"The latest numbers from WHO show that more than 183,000 new cases of COVID-19 were reported on Sunday, which was easily the most in a single day so far. Worldwide, more

than 8.8 million cases have now been reported to WHO, and more than 465,000 people have lost their lives.

According to the WHO chief, some countries are continuing to see a rapid increase in cases and deaths, while some others that have successfully suppressed transmission are now seeing an upswing in cases as they reopen their societies and economies.

He urged countries to be careful and creative in finding solutions that enable people to stay safe while getting on with their lives, and to double down on the fundamental public health measures that have been known to work, including finding and testing suspected cases, isolating and caring for the sick, tracing and quarantining contacts, and protecting health workers. He also urged every individual to



Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus

take measures to protect themselves and others, such as maintain physical distance, cleaning hands and wearing a mask where appropriate.

The WHO chief also talked about the potential of steroid dexamethasone in treatment of COVID-19, saying "although the data are still preliminary, the recent finding that the steroid dexamethasone has life-saving potential for critically ill COVID-19 patients gave us a much-needed reason to celebrate."

But he reiterated that it should only be used for patients with severe or critical disease and under close clinical supervision. According to WHO, as of 3:50 p.m. CEST (1750 GMT), the COVID-19 pandemic had infected 8,860,331 people worldwide, causing a death toll of 465,740. **Xinhua**

Approval of changes to constitution to help cement Russia's strong position - Kremlin

MOSCOW

APPROVAL of amendments to Russia's constitution will enhance the country's position as a strong and sovereign state, so the other nations will have to agree to this state of affairs, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in a televised interview on Channel One on Saturday.

Peskov pointed out that certain Western countries had never approved of Russia's growing independence.

"As long as Russia feels more self-confident, more self-reliant, more independent, as long as Russia protects itself better from interference in its domestic affairs, Russia can concentrate on 'cementing' that position. To my mind, this variety of amendments is the process of 'cementing' the current state of a strong and sovereign Russia," he said.

Peskov added that those foreign countries that do not like the current state of affairs will have to accept the fact, "with patience and tolerance, if not with understanding."

Amendments to the Constitution

Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on holding national popular vote on amendments to the Constitution on July 1.

In January 2020, in his message to the Federal Assembly Putin suggested introducing a number of amendments to the fundamental law that would better meet the modern realities and consolidate the achieved results.

After a special group discussed the proposed amendments the State Duma on March 11 adopted the presidential bill in the final reading. Later in the day the bill was approved by the Federation Council and supported by the legislative assemblies of all of Russia's territories.

The Federation Council considered the results on March 14 and sent its resolution to the president.

Originally Putin signed a decree to hold the national popular vote on the amendments on April 22. However, amid the novel coronavirus pandemic Putin addressed the nation on television on March 25 to say that the voting had to be postponed. The amendments will take effect only if they are approved in a plebiscite.

Agencies

Egyptian volunteers cook, deliver free meals to home-isolated COVID-19 patients

CAIRO

GROUPS of Egyptian benevolent youths supported by hundreds of volunteers and thousands of online followers communicate and arrange cooking and delivery of free meals to home-isolated COVID-19 patients, who are often avoided by restaurant delivery workers.

The groups were formed more than two weeks ago on Facebook by a number of friends after they learned that some restaurants were avoiding delivering meals to home-confined COVID-19 patients.

The groups operate under the slogan "Initiative of healthy meals for home-isolated coronavirus patients." "So far, we've delivered over 5,000 meals to more than 1,000 home-confined coronavirus patients. We deliver each patient enough meals for three days," Anas Hassan, a 29-year-old bank employee and one of the group founders, told Xinhua.

Hassan stressed that the main goal is to show the patients love and care and give them moral support, noting that the group does not accept money donations but it welcomes help with materials and cooking or delivery work.

At her home in downtown

Cairo, Somaya el-Asyouty, a housewife who loves cooking, has recently been using her kitchen to voluntarily cook and prepare tens of meals for self-isolated coronavirus patients.

"Such initiatives tell patients that they are not alone," the Egyptian housewife said. "Now I am not worried if I get infected because I know there are caring people who will take care of me as we take care of others," she added.

In Giza province near the capital Cairo, another group of youths use a room in the ground floor of an old building as a kitchen where they cook and prepare meal boxes to be delivered to COVID-19 patients.

The kitchen room looks like a beehive with Ahmed el-Bardeesy, a 28-year-old volunteer chef, busy with his assistants preparing and arranging the meals on a large table. Each meal consists of rice, a piece of chicken and cooked mixture of vegetables, besides a box of fruits with each.

Bardeesy, having been closing his restaurant in downtown Cairo since the beginning of the crisis, has started the initiative on his Facebook page three weeks ago and it soon got massive positive responses with many people offering donations and help.



People prepare free meals for home-isolated COVID-19 patients in Cairo, Egypt on June 16, 2020. Groups of Egyptian benevolent youths supported by hundreds of volunteers and thousands of followers communicate online and arrange cooking and delivering free meals to home-isolated COVID-19 patients, who are sometimes avoided by restaurant delivery workers. (Xinhua)

"I started the kitchen with 30 meals and I had only one assistant and two delivery men."

The next day I had at least five assistants and five delivery men, all are volunteers," said the volunteer chef, adding

excitedly "now we distribute about 120 meals daily."

Bardeesy has even started to establish the kitchen for one week in each province in rotation to support the home-confined COVID-19 patients there.

He is currently in the northern coastal province of Alexandria where he has cooked and delivered at least 100 meals so far.

"We even write an encouraging phrase and attach it with each meal box, such as 'We love

you!' 'Get well soon!' and 'You are stronger than coronavirus!'" Bardeesy told Xinhua. The kitchen staff sticks to hygiene and precautionary measures such as wearing face masks and gloves and sterilizing their utensils and tools before and after cooking.

Egypt has reported 56,809 COVID-19 infections, including 2,278 deaths and 15,133 recoveries as of Tuesday.

Medhat Saleh, 31, is one of the volunteer delivery men in Cairo and nearby Giza.

Wearing a face mask and a pair of gloves, he sprays his bike with alcoholic disinfectant before he drives to a patient's home.

"As for how I deliver the meals, either the patient lowers his food basket from his balcony and I put the meal inside, or I leave the meal at the patient's door,"

Saleh said. Saleh cares so much about not making the home-isolated patients feel offended or embarrassed. Even when he wants to spray his hands with disinfectant after delivery, he does it after he leaves the patient's place. "I feel very happy when I see happiness on the patient's faces and make them feel they are not alone," the volunteer young man told Xinhua. **Xinhua**

Rural tourism helps village in Northwest China shake off poverty

IN June, Shibei village in Northwest China's Qinghai Province gets busy as tourists flock to scenic sites there every day and cars wait to enter a scenic spot to see the sea of flowers.

Rural tourism has become a poverty alleviation tool for villagers of Shibei, Gucheng Hui Autonomous Township, Ping'an district, Haidong city, Qinghai.

Getting its name from a stone tablet, Shibei is a beautiful ancient village of ethnic minorities. Though it is endowed with clear waters and green mountains, the village was impoverished in the past.

To help the villagers out of poverty, the local government invested 5.6 million yuan (\$791,500) to develop rural tourism based on the resources it has, such as natural ecology and folk culture.

The village provides tourism services such as sightseeing, catering and accommodation. In addition, the local government has endeavored to make the village more

beautiful, improved supporting services, launched entertainment projects with countryside characteristics such as farming and hiking, and developed characteristic rural tourism. The measures have expanded the income channels of the residents.

Thanks to the rural tourism project, Shibei village has been lifted out of poverty, with the per capita disposable income of registered poor households increasing to 5,500 yuan in 2017 from 2,429 yuan in 2015.

The villagers have established seven agritainment resorts, generating about 30 jobs, said Ma Chengquan, secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) branch at Shibei village.

The village is expected to receive 120,000 tourists this year, bringing an average income of 2,300 yuan to each villager, Ma noted.

The local government also encourages the villagers to open shops and snack bars and develop farm stay business.

A villager named Ma Xiaoyu said she could earn 300 yuan every day by selling yogurt and snacks in the scenic areas. While doing the business, she could also take care of her child.

The rapid development of the village attracted some villagers who had worked in the cities to come back to start up businesses, which created more opportunities for the local economy.

"I used to run a noodle restaurant in a developed coastal area of the country, and earned a lot of money. Last year, I came back to the village and opened an agritainment resort covering 500 square meters. Now, I earn as much as I did in the past," said Ma Shouqing, a villager in Shibei.

Shibei village invested 500,000 yuan of collective development funds in the scenic areas to purchase recreational facilities, bringing 40,000 yuan of income to the village every year.

Together with the dividends of the project, the village could gain

181,600 yuan every year for developing collective economy, providing seasonal jobs for more than 80 rural households and increasing the per capita income of villagers involved by over 2,000 yuan.

The development of collective economy has made villagers more optimistic about future life and made them realize that lucid waters and lush mountains are invaluable assets. The residents would volunteer to clean the scenic areas on a regular basis.

With the continuous efforts to build a beautiful village and improve the living environment, Shibei village has taken on a new look and become one of the important rural tourist attractions in Ping'an district, according to Che Guiping, secretary of the CPC committee of Gucheng township.

The village has risen to fame and attracted more and more tourists and the per capita income of villagers stood at 13,256 yuan in 2019, Che added.

People's Daily

S.Korea gives stern warning over anti-DPRK leaflets

SEOUL

SOUTH Korea's unification ministry said yesterday that it will sternly deal with the scattering of leaflets criticizing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) after the alleged dispersion of such leaflets across the inter-Korean border overnight.

The unification ministry in charge of inter-Korean affairs expressed deep regrets over an attempt by some civic group activists to send anti-DPRK leaflets and materials across the border, according to a statement.

The ministry noted that it will sternly deal with such acts in cooperation with relevant agencies, including the police, adding that it will strongly respond to the anti-DPRK leaflets distribution, which escalates tensions between the two Koreas and endangers the lives and safety of people residing in border areas.



Some civic group activists, mostly defectors from the DPRK, claimed to fly balloons carrying anti-DPRK leaflets and materials Monday night in an area near the western inter-Korean border.

According to local media reports, the balloons were found in an eastern area of South Korea, some 70 km southeast away from the place the balloons were flown. Earlier this month, the ministry filed a le-

gal complaint against two civic groups for having sent anti-DPRK leaflets.

The government of Gyeonggi province, surrounding the capital Seoul, asked the Seoul Metropolitan Policy Agency and the Gyeonggi Northern Provincial Police Agency earlier in the day to investigate the civic group activists who distributed anti-DPRK leaflets on Monday.

Xinhua

Beijing's new infections uptick won't derail economic recovery

A second wave of COVID-19 infections in Beijing has raised concerns about China's economic growth, which has just started gaining momentum. After the city Tuesday announced an upgrade of its virus prevention and control measures to level II, hundreds of flights to and from Beijing are canceled now.

However, unlike the city's initial outbreak at the beginning of the year, control measures imposed swiftly to stifle the cluster contagion, mean the spread is likely to be contained and will not produce profound negative effect on

economic recovery.

By Thursday, Beijing had reported 158 new cases, all connected to the city's largest Xinfadi whole food market. The market was cordoned off Saturday, with all market personnel now placed under quarantine and required to take nucleic acid tests.

Compared to the outbreak in Wuhan, Central China's Hubei Province, the new infections in Beijing occurred when the nation has already developed a comprehensive and effective prevention and control system following months of arduous efforts. The

city has adopted a precise prevention strategy, putting related communities under lockdown while launching large-scale testing.

As it is critical to contain the virus from an early stage, the spread of COVID-19 in Beijing will be much weaker than it was in Wuhan, so the impact on the economy will be short-lived. In the short run, the economic impact will be strictly limited to Beijing.

According to recent data from China's National Bureau of Statistics, economic growth in May maintained it recovering trajec-

tory and was within broader expectations.

Given that there are only two weeks left of the second quarter, the new outbreak in Beijing will not have much impact on the GDP growth for the quarter. Moreover, investment and industrial manufacturing across the country have seen little impact from the infection cluster in Beijing, and economic recovery outside the city has not been shortcut.

For now, the major impact will be on retail consumption and service sector within the city. Ec-

onomically speaking, consumption has not fully recovered to last year's standard. Though the new outbreak will prolong the recovery time, they will not cause an obvious economic slump.

China, after months of all-out efforts to contain the COVID-19, has set a clear tone for countercyclical adjustments to bring back economic growth momentum, including active fiscal and monetary policies. This will not change due to the latest outbreak in Beijing.

If the downward economic pressure continues to mount in

the second half of the year, or the overseas pandemic spread worsens, it is highly possible that China will roll out even stronger policies to facilitate economic revival.

For instance, China has set a yearly fiscal deficit rate of over 3.6 percent to its annual GDP, maintaining the space to issue new special bonds if needed.

As the pandemic continues to grow across the world, COVID-19 prevention has become the new normal. China, compared to other countries and regions, possesses the advantages in quickly reach-

ing a clear and unified target, as well as effectively implementing measures to contain the virus spread and to accelerate economic growth.

For Beijing city, it is true that the recent outbreak will prolong its regional economic recovery, restricting catering, tourism, education and service sectors. It will take some time for the people to regain confidence to rejuvenate businesses in the city, as well as in the country.

The author is head of Zhixin Investment Research Institute.

Global Times

SPORT



In this May 19, 2019, file photo, Brooks Koepka poses with the Wanamaker Trophy after winning the PGA Championship golf tournament at Bethpage Black in Farmingdale, N.Y. Brooks Koepka will try to become the first player to win the PGA Championship three straight times in stroke play, and there won't be anyone at Harding Park to cheer him on. The PGA of America confirmed Monday, June 22, 2020, the first major of this most unusual year won't have spectators. (AP Photo)

PGA Championship confirms no fans for Harding Park

By DOUG FERGUSON

BROOKS Koepka will try to become the first player to win the PGA Championship three straight times in stroke play, and there won't be anyone at Harding Park to cheer him on.

The PGA of America confirmed Monday the first major of this most unusual year won't have spectators.

The PGA Championship, originally scheduled for May 14-17 in San Francisco, now is set for Aug. 6-9 and will be the first of three majors this year. The U.S. Open moved from June to Sept. 17-20 in New York, with the Masters moving to November two weeks before Thanksgiving. The British Open was canceled.

Still to be determined is whether the other two majors have fans. The PGA Tour resumed its schedule following its coronavirus-caused shutdown two weeks ago without fans, and it is not planning to have them until a reduced number July 16-19 at Memorial.

The PGA of America submitted its plan to not have spectators a week ago, and the San Francisco Chronicle said government and health officials approved it.

Mayor London N. Breed said the city was "thrilled" to welcome the century-old major to San Francisco. PGA of America officials were prepared to go elsewhere if playing in San Francisco would not allow health standards to be met.

"We are able to safely take this step toward reopening because of the ongoing sacrifices of our citizens," Breed said.

Those sacrifices now include watching only on TV for those who had planned to attend. This

is the first major for Harding Park, the public course across the street from Olympic Club and now part of the TPC network. It previously held two World Golf Championships (won by Tiger Woods in 2005 and Rory McIlroy in 2015) and the Presidents Cup in 2009.

"While the local community cannot be with us physically on site, we will certainly carry their spirit of resilience and unity with us as we stage our major championship, on their behalf, for all the world to see and enjoy," said Seth Waugh, the CEO of the PGA of America.

Koepka won in 2018 at Bellerive Country Club in St. Louis, and he joined Woods as the only back-to-back champions in stroke play when he won last year at Bethpage Black on Long Island.

Woods tied for 29th, 14 shots behind, when he was going for a third straight PGA Championship title in 2001 in Atlanta. He did not have a chance at three in a row in 2008 because he had knee surgery and missed the last two majors.

Walter Hagen won four straight times from 1924-27 when the PGA Championship format was match play.

"We've got to do what we got to do to make us safe, keep the fans safe," Koepka said last week about a major with no fans. "Obviously, you'd like to have fans, but I understand with what's going on it might not be possible."

Meanwhile, the PGA of America is contacting those who bought tickets in advance to set up refunds. It said it will not process refunds for tickets bought from a secondary market platform.

The PGA Championship next year goes to Kiawah Island in South Carolina.

AP

Coric, Troicki test positive for COVID-19, poses questions for sport's return

BELGRADE, Serbia

BORNA Coric and Viktor Troicki tested positive for COVID-19 after playing in Novak Djokovic's Adria Tour exhibition event, raising serious concerns for tennis governing bodies in their bid to restart the sport after a lengthy shutdown.

The professional circuit was halted in early March as nations closed borders and imposed lockdowns to contain the spread of the virus.

Last week the men's ATP and the WTA, which runs women's events, issued revised calendars for the resumption of the circuit from August while organisers of the U.S. Open said the Grand Slam will be staged without fans as scheduled from Aug. 31 to Sept. 13 in New York.

Those plans, however, could need to be redrawn after three players who had featured in the Adria Tour event tested positive for the coronavirus. On Sunday Grigor Dimitrov said he had contracted the novel coronavirus.

While the players did not break any Serbian or Croatian government protocols, as neither country required the athletes to maintain any social distancing, the fact that three players and some support staff caught the virus highlights the risks of athletes from different countries being in close proximity to each other.

"I want to make sure anyone who has been in contact with me during the last few days gets tested," Coric, ranked No.33 in the world, said on Twitter. "I am really sorry for any harm I might have caused. I'm feeling well and don't have any symptoms."

Troicki played in the first leg staged at Djokovic's tennis complex in central Belgrade from June 13-14, before Dimitrov and Coric tested positive at the second leg in Zadar held from June 20-21.

Troicki, 34, entered Janko Tipsarevic's Eastern European Championship tournament which started in Belgrade last Monday and pulled out after learning that he and his wife tested positive.

"My wife took the test on Friday and I took it on Sunday after she tested positive," Troicki told Serbia's Telegraf website. "Our daughter tested negative."

The ATP wished players and staff who tested positive at the event a speedy recovery and urged "strict adherence to responsible social distancing" to limit the spread of the virus.

The governing body added that it will implement a variety of precautions and protocols that would be adjusted as and when dictated by the latest medical information to ensure safety at events when the tour resumes on Aug. 14.

The WTA did not respond to a request for comment. Organisers of the Adria Tour could not be reached for comment.

Bulgarian Dimitrov flew in to play in Djokovic's event in Belgrade and the second leg, as did other top names like Dominic Thiem of Austria and Germany's Alexander Zverev.

Organisers of other sports looking to resume from the coronavirus shutdown will be watching developments with some trepidation as they try to find the safest way of getting competition back under way.

The joys of sports

By Correspondent Lloyd Elipokea

WITH the domestic football terrain's most foremost football league, the Mainland Premier League, having resumed hostilities in earnest recently and with the much cherished top flight German football league fondly dubbed the Bundesliga also following suit at or around the same time, it is mercifully beginning to feel as if live sports is slowly but steadily on its way back to brighten up our at times stressful lives.

Indeed, this viewpoint that we are witnessing the immensely awaited return of live sports is lent further credence when one factors in other sports which are undergoing a pleasant revival following a suspension of all sporting activities, which was of course imposed by the COVID-19 lockdown that brought many hitherto urban areas to a screeching halt.

In addition to the Bundesliga, and the bread and butter of all domestic top tier outfits, the Mainland Premier League, the avidly followed English Premier League (EPL), which is arguably the most popular football league across the vast expanse of this world picked up from where it left off mid-last week and encouraging noises are also emanating from the ferociously competitive American basketball front where plans are already in the works for the globe's utterly top notch basketball championship, the NBA, to resume officially live basketball league games in the not-too-distant future.

In spite of the fact that the restoration of live sports will be working within the bounds of certain restrictions such as the conspicuous absence of supporters, for one, there is no doubt that one can detect the unmistakable tingle and sizzle of excitement in the air over the long-anticipated return of live sports action.

Naturally, one hopes that tournaments across the wide gamut of sports globally that are experiencing a welcome revival will take all the requisite safety



Dar es Salaam's draught player, Yasin Mohamed (R), makes a move in a match against his opponent Mohamed Ndembo in this year's National Championship, which is currently taking place at Java Kitunda venue in the city. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE

precautions against COVID-19 so as to contain the spread of the pandemic.

Still, all things being considered, this writer deems it to be of import to reveal that a certain sense of joie de vivre, though muted because of the COVID-19 pandemic has definitely returned to inject some happiness into his life.

Let us now wade into more sober waters. Just recently, the Manchester United football sensation, Marcus Rashford, whose star is very much on the rise, elicited seemingly boundless praise for displaying an admirable sense of social activism.

Indeed, around the mid-point of last week, Rashford was able to flex his muscles and force the British government into a bona fide U-turn on free school meal vouchers over the summer holidays.

Now, as a result of Rashford's intervention on this grossly underappreciated challenge, thousands of children living in poverty in England will get a nicely warm meal.

Quite understandably, Rashford's off-field exertions have seen the Red Devils' fan favourite be treated to a shower of flowery compliments.

In the wider picture, though, Rashford's warmly praised social activism set me off thinking about how household names in domestic football could borrow a leaf out of the talismanic Manchester United goal-getter's book and engage in similar noble labors to bring about positive social change.

One issue in particular, which this writer feels could do with some significant support from the galaxy of stars electrifying the football scene in the country is the importance of the citizenry to donate blood.

Indeed, from time to time, we often learn via news reports that leading hospitals in the country are complaining that they running dangerously low on blood supplies.

During such times, these prestigious hospitals call upon members of the society to voluntarily donate blood.

And, it is on this issue of sensitizing

the public about the enormous value of donating blood that I believe that prominent football actors could be made use of.

For example, Simba's widely respected forward, the evergreen John Bocco, could team up with one of Yanga's ever-dependable stars in Kelvin Yondani to advertise in TV and Radio commercials about the monumental impact upon society of the wananchi voluntarily donating blood frequently and critically, not just when blood supplies are running worryingly low.

Bearing in mind that the aforesaid example of low blood supplies is just a hypothetical example, there are of course a myriad of other social ills in our society which are not well-known or well-understood.

And, just like the glowing praise that was lavished on Rashford last week, our local football icons may find that engaging in social activism on the home patch in some way, shape or form could not only enhance their stature in society but boost their brand if you like.

Amid pandemic, Live Nation announces drive-in concert series



This combination photo shows, from left, Brad Paisley, Darius Rucker and rapper Nelly, who will participate in Live Nation's "Live from the Drive-In," concert series taking place July 10-12. (AP Photo)

NEW YORK

TOUR promoter Live Nation has announced its first-ever drive-in concert series in the U.S. for July, months after the live music industry has been on lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The entertainment company on Monday announced "Live from the Drive-In" – a set of nine shows to take place July 10-12 in Nashville, Tennessee; Maryland Heights, Missouri; and Noblesville, Indiana.

Grammy-winning singer Brad Paisley will headline shows in all three cities, while fellow country artists Darius Rucker and Jon Pardi will also perform in Nashville at Nissan Stadium. Nelly will perform in Maryland Heights, near St. Louis.

Concertgoers will be able to drive into the parking lots of the amphitheaters – a maximum of four people per car – and will have two empty parking lot spaces in between each vehicle so fans can watch and party from their designated individual tailgating zones. Attendees are encouraged to bring food, drinks and chairs, setting up around their cars to view the

performers from the stage and also from the large LED screens.

All venue staff are required to wear masks, and Live Nation requests that attendees wear masks upon arrival, where there will be contact-less ticket scanning through their windows. Masks are not required once fans are in their designated tailgate areas, and Live Nation is not requiring that fans wear gloves. Tom See, president of Live Nation Venues-US Concerts, said the company spent months working to find a safe, enjoyable way to put on live shows during the pandemic.

"We're really dialed in with partnerships with (the) local jurisdictions (and) we've been meeting with them for months, just talking about how we can provide a great, comfortable experience to fans with social distancing at the forefront in whatever phase they're about to enter. Because of those relationships and that communication going back and forth, we've been successful in getting that green light," See said in an interview with The Associated Press.

"It was really important to us not to just do one and be done. It wouldn't be Live Nation. It wouldn't be the concert industry leader. We wanted to make a

bigger statement."

Nelly, who is celebrating the 20th anniversary of his debut album "Country Grammar," and Pink Floyd tribute band El Monstro are both from St. Louis and will perform at The Hollywood Casino Amphitheater. Pardi and rock band Yacht Rock Revue will headline at the Ruoff Music Center near Indianapolis.

Tickets will go on sale for the general public on Friday. See said ticket prices will fluctuate by market, but they can be as low as \$125, which is roughly \$31 per person if the maximum number of four attendees per car attend.

"I'm very excited to do this because I wanted to make sure, if we were going to do anything like this, that they had the important stuff worked out," Paisley said in an interview with the AP. "My goal would be not to spread this virus to one person. There should be no spread from this. That's key. I just don't think it's worth doing shows if we're putting people at risk."

"The idea that we're outdoors is a great thing," Paisley added. "I just think it's a fun way to watch a concert anyway. It'd be fun if there wasn't a virus."

For the Missouri show, See said they have a capacity to fit 1,000 cars while

incorporating social distancing guidelines. Grills and BBQ pits are not permitted, but concertgoers can bring pre-cooked food and drinks, including alcohol. Live Nation encourages that groups assign a designated driver.

A menu of hot food items and nonalcoholic will be available for purchase, Live Nation said. People can place orders online and the items will be delivered to their designated tailgate zone.

Fans will only be able to leave their pods to access single restrooms, which See said will be cleaned regularly throughout the show. Attendees are encouraged to wear masks when leaving for restrooms.

"They don't have to walk too far to be able to use the facility," he said.

"The traditional drive in, I get it, you're stuck in your car, and you're going to get it through an FM transmitter. That's not happening with these shows," See said.

"We're giving you what's about the size of a double-car garage to where you're going to be able to park your car, get out of your car, and have a great tailgating hang for you and your friends, and listen to music through proper professional PA and amazing audio and video display. It's really a different aspect of drive-in and live. It's highly experiential."

AP

Burnley condemn 'White Lives Matter' banner

LONDON

PREMIER League club Burnley has condemned a plane towing a banner declaring "White Lives Matter Burnley" that flew over Manchester City's Etihad Stadium before Monday's match between the two clubs.

"Burnley Football Club strongly condemns the actions of those responsible for the aircraft and offensive banner that flew over The Etihad Stadium on Monday evening," a statement released on the club's website at half-time said.

"We wish to make it clear that those responsible are not welcome at Turf Moor. This, in no way, represents what Burnley Football Club stands for and we will work fully with the authorities to identify those responsible and issue lifetime bans.

"The club has a proud record of working with all genders, religions and faiths through its award-winning Community scheme, and stands against racism of any kind.

"We are fully behind the Premier League's Black Lives Matter initiative and, in line with all other Premier League games undertaken since Project Restart, our players and football staff willingly took the knee at kick-off at Manchester City.

"We apologise unreservedly to the Premier League, to Manchester City and to all those helping to promote Black Lives Matter."

The plane appeared shortly after players from both teams took a knee in support of the Black Lives Matter movement.

There was no indication of who organised the plane and banner.

After the match, Burnley defender Ben Mee told reporters that the players had heard rumblings that a display would be made minutes before kick-off.

"We literally heard as we were coming out. We heard some whispers it was going to happen. The club tried to stop it, but I've heard it's a small number of people who've arranged this. Hope it doesn't happen again," Mee said. "I'm ashamed and upset it's associated with the club, my club, and it's not something we want to see in this game."

Burnley manager Sean Dyche said that he knew nothing of the banner

and that the club could only apologise for its appearance.

"I didn't realise what had gone on at the beginning. Heard noise. Unacceptable. We can only apologise," Dyche said after the match. "I don't know what the club can do to send a message out. The powers that be will look at the way we can play our part."

Manchester City manager Pep Guardiola, who last week said that white people should apologise for the treatment of Black people, said the banner's message missed the point of the Black Lives Matter movement.

"Of course white lives matter, but black lives matter, too. Human beings matter. Everyone, we are the same. I travel a lot around the world and live in many countries, and every one of us, we are the same," he told reporters. "Every day we have to fight not just for the situation but for all the injustice around the world."

Former England and Manchester City defender Micah Richards says he was disheartened to see the plane carrying its banner.

"It's so disheartening. After how far we've come in the last couple of weeks, it really does hurt me," Richards told Sky Sports.

"I agree, everyone should have free speech, but just at a time when things are on the up, a small fraction just want to spoil things.

"Burnley have come out and condemned it, but it just shows you – I speak to a lot of people who say, 'all that stuff happens in America, it doesn't happen in England.'"

"... We can wear t-shirts, we can do 'Black Lives Matter' protests, and slowly we're getting better. But it just shows today, that although it's a small minority, it's still happening."

All players in the 12 Premier League games since the restart of the season after the coronavirus pandemic stoppage have worn "Black Lives Matter" on their shirts in place of their names in response to the May 25 killing of George Floyd, a Black man, who died after Derek Chauvin, a white police officer, knelt on his neck for nearly eight minutes in Minneapolis. Floyd's death has spurred demonstrations against racial injustice around the world as well as in sport.

(Agencies)

Mourinho bites back over comments on Harry Kane

LONDON

JOSE Mourinho has hit back at claims his negative playing style could encourage Harry Kane to leave Tottenham this summer.

Ex-Arsenal midfielder Paul Merson suggested in his role as a Sky Sports pundit following Spurs' 1-1 draw with Manchester United on Friday night that Kane will "have a serious think at the end of the season" because he won't score "25-30 goals a season the way Jose will want to play."

Mourinho said he can get the best out of the England captain by citing his previous work with Didier Drogba at Chelsea, Cristiano Ronaldo and Karim Benzema at Real Madrid, Diego Milito at Inter Milan and Zlatan Ibrahimovic at United.

Speaking ahead of Tuesday's Premier League visit of West Ham, Mourinho launched an impassioned defence of his record in a lengthy monologue which featured pre-prepared statistics.

"I feel a bit strange [about] some analysis and some comments, especially, you know, because it looks for me that the beginning of some comments and analysis, they started from Paul [Merson]," he said.

"I have to say I respect a lot people like him and because I respect a lot, I want to be nice in my answer. I don't think he is ready for a bad answer. So I try to be nice. And I try just to say something where people can think a little bit.

"First of all, Harry played his first game for six months and if you watch and analyse the game, compare Harry Kane with [United striker] Anthony Martial. It wasn't a game of many chances, where the two strikers had a lot of chances.

"Do you give credit to my defence for Martial's game, do you give credit to United's defence to the occasions that we didn't create? You have to look at it in a balanced approach

"In our case, Harry doesn't play a game for six months. The record of goals that Harry has with me is easy for you, you just go to your data and it is easy to see how many matches Harry played with me and how many goals he scored.

"For you not to lose time, I can say that I had a few strikers who played for me and they are not bad. I had one guy called Drogba. He played for me four seasons, he scored 186 goals which gives an average of 46 goals per season. (According to Transfermarkt, however, Drogba scored 73 goals while he was managed by Mourinho.)

"I had one guy who is not also bad. Plays for Juventus now. He played for me for three seasons. He scored 168 goals which gives an average of 56 goals per season. I had another guy that is also not bad, called Karim Benzema. He played for me three seasons. He was not always starting because he was quite young at the time. He scored for me 78 goals in three seasons, which gives a 26 goal average per season.

"I had another one called Milito. He played one season for me, he scored 30 goals, he won three titles. Of course, the average is 30. I had another guy who played for me for one-and-a-half seasons. I say that because in the other half he had a big injury. Tall guy called Zlatan. He played for me for one-and-a-half seasons, he scored 58 goals which gives a 29-goal average per season. (Agencies)

Liverpool return to Anfield as Man City aim to prolong title wait

LONDON

LIVERPOOL'S 30-year wait to win the English title could come to an end this week, but the Reds must rely on Manchester City dropping points at Chelsea.

Jürgen Klopp's men host Crystal Palace in the first Premier League game at Anfield for 110 days.

A 0-0 draw at Everton in their first match for three months on Sunday means the champagne will remain on ice even if Liverpool return to winning ways.

However, victory for Klopp's side will leave City needing to win at Stamford Bridge 24 hours later to deny Liverpool the title.

Palace were the last team visiting team to win a league match at Anfield over three years ago.

The Eagles impressed in their comeback with a 2-0 win at Bournemouth on Saturday to close to within four points of the European places and Klopp was impressed with what he saw.

"I saw Crystal Palace and they look like a proper-oiled machine," said the German.

"They have four times in a row now a clean sheet, so it will be a tough job 100 per cent, I know that. But that is how the Premier League is always, so no problem with that."

Liverpool are hopeful of having Mohamed Salah and Andy Robertson back fit after both were badly missed in the Merseyside derby.

City's strength in depth was on show as Pep Guardiola was able to make eight changes for Monday's 5-0 thrashing of Burnley.

Kevin De Bruyne and Raheem Sterling are among those expected to come back into the side for the stiffer test of Chelsea, who will be looking to cement their place in the top four.

Frank Lampard's men came from behind to beat Aston Villa 2-1 on Sunday to open up a five-point lead over Manchester United and Wolves.

"Now we have three points when some teams have lost points around us," said Lampard.

"We played well in patches but when they put us under pressure slightly, I thought we gave it away too easily - things we will definitely have to clean up on in the future games coming up."

- Pogba back -

Depending on the outcome of City's appeal against a two-season ban from European competition, fifth place could be good enough to qualify for next season's Champions League.

United are in pole position to take advantage of their local rivals' punishment and made an impressive return despite being held to a 1-1 draw at Tottenham on Friday.

Paul Pogba won the penalty, converted by



Liverpool could seal a first Premier League title in 30 years this week (AFP Photo)

Bruno Fernandes, for United's equaliser on his first appearance since December 26 as a substitute.

Ole Gunnar Solskjær is expected to pair the two star midfielders together from the start for the first time against Sheffield United on Wednesday.

The Blades have taken just one point from their opening two games of the restart, but can still move above the Red Devils with victory at Old Trafford.

Wolves picked up where they left off by beating West Ham 2-0 to move into the top six and will be confident of another victory when they host Bournemouth at Molineux.

Meanwhile, Burnley manager Sean Dyche was unable to name a full bench for Monday's trip to Manchester City as a number of players refused to take part after not being offered contract extensions. The Claret's have five players whose deals are due to expire at the end of June: Phil Bardsley, Aaron

Lennon, Jeff Hendrick, Joe Hart and Adam Legzdins.

Former England goalkeeper Hart has already been told his contract will not be extended, while Lennon has reportedly rejected an extension.

Dyche's squad is further depleted by injuries ruling out Ashley Barnes, Chris Wood and Johann Berg Gudmundsson. Burnley named just seven of a possible nine substitutes against City.

"It's a strange situation with contracts," Dyche told Sky Sports. "Players who haven't been offered things have decided not to finish their contracts." Dyche has made his frustration at the Burnley board's handling of the situation clear.

"These situations didn't need to occur," he said in his pre-match press conference.

"That is something the chairman and the board must learn from. The Covid crisis has not been helpful for sure but

it's not been the cover story because I've been talking about this for 18 months."

Dyche stressed on Monday that he is still very keen to keep as many players as he can until the end of the season in July. "At this moment, it's not easy. All of them I would've kept in the short term," he added.

"It's not ideal but it's part of management, we've still got a great group here."

Fixtures (all times GMT)

Today
Manchester United v Sheffield United, Newcastle v Aston Villa, Norwich v Everton, Wolves v Bournemouth (1700), Liverpool v Crystal Palace (1915)

Tomorrow
Southampton v Arsenal, Burnley v Watford (1700), Chelsea v Manchester City (1915)

AFP

Brazil's 1970 World Cup win and the football revolution that followed

By Tim Vickery, ESPN South America correspondent

PRECISELY 50 years ago football experienced one of the most important days in its history.

On June 21, 1970, Brazil beat Italy 4-1 in Mexico City's Aztec Stadium to win the ninth version of the World Cup with a performance of breathtaking skill. The first half was a relatively even game – the score at the break was 1-1 – but after the interval there was no holding Pele, Jairzinho, Gerson, Tostao, Rivelino, Clodoaldo, Carlos Alberto and Co. Brazil ran riot, and set a benchmark for footballing greatness which has served ever since.

Would this team be able to beat Brazil 1970? Were they as entertaining as Brazil 1970? These are questions used to assess the pretensions to greatness of any subsequent team.

It is possible to make an argument that Brazil's 1958 team was better. They defended with more solidity, not conceding a goal until the semifinal. And with Pele and Garrincha together, it is hard to find fault with the attack. They remain the only Brazilian – or South American – side to have won the tournament in Europe. But the boys of 1970 can count on a powerful advantage to press their claims: Television.

The 1970 World Cup was the first to be broadcast live to much of the planet, and the global audience got lucky. The tournament was a great success. There were none of the unsavoury incidents that had blighted the previous two – the infamous "Battle of Santiago" in 1962 and all of the controversy surrounding the sending off of Argentina's Antonio Rattin, and the refereeing in general, of 1966.

During the course of the action in Mexico, not a single player saw the new red card – the yellow and red cards were introduced for this tournament to ease communication. The memories were all positive. And the images, bleached out by the Mexican sunshine, had an ethereal quality that gave them an exotic beauty.

It is hardly surprising that a link was frequently made between the achievement of the Brazil team and the moon landing a few months before. Both were jaw dropping displays of human potential with images that were unforgettable for a new, worldwide TV audience.

June 21, 1970, represents the end of a golden era of Brazilian football. With three World Cup wins in four tournaments, they established themselves as the game's leading power not only for the titles, but also for the swaggering style of their play.

This has never been entirely recaptured. They came again – with three consecutive finals, and two wins, between 1994 and 2002. But this period was always more pragmatic, less romantic than the Pele years.

Even more importantly, June 21, 1970, represents the birth of football as a TV experience.

The effect of this is often overlooked. It is a revolution in the game's finances. Back in 1960, for example, Penarol of Uruguay could meet Real Madrid on more or less equal terms. Penarol could fill the Centenario stadium in Montevideo, Real could fill the Santiago Ber-



At 1970 World Cup, the first to be broadcast live to much of the planet, Brazil set a benchmark for greatness which has served ever since. AP

nabeu. There was a parity of forces.

Fast forward to the modern era, and it hardly matters whether or not Penarol can fill their stadium. They cannot hope to match the resources of Real Madrid, who have seduced a worldwide audience of TV fans. With the introduction of television, the market stretches way beyond the number of fans willing and able to buy tickets.

The potential audience is the entire planet, and those clubs who have captured a significant part of this audience are now operating on a financial level beyond the wildest dreams of a Penarol.

A handful of European clubs have been the biggest beneficiaries of this process. But

it was international football – and specifically the World Cup – which saw it first and gave it the biggest push. FIFA's revenue has always been dependent on the World Cup. The success of the 1970 tournament made it clear that ticket sales would not be the most important slice of the pie. What really mattered was the sale of TV rights.

This meant that FIFA were in the vanguard of changes introduced to improve the quality of the spectacle and seduce the "neutrals" – those without a connection with either of the two teams in action, but sufficiently interested to watch the game.

For that 1970 World Cup, FIFA brought in the cards and worked hard to ensure that

the referees did not lose control. Two decades later, after the 1990 World Cup had proved disappointingly defensive, it was FIFA who led the crackdown on the tackle from behind, working to ensure that the skillful players received more protection.

The triumph of football as a TV event would almost certainly have happened anyway. But it seems beyond doubt that Brazil's performances in 1970 made sure that it happened quickly. The show put on by Pele and company was so good that watching the World Cup on TV became instantly habit forming.

That night, many would have gone to bed counting the days until the big kick off of West Germany 1974.

Gwiji by David Chikoko



Azam FC, Yanga, Namungo FC in chase for VPL second spot

SPORT

Liverpool return to Anfield as Man City aim to prolong title wait

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

TOC set to hold symposium

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA Olympic Committee (TOC) has organized a sports symposium, to be held at National Stadium in Dar es Salaam on Saturday, to discuss the effects of coronavirus pandemic in sports industry in the country.

Henry Tandau, TOC vice-president, said the symposium will involve leaders of sports bodies, which are under Olympics, and sports journalists.

He said as a means of observing health guidelines of combating the spread of coronavirus, invitations have been extended to 60 participants only so as to observe the one-meter apart requirement.

The TOC official disclosed that some topics to be discussed at the symposium include, impact of coronavirus pandemic in sports especially in preparations for the Tokyo Olympics.

"Other topics to be covered include challenges, plans after the coronavirus pandemic and the contribution of sports in the development of the country," he said.

He disclosed the forum is also expected to analyze the effects of the pandemic in local sports.

Tandau further disclosed that initially TOC wanted to celebrate World Olympics Day, which falls on June 21, but the celebration has been cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Tokyo Olympics was scheduled to be held from July 23-August 8 but due to the pandemic, the Games have been shifted to next year.

By Correspondent Michael Mwebe

AZAM FC, Young Africans (Yanga) and Namungo FC are in the race for a runners-up spot after Simba SC had opened up an 18-point gap at the top of the Vodacom Premier League with eight matches to go.

Namungo FC, Azam FC and Yanga will be in action today as the league continues with five matches scheduled this afternoon.



Namungo FC midfielder, Hamis Fakihi (R), tackles his Simba counterpart, Hassan Dilunga, during a recent Vodacom Premier League match, which took place in Dar es Salaam. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

In Dar es Salaam, Yanga will be looking to get back to winning ways when they host Namungo FC at the National Stadium.

The Jangwani Street side goes into the contest having drawn their last two games

to falter in the race for the runners-up spot. Namungo FC, meanwhile, go into the match in good form having beaten Kagera Sugar 2-0 in their last encounter.

They are sitting comfortably in fourth

position on the table, six points ahead of fifth-placed Coastal Union and only two points behind Yanga, making this a head-to-head clash for third place.

Azam have a tricky away assignment against Kagera Sugar who are looking to bounce back from last weekend's 2-0 loss to Namungo.

Survival looks assured for Kagera Sugar but another home defeat would raise eyebrows after a bright start to the season the side had enjoyed before fading away.

Mbeya fans will see hosts Mbeya City FC take on Simba who are closing in on their third consecutive Vodacom Premier League title.

While Simba will go one step closer with a win, relegation beckons for the hosts who sit in the 18th position and lost a crucial six-pointer against Alliance FC last weekend.

In Musoma, Biashara United, who had looked dead and buried until Kenyan coach Francis Baraza's appointment in mid-November, will

be banking on their formidable home record to gain the upper hand on a resurgent KMC FC.

Baraza succeeded Amri Said and the former has guided the team to an impressive run of eight consecutive victories at the Karume Stadium.

Meanwhile, KMC FC will be determined to claim their sixth consecutive win, after beating Ruvo Shooting, Mbao FC, Alliance FC, JKT Tanzania and Yanga in their last five league encounters.

Lake Zone will have another tie to look at as Alliance FC hosts Coastal Union at Nyamagana Stadium.

These teams have very differing aims, but they will both be looking for three points. Despite their victory on Saturday, Alliance FC remain in the relegation zone with eight matches to secure their topflight status.

Only two points separate four teams, therefore a big chance remains for Alliance FC to stay in the top-flight with six home games to boost their confidence.

National U-21 netball side misses out on World Cup

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIA's national U-21 netball team has missed out on the Netball World Youth Cup scheduled for June 2021 in Fiji.

The country's netball association (Chaneta) Chairperson Devatha Marwa said the development comes after the International Netball Federation (INF) cancelled last month's World Youth Cup qualifiers.

She pointed out the federation's decision to use the sport's current world rankings to determine contestants due to the coronavirus pandemic, which has wrecked havoc across the globe, has also dashed away the national U-21 team's hopes of taking part in the showpiece.

She said the national U-21 team were scheduled to travel to Uganda for Africa Regional qualifiers, but the latest development means Tanzania has missed the World Youth Cup as the country's senior netball team is not ranked by INF.

"The U-21 team was supposed to travel to Uganda for the African qualifiers, but due to Coronavirus crisis, the INF cancelled the qualifiers and

instead they will use the current ranking," she disclosed.

"Unfortunately, we are not ranked, that means we have missed the next year's World Youth Cup," she said.

She said the fact that the national U-21 team will miss the next year's World Youth Cup due to qualifiers' cancellation must serve as a wake up call to netball stakeholders in the country that there is a need for taking netball to where it was in the previous years.

"The junior team will not compete at World Youth Cup in Fiji next year, it is not that they have failed to earn qualification on the pitch but our netball is not rated and ranked by INF, we must wake up now and take our netball to its place," she said.

The INF had suspended Tanzania's netball governing body some years ago due to among other things inactive of the senior team and unpaid annual membership fee.

The Chaneta leadership, led by Marwa, worked hard for the country to have its membership restored.

However since INF reinstated the country's membership, neither the

senior team nor the junior team has played any international match.

The national U-21 team has never qualified for the World Cup and according to Marwa, this time around they were prepared to send a team which can qualify for the global event. She said after INF reinstated the country's membership, Chaneta had aimed at building a strong national team, starting with junior teams.

"We want to start our netball from the junior teams and we were ready to send the U-21 team to Uganda for the qualifiers but due to the development we have to wait for next time," she said. Asked what will Chaneta do to ensure that the senior national netball team is rated and ranked by INF, she said they plan to play many international friendly matches.

"We plan to have frequent international friendly events next year, as this year they will be no any international netball events due to the Coronavirus, in the senior team we will have many junior players as this will help them to have international exposure," she said.

Minziro seeks to boost Mbao FC pursuit of VPL spot next season

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

MBAO FC's head coach, Fred Felix 'Minziro', has been handed a tricky task of seeing to it the outfit land a place in the next season's Mainland Premier League.

The Mwanza squad is currently one of the domestic top flight clubs that are struggling to escape relegation to the First Division (FDL).

Minziro's first task was Mbao FC's yesterday's league encounter with Tanga's Coastal Union which was set to take place in Mwanza.

After the yesterday duel, Mbao FC will be left with seven games, which could determine the squad's future at the top level of domestic soccer.

Minziro, who had recently coached Mwanza's other Premier League squad, Alliance FC, stated he had five days to improve his players' fitness.

"I have opted for few changes and now my players are to a certain extent fit given I put them through their paces to improve stamina and endurance," he stated.

"With the players having returned from a break brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, most of them had probably not trained well during the break given they are not fit."

"I have, for that matter, improved their fitness given a soccer player can not excel in the game should he be found wanting in the aspects."

He noted he has a challenging task of helping the outfit regroup and perform well, given they are not in safe position in the league standing.

He added that they for that matter need to win all of their matches and ultimately be certain of a spot they will be in.

"We need to win every game. Every game has to be perceived as a final then we will be certain of a spot we will be in," he disclosed.

Before the yesterday duel Mbao FC had been positioned 19th in the 20-team Premier League table.

They had registered 23 points in 30 matches, with eight matches left to conclude the season.



Students from several secondary schools in Dar es Salaam take part in a recent netball tournament which took place at the JMK Youth Park in the city. PHOTO: COURTESY OF JMK YOUTH PARK

Flexibles by David Chikoko

RESPECT PEOPLE WHEN THEY RESPECT YOU. WHEN THEY DISRESPECT YOU - RESPECT THEM STILL. DON'T LOWER YOUR STANDARDS



TONIGHT @ 7:00

EATV SAA 1

WEDNESDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Weekend Movie (r)
13:30 Kali Za Wana
14:00 Planet Bongo (r)
14:30 Bongo Hits
15:00 Funguka
15:30 Nirvana (r)
16:00 Skonga (r)
16:30 #HASHTAG
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurasa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)
21:00 Kibiashara Zaidi

EATV SAA 1
Coverage of the days current events accompanied by interviews with prominent people on diverse topics ranging from national to social interests.

east africa RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM
DAR ES SALAAM

"With the players having returned from a break brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, most of them had probably not trained well during the break given they are not fit