



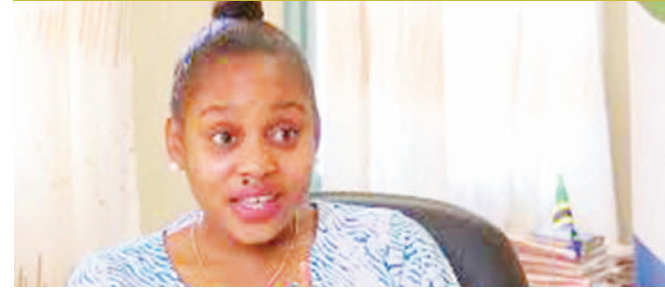
National Pg 3
Govt to end land dispute in Ruaha



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Plan Tanzania donates Covid-19 PPE



Japan, WFP now partner to reduce malnutrition in central regions

By Guardian Reporter

THE Japanese government has contributed US\$1.5 million to the World Food Programme (WFP), a United Nations agency, to support the four-year Boresha Lishe nutrition project in rural areas of central Tanzania.

Michael Dunford, WFP representative in Tanzania, said at a press conference yesterday that in collaboration with Japan, WFP is supplying and installing solar power kiosks to 40 village community banking groups (VICOBAs) under the project.

The kiosks will have rechargeable rental devices such as lanterns and are operated as businesses, providing income opportunities for the project participants.

Through the Boresha Lishe project, WFP is adopting a multi-sectoral approach, combining the provision of specialized nutritious foods, behavioural change communication, while enabling communities to access income generating

'Truck drivers have to be COVID-19 negative'



Judge (rtd) Mathew Mwaimu (R), Chairman of Tanzania's Commission for Human Rights and Good Governance, bids Lindi regional commissioner Godfrey Zambi (C, foreground) farewell after they held talks in Lindi municipality on Monday. Mwaimu led a delegation comprising members of the commission. Photo: Correspondent Mbaraka Kambona

By Guardian Reporter

KENYA'S High Commissioner to Tanzania, Dan Kazungu, has said his country has not barred Tanzanian drivers from entering Kenya only that it has placed conditions to ensure that those entering are proven to be Covid-19 negative.

The Kenyan envoy was speaking to reporters in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

He said: "People are talking on border closure but do not speak everything. When President Uhuru Kenyatta spoke about the border issue he affirmed that Tanzania drivers who have tested negative of Covid-19 should board their vehicles and bring their cargo into Kenya without being forced to do so.

"Also the president said a Kenyan driver cannot travel to other countries without having a permit showing he has been tested and found negative so as not to infect Tanzanians or Ugandans or other people in the countries of the East African Community. And on similar measure we said a driver from Tanzania should be tested for the coronavirus and if found negative he should proceed with his cargo to Kenya.

"The step taken by Kenya is not against Tanzania, but against our common enemy - the Covid-19 pandemic. As sages have said, a fight amongst grasshoppers is the joy of crows (Vita vya panzi ni furaha ya kunguru) and the crow is

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The Boresha Lishe project is co-funded by Japan, the European Union and WFP

activities, he said.

Launched in 2017, the Boresha Lishe project aims at improving nutrition for 30,000 women and children through behaviour change via communication, diversification of food production and distribution of specialized nutritious foods. This will be done in Bahi and Chamwino districts in Dodoma Region and Ikungi and Singida Rural districts in Singida Region.

Goto Shinichi, the Japanese ambassador said that this particular contribution is directed toward women and children in rural areas, in view of the 'Leaving no one behind' of the 2030 sustainable development goals agenda.

It is based on the important concept of human security, and it will improve nutrition and income generation of vulnerable groups, the envoy noted.

The Boresha Lishe project works to improve knowledge on nutrition, dietary diversity and water, sanitation and hygiene practices (WASH). In addition, keeping small-scale livestock, planting diverse crops and mobilising VICOBA are

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PM suspends TEMESA officials over tendering

By Guardian Reporter

PRIME Minister Kassim Majaliwa has suspended three officials of the Tanzania Electrical, Mechanical and Electronics Services Agency (TEMESA) over allegations related to tendering.

The premier said the suspended officials were involved in loss of funds totalling 780m/-.

Touring the TEMESA workshop in Dodoma yesterday, the premier ordered the agency's accountant, Lecian Mgeta, who resigned from the position on April 6, 2020, to be summoned to office in connection with the allegations.

The director of electrical services, Hans Lyimo and acting chief accountant Jonas

Bakuza were also suspended.

The premier warned TEMESA chief executive Japhet Maselle over poor management, said he had failed to take actions against the officers despite being aware of embezzlement of funds.

"The whole scenario was in collaboration with one dishonest officer at CRDB Bank who we are yet to identify. Authorities are searching for him," he said.

TEMESA officials collaborated with the bank officer to change cheques into cash, he further asserted.

The monies were to be deposited into the Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA) bank account, Majaliwa said, expressing worry that more funds would be ending up

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Govt introduces pesticides, phytosanitary regulation bill

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

THE government is setting up a Tanzania Plant Health and Pesticides Authority in a new drive to tighten control of pesticides and phytosanitary regulation, by supervising basic rules for food safety, animal and plant health standards.

Agriculture minister Japhet Hasunga tabled the Plant Health Bill 2020 in the National Assembly here yesterday, where among other issues the proposed law intends to manage importation and use of plants and plant products, along with the prevention of introduction and

spread of pests.

The new law is part of efforts to attract investments and doing away with bureaucracy in the plant sector and agriculture. It also seeks to guarantee the availability of fresh and quality plant products on account of a well regulated sector.

The minister said the law will also reduce side effects caused by residues from pesticides such as aflatoxins, heavy metals and contaminants on the basis of regulated activities producing such residues.

"The proposed law will also reduce

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SHARE FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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Tanga regional commissioner Martine Shigella addresses truck drivers at the Tanzania-Kenya Horohoro border post yesterday following his decision to close the border after 19 Kenyan drivers planning to cross over on Monday tested positive. Photo: Correspondent Bonface Gideon

'Truck drivers have to be COVID-19 negative'

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this virus. We should be patient, we love our countries; we are patriots."

High Commissioner Kazungu stated that President Kenyatta does not view Tanzania as merely a neighbor, but like a brother and sister. "In his heart he wants to be in very good terms because we are one. Our call is that we have to have patience; let's leave our leaders to solve the issue."

Kazungu said he had already spoken to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and East African Cooperation, Prof Palamagamba Kabudi who promised to talk to his Kenya counterpart about the issue at the end of the week, but stressed that Covid-19 should not be a reason for squabbling.

He said it should be understood that in addition to the fact that Tanzania has borders with many countries, it has a very long border with Kenya, hence the need for the two countries to put their issues in good order.

The envoy underlined that Tanzania and Kenya are the major economies in the EA Community and in the wider region, hence when the two countries cooperate more, their economies remain strong, "but when we start shaking, we are also shaking the others."

He said about half of intra-East African trade is between Tanzania and Kenya, making the two countries the pillars of the region's economy.

The friendship and brotherliness between the two countries will continue to exist and that is why President Kenyatta was the first to travel by air to greet President John Magufuli in Chato in Geita Region.

"President Kenyatta planned to come to Tanzania for the Union Day on April 26, and was set for a week long official visit that would have also taken him to Zanzibar," the envoy noted.

Speaking on Kenya journalists who were arrested at the Namanga border post last week, Kazungu said he had communicated with them and they defended themselves, saying they entered Tanzania without knowing that they were in Tanzania soil. The issue was now being dealt by Tanzania immigration authorities.

Kazungu's remarks come at a time when relations appeared to be strained after Kenya shut the border with Tanzania for 30 days, putting restrictions on truck drivers.

Several truck drivers were turned back after they tested positive of the Covid-19 at several border posts such as Isibania, Namanga and Horohoro, officials affirmed.

Govt introduces pesticides, phytosanitary regulation bill

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transactions in obsolete pesticides and empty containers of pesticides harmful to plants," he said.

The new bill control trade in pesticides and ensure overall supervision of specific phytosanitary measures, often a contested issue in regional and international trade law.

Tabling the Bill, Hasunga said that importation and use of plants and plant products was expected to be sufficient, while the new law will regulate importation of pesticides and control counterfeits.

This law will upon accession bring

in place conditions on the control of pesticides, administration of plant life, importation of plant products, by regulating and shaping the plant business in the country.

"This law will permit other laboratories to perform studies on imported pesticides as well as give the newly established authority powers to take legal actions, including imposing fines on offences committed," the minister noted.

The proposed law gives powers to the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) to do any research on pesticides and plant health related issues, he added.

PM suspends TEMESA officials over tendering

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in individuals' pockets if the agency's top management remains passive about dishonest staff.

"You were supposed to take actions in accordance with government directives and the law instead of waiting for me to come here," he told Maselle.

Majaliwa directed the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) to investigate TEMESA following reported incidents of embezzling funds.

In other remarks, the premier has directed government agencies and institutions to settle their bills to TEMESA in the next two months, saying they owe TEMESA well over 25.8bn/-.

"All payments to TEMESA should be completed by July 30th. The agency depends on the funds to operate as well as procure machines and spare parts. Regional authorities must ensure allocation of at least 1bn/- for TEMESA every month," he declared, pointing out that state owned vehicles are repaired by the agency for security

reasons.

He urged the agency to improve its operations as regional commissioners and administrative secretaries complain of repairing of vehicles taking longer periods.

TEMESA officials should look into ways of reviewing charges for vehicle maintenance to facilitate speedy payments, he stated.

The agency must also ensure regular checkups of its operating passenger ferries in lakes, rivers and seashore ports to avoid possible accidents.

Earlier, the TEMESA CEO informed the premier that the agency faces a number of challenges including delayed payments from regional authorities. Some regions have never paid the cost of vehicle repairs, he asserted.

Until March 2020, the agency had a total of 25.8bn/- in unsettled vehicle maintenance bills, while suppliers owe the agency a total of 18.9bn/-, he said.

"Most of our regional workshops are in a poor condition, which affects the agency's performance," he added.

US court orders Sudan to pay for 1998 twin embassy attacks

New York

THE US Supreme Court on Monday ruled that Sudan must pay hundreds of millions of dollars in punitive damages to some victims of the 1998 attacks on US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam.

The court's unanimous decision applies only to claims brought by US nationals, members of the US military, and employees of the US government or embassy contractors.

Kenyan relatives of embassy workers or private contractors killed or injured in the bombing are not covered by Monday's ruling.

The court stated that a US appeals court must now address the question of whether those Kenyan nationals are entitled to a share of the full \$4.3 billion in punitive damages awarded by a US judge in 2011. The Supreme Court's ruling holding Sudan liable suggests that the appeals court may decide that the Kenyan nationals should also receive punitive damages.

A Washington-based attorney representing the 567 plaintiffs, including Kenyans who brought the case, interpreted Monday's limited ruling as a victory. "We are deeply gratified that the Supreme Court has validated the right of our clients to receive this measure of compensation," said attorney Matthew McGill.

"We are hopeful that this soon will lead Sudan to reach a just and equitable resolution with its victims."

A US attorney representing Sudan estimated that the Supreme Court decision applies to only about 20 per cent of the full \$4.3 billion in punitive damages. "Sudan looks forward to further proceedings in this continuing litigation while it remains engaged with the United States in negotiations to normalise the bilateral relationship," said attorney Christopher Curran.

It has previously been decided in the US judicial system that Kenyan family members are entitled to some of an

additional \$6 billion in compensatory damages to be paid by Sudan.

But it is unlikely that the Kenyan families will receive anything close to the full amount of claims for which US courts have already held Sudan liable or might do so in the future.

Sudan's recently installed reformist government has maintained that the nation's enormous sovereign debt would prevent it from making good on any multi-billion-dollar settlement arising from the embassy bombings.

But at the same time, Sudan is eager to resolve legal disputes in the US related to the 1998 attack that killed 212 Kenyan nationals and 12 US citizens.

Ten Tanzanians died in the nearly simultaneous bombing of the US embassy in Dar es Salaam.

Outstanding claims against Sudan are among the factors that the US has cited in declining to remove Sudan from a terrorism blacklist.

Erasing that designation, originally made in 1993, would earn Sudan full access to the global financial system.

A US court has found that the Sudan dictatorship of Omar al-Bashir, who was overthrown last year, had assisted al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, in carrying out the embassy bombings.

The new government headed by Prime Minister Abdalla Hamdok denies that Sudan played a role in the attacks.

But the country's rulers are seeking to negotiate a settlement with victims of the bombing that would be acceptable to the US government.

Monday's ruling by the US Supreme Court has no bearing on separate lawsuits filed by more than 2,000 Kenyans who were harmed by the bombing but who were not employed by or related to workers at the embassy or for private contracts.

Litigation involving that large group of victims has been stalled in the US court system for several years and is not expected to reach a settlement anytime soon. **AGENCIES**



Energy minister Dr Medard Kalemani has a word with a resident of Rusungwa in Chato District on Monday after officiating at the switching on of national grid electricity in the village made possible through the national rural electrification project. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

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promoted, increasing access to capital. "With the support from the government of Japan, WFP is improving women and children's nutrition and the future of these communities," the WFP representative underlined.

For the supply and installation of solar power kiosks, WFP is working with a Japanese private company, leveraging expertise accumulated through business operations over the

Japan, WFP partner to reduce malnutrition in central regions

years.

The Boresha Lishe project is co-funded by Japan, the European Union and WFP.

WFP is engaging in saving lives in emergencies and changing lives for millions through sustainable development. WFP works in more than

80 countries around the world, feeding people caught in conflict and disasters, and laying the foundations for a better future.



Workers with Sao Hill Industries in Mufindi District pictured yesterday harvesting pollen from beehives installed in their farms. Today is World Bees Day. Sources said a litre of pollen fetched between 400,000/- and 600,000/- . Photo: Correspondent Francis Godwin

Review electoral legislation - WFT

By Felister Peter

THE Women Fund Tanzania (WFT) has identified some legal gaps in existing election laws that partially contribute into poor participation of women in leadership positions. The women's right fund analyzed five election laws including the National Elections Act 2015, Zanzibar Election Act 2028, Section 292 of the Local Authorities (Election) Act 1979, Local Government Act 2002 and Local Government (Urban Authorities) Act-Cap 287 and 288.

Presenting findings to members in Dar es Salaam yesterday during a virtual meeting, Prof Ruth Meena, WFT Chairman underscored the need for political parties to also consider appointing more women to contest for various election posts during General Elections.

Prof Meena faulted some of the conditions for one to participate in elections including the requirement of being a member of certain political party.

According to her, despite gaps in the election laws, parties are still giving limited chances to women to participate in elections whereas women contestants from the ruling Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) accounted for 9 per cent, Chadema 6 per cent, ACT-Wazalendo 15 percent and the Civic United Front (CUF) 11 per cent.

She said the number of women elected into parliamentary posts is small whereas in the 2005/2010 elections, 18 women (8 per cent) were elected as MPs, the number increased slightly to 21 in 2010/2015 (9 per cent).

The number of elected women legislators increased to 25 (9 per cent) in the past general elections, she said.

She added: "There are a number of factors contributing into women being defeated in elections; most of them cannot afford election costs but also the patriarch system in our communities

which has its roots from family level".

Prof Meena said despite the government's good intention to introduce Special Seats, women legislators are less privileged since they don't get Constituency Development Fund (CDF), an additional means of financing given to Members of Parliament for community-driven development. "There should be amendments into the elections act to allow Special Seats legislators to be appointed to the positions of Prime Minister. There should be time limit for special seats MP, its implementation should consider gender equality", said Prof Meena.

Prof Meena noted that in Tanzania mainland, special seats legislators could not be appointed to lead some of the Parliamentary Standing Committee such as the Ethics and Finance committees. At Full Council meetings, special seats councilors are not allowed to act on the chairmanship position.

She however noted that analyzed laws provide equal chances for people to participate in the voting exercise. She said that 53 per cent of all the voters registered during the 2015 general elections were women, an increment of 4.4 per cent compared to the number of women voters registered in 2010.

She pointed out on the role of the media in sensitizing women to participate in elections, insisting on editors to prioritize publishing news about women.

"Women contestants deserve coverage in print and electronic Media, this will encourage more women to come out and contest for different posts", she noted.

Participants called upon political parties to put in place a system that will ensure equal participation of women and men at elections. They also raised concerns that special seats legislators should be entitled to all the privileges as well as chairing some crucial parliamentary committees.

Mineral trader in Mbeya 'commits suicide' after failing to repay debt

By Guardian Correspondent, Mbeya

MINERAL and timber dealer of Ibala area in Uyole Ward in Mbeya City is reported to have committed suicide allegedly after failing to repay 100m/- bank loan.

Confirming the incident yesterday, Mbeya Regional Police Commander Ulrich Matei said on May 18 at around 3 a.m the trader identified as Jonas Mahenge (52) shot himself with his own pistol.

He said the deceased was a timber, potatoes and plywood trader and also engaged in mining in Chunya district. According to the police the deceased recently applied for 100m/- loan

from CRDB Bank, but he was faced with repayment difficulties hence he decided to sell his house to offset the debt.

He said later the bank rescheduled conditions for repayment and told him to pay 3m/- every month, but also failed to do. "The night of May 18 his family woke up for steam inhaling session. But when other family members were preparing themselves, he returned and locked himself inside the room and then shot himself," said RPC Matei.

Steam inhalation is one of the most widely used home remedies to soothe and open the nasal passages and get relief from the symptoms of a cold or sinus infection.

Also called steam therapy, it involves the inhalation of water vapor. The warm, moist air is thought to work by loosening the mucus in the nasal passages, throat, and lungs. This may relieve symptoms of inflamed, swollen blood vessels in your nasal passages.

While steam inhalation won't cure an infection, like a cold or the flu, it may help make you feel a lot better while your body fights it off. But as with any home remedy, it's important to learn best practices so you don't hurt yourself in the process.

RPC Matei sent his condolences to Mahenge's family and all Mbeya traders for the death of their colleague

and advised citizens to have in place sound strategic plans when embarking in economic activities before accessing bank loans.

He called upon them to seek expert advice from business experts on expenditure and income for the business they are about to start.

Meanwhile, the police in Mbeya has arrested Marko Kandonga (78), a resident Kilambo in Njisi Ward in Kyela district for being in possession of government trophies without permit.

RPC Matei mentioned the trophies as a squirrel skin, python skin, a warthog tail whose total value could not immediately be established.

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

THE government is working on the final report of experts about the land conflict between the Ruaha National Park and the local communities.

Dr Khamis Kigwangalla, the minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, said in a written response to Special Seats MP Sophia Mwakagenda (Chadema) that the decision is part of President John Magufuli's directive to the ministry to resolve land disputes in all national protected reserves.

Kigwangalla said a team of sectoral ministries had been established to revisit all reported land conflicts across the country, in which it included the dispute between farmers, pastoralists in Mbarali district and the Ruaha national park.

The dispute chiefly involves villagers from Madibira, Miyombweni, Igawa, Rujewa, Songwe, Mapogoro and Ruhanga wards, that the legislator claims despite the government notice GN no. 28 of 2008 the problem remains far from ending.

She wanted the government to explain the timeframe for resolving the ongoing land conflict that would set the citizens, farmers and pastoralist free from unnecessary arrests in the pretext that they are conducting activities inside the

national park.

"Why is it that citizens who are farmers and pastoralists continue to be arrested by the order of the District Commissioner?" she asked arguing that the Prime Minister in his address to adjoin the 2016/17 the parliamentary budget session had in fact issued an executive order that the people must not be harassed.

Mwakagenda said the premier has emphasised that the farmers and pastoralists must be free until further notice when the state receives a detailed report from the team of experts who are investigating the land disputes.

Responding, the minister said the technical report was submitted to the respective authority for further decision. He said the premier issued a verdict in September 2019 regarding 920 villages in 975 wards that had land disputes, saying the areas will remain unchanged.

"The villages included some villages in the wards named by the legislator with a government notice Mbarali

Meanwhile, the ministry through the National Parks Authority (TANAPA) is working with the district commissioner to enforce the prime minister's decision. "This includes unnecessary arrests of Wananchi until the final technical report on the dispute is published," he noted.



The Dar es Salaam Water and Sanitation Authority (Dawasa) has recently been busy overseeing the implementation of water projects devised by local residents in various parts of Dar es Salaam, including this one in the Kipunguni B suburb - as found yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Francis Kajubi

MUHIMBILI National Hospital (MNH) has increased production of personal protective equipment (PPE) for health workers from 120 to 600 pieces per day since production kicked off mid-last month.

Briefing journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, MNH head of public relations, Aminiel Aligaesha said that the increment in production is equal to 400 per cent.

MNH beefs up production of PPE

"The hospital has produced 10,553 PPE so far from which 5,000 had been distributed to the Medical Stores Department (MSD). The rest of them had been distributed to zonal referral hospitals, regional referral hospitals, health centres, non-government organisations, private hospitals,

companies and municipal councils" said Aligaesha.

According to him, the current production of PPE seems to meet the demand and the hospital is looking forward to increasing the production capacity. "The Tanzania Medicine and Medical Devices Authority (TMDA)

approved the PPE this April hence authorised the MNH to start production and distribution across the country. Production and distribution of the PPE involves abiding by the Tanzania Food, Drugs and Cosmetics (Control of Medical Devices) Regulation, 2015," he added.

He explained that the hospital has also increased the number of special sewing machines for production of PPE from eight machines to 32 during the period. He added that before the clothing reaches the consumers whom are nurses and midwives are taken through the central sterilisation

and supply department for special treatment and packaging.

For her part, Zuhura Mawona, director of nursing and midwifery services at MNH, said that the PPE is designed in way that guarantees protection and safety of health workers.

"The PPEs are supplied across the country through the Medical Stores Department. The current production speed is satisfactory and assures us of meeting the daily growing demand," said Mawona.

Tanzania and Rwanda agree on raft of issues on cargo transport

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

GOVERNMENTS of Tanzania and Rwanda have agreed upon eight issues on the transportation of goods including the requirement of offloading all the cargo at customs border posts except for fuel and perishables.

Speaking here at the weekend, the Minister for Works, Transport and Communications Isack Kamwewe said the agreements have been reached after the two countries' joint meetings convened from May 6 to 15 this year.

He said the step followed complaints from drivers on conditions set by the Rwandan government over goods transport service between the two countries.

"We sat and discussed with our Rwandan counterparts on how to solve the challenges, including allowing transportation of goods between the two countries while precautionary measures are taken in the control of the spreading of Covid-19 infections," Kamwewe said.

He said they have agreed that all goods destined for Rwanda will be offloaded at Rusumo and Kagitumba customs posts with the exception of fuel and perishables.

"Trucks carrying these goods will be allowed to continue with their journeys and will have free escort up to the town of destination inside Rwanda, but as you can recall, the Rwandan government had said such escorts will be charged USD 500," he said.

He said the second issue concerns trucks with goods that are transported in transit through Rwanda destined to Congo DRC, saying these will be allowed to proceed under escort up to Rwanda-Congo DRC

border.

"In addition freight trucks will be allowed to travel from 6.00 in the morning to 6.00 in the evening meaning that they will not be allowed to travel during the night. And the fourth issue that was agreed upon was putting in place procedures to ensure drivers who load and offload cargo at customs border posts do not take long to do so," Kamwewe said.

He added: "In case they are forced to stay longer they will be accommodated at designated hotels at the expense of goods' owners and they will not be allowed to sleep inside their vehicles due to health reasons."

He said trucks will be allowed to stop at designated areas and all drivers destined to Rwanda will be tested in Tanzania before the start of their journeys and Tanzania will test them before they start their journeys to Dar es Salaam.

The seventh issue that was agreed upon concerns stigma including not disclosing the names of drivers who had tested positive of Covid-19 infections and the eighth issue calls for communications between the two countries before implementing any regulations and guidelines that may ruin border trade," he said.

He called upon owner of goods and drivers destined for Rwanda to respect these agreements and communicate with the ministry for any problem that may arise.

On April 24 this year the Rwandan government issued guidelines on transportation of goods destined for Rwanda or in transit through Rwanda requiring all cargo to be offloaded at the border post and the need for two drivers for each truck - one Tanzanian and the other Rwandese.



Residents of Bugunda village in Musoma District running as No Sweat, No Sweet Group connect a pipe to a machine in an effort to irrigate their watermelon farms, as captured last week. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

THE government is in final stages of renovating and improving infrastructures at Kalenga Museum centre in Iringa to meet demands by tourists through the resilient natural resources for tourism and growth' (REGROW) project, the National Assembly was told here yesterday.

This tiny museum in nearby Kalenga - the former Hehe capital - contains the skull, personal effects and other relics of Chief Mkwawa. It was here that he committed suicide rather than succumb to the German forces. The admission price includes a historical explanation by the caretaker.

It's also possible to arrange with the caretaker to visit other nearby historical sites, including a cemetery with the graves of some of Mkwawa's 62 wives, and the site of part of Kalenga's old defensive wall (the ruins themselves are now nonexistent).

Kalenga is about 15km from Iringa on the road to Ruaha National Park. Dalla-dallas go regularly to Kalenga from Iringa's post office, also stopping at Mlandege bus stand near the

Tanzania set to improve infrastructure at Kalenga museum centre, House told

roundabout at the start of the Ruaha road.

The Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism said in a written response to a question from Special Seats MP, Nuhu Mwamwindi (CCM) that due to the importance of the centre, the government in collaboration with Iringa District Council has mapped the boundaries of the centre in 2018/19 and two plots which have been included in the centre's mapping exercise.

In her question the MP wanted to know the government plan on renovating the centre which has a lot of history relating to Hehe Chief Mkwawa so that it attracts tourists.

The MP asked "This centre is very important but has no infrastructure to suit its status which can attract tourists, what is the government plan to improve infrastructure at the centre,"

Kalenga Museum centre is a symbol of chief Mkwawa's residence as well as Hehe tribe; it is at this centre that the skull of chief Mkwawa which was returned from Germany on 9th

July 1951 has been preserved, explained the ministry.

The ministry said it is in final stages of handing in a title deed for ownership of the centre's plot.

The ministry further said the government has handed over the task to preserve the centre to the Tanzania National Parks Authority (TANAPA).

Through the Regrow project funded by the World Bank and TANAPA, infrastructure at the centre is expected to improved including construction of a memorial and record keeping centre to preserve chief Mkwawa's history and those of the Hehe tribe for tourism attractions.

The ministry said it will continue with conservation tasks, research and preparation of information on Kalenga museum centre as well as offer public awareness for sustainable use of the country's natural and historical sites.

By Guardian Correspondent,

Singida

SINGIDA District Council in collaboration with INADES-Tanzania, a Non Governmental Organisation (NGO) have marked World Donkeys Day by educating citizens on precautionary measures against Covid-19 infections.

An expert from the Council's Health Department Neema Swai said the stakeholders also assisted in educating people in the district on the importance of keeping donkeys and the correct use of face masks.

She said the community has been faced with water woes challenges but by using donkeys they have been able to get the required running water for washing hands as a preventive measure against the disease.

NGO stresses welfare needs of donkeys in rural settings

Neema stressed donkeys have also been source of income to the people in the area that enable them maintain their livelihoods.

Singida district livestock development officer Adam Sungita said donkeys have been of great help in rural areas as they are used to fetch water for domestic use including for washing hands as preventive measure against Covid-19 infections.

Sungita said Singida District has a total of 7,793 donkeys which he said the number was small as compared to other animals kept by residents of the district.

"Our call we in the government is appeal to the

people to continue keeping donkeys as well as other animals and educate others on the importance of keeping such animals," he said.

Sungita said for villages that were not covered by the project they are continuing with efforts to reach them now that they are under INADES-Tanzania sponsorship, and added that once reached they will continue educating villages on the importance of donkeys, they should not sell them without reason.

Endesh village executive from Msange Ward Joseph Kingu said since the NGO began its activities on the donkeys' project in the village, they have started seeing their benefits.

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



IN THE FAIR COMPETITION TRIBUNAL OF TANZANIA AT DAR ES SALAAM

APPEAL NO. 7 OF 2020

BETWEEN

TANZANIA ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITEDAPPELLANT AND

JOSEPHINE MHINA NAAMAN.....IST RESPONDENT

ENERGY AND WATER UTILITIES REGULATORY AUTHORITY2ND RESPONDENT

(Notice pursuant to Rule 16 of the Fair Competition Tribunal Rules, 2012)

TAKE NOTICE THAT an appeal has been lodged in the Tribunal against the whole decision of the Energy and Water Utilities Regulatory Authority (EWURA) given on 25th March, 2020 in which EWURA held the Appellant responsible for the fire incident that destroyed the premises and household items of the 1st Respondent and awarded general damages of TZS 37,000,000 (Thirty seven million shillings) and costs of the complaint to the 1st Respondent.

The appeal is based on the grounds that the decision was made in an error of procedure, error of the law and the award issued was based on improper assessment of evidence. Thus, the Appellant prays for orders to set aside the award with costs.

BY THIS PUBLIC NOTICE any person who considers that he has sufficient interest may apply to intervene in the proceedings within seven days of the first publication of this notice to the Fair Competition Tribunal, 2nd Floor, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology Building, Jamhuri Street, Dar Es Salaam.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of the Tribunal this 19th May, 2020.

REGISTRAR

157433

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA



IN THE FAIR COMPETITION TRIBUNAL OF TANZANIA AT DAR ES SALAAM

APPEAL NO. 17 OF 2019

BETWEEN

M/S TONEBYTES & SUPPLIES LIMITEDAPPELLANT AND

I.S.M. STATIONERY IST RESPONDENT

CHIEF INSPECTOR OF MERCHANDISE MARKS ACT 2ND RESPONDENT

(Notice pursuant to Rule 16 of the Fair Competition Tribunal Rules, 2012)

TAKE NOTICE THAT an appeal has been lodged in the Tribunal against the whole decision of the Chief Inspector of Merchandise Marks Act given on the 17th October, 2019 in which it was held that seized goods were not counterfeit and the same be returned to the 1st Respondent with immediate effect.

The Appellant contends, among other grounds, that the Chief Inspector of Merchandise Marks Act erred in law and in facts by holding that the Appellant is not the registered trademark owner in Tanzania thus, have no exclusive rights and by failing to determine that seized goods were counterfeit. Thus, the Appellant prays for orders to declare him as the registered owner of the trademark and set aside the decision of the Chief Inspector of Merchandise Marks Act with costs.

BY THIS PUBLIC NOTICE any person who considers that he has sufficient interest may apply to intervene in the proceedings within seven days of the first publication of this notice to the Fair Competition Tribunal, 2nd Floor, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology Building, Jamhuri Street, Dar Es Salaam.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND AND SEAL of the Tribunal this 19th May, 2020.

REGISTRAR

157433

Use superior cotton and sunflower seeds for production of oil for human use - PS

By Guardian Correspondent, Shinyanga

THE government has called on all farmers in Shinyanga region to use quality cotton and sunflower seeds so as to increase the production of edible oil.

Speaking during his one-day visit in Shinyanga municipality, the Permanent Secretary to the Ministry of Industry and Trade Prof. Riziki Shemdoe said the existence of meat and edible oil processing plants in Shinyanga region is an opportunity for residents and farmers in the region to produce sunflower and cotton in abundance as the processing plants sell the oil inside the country and also for export.

Prof Shemdoe directed the management of a yarn factory in the outskirts of Shinyanga municipality to change its business strategy and start selling the raw material that is in great demand in China.

As of now the factory has suspended production due to Covid-19 pandemic because some of its experts are stuck in China. "There are clothing factories in the country that have benefitted from the raw materials produced by this factory but its procedure of exporting 80 percent of its products has affected the local textile factories, hence the need to sit together with Export Processing Zone Authority (EPZA) to have a law to sell locally produced yarn to the local factories," said Shemdoe.

He said as of now the government has established 8,477 factories countrywide that have been built during the fifth phase government of President John Magufuli.

He also inspected donkey meat processing factory and called on the producers to abide by the conditions given by the Ministry of Livestock of slaughtering 30 donkeys per day.

Prof Shemdoe continues with his visit in Shinyanga region inspecting various investment projects in Shinyanga municipality and Kahama district.

Plan Tanzania donates Covid-19 PPE worth 76.8m/- to Kisarawe

By Guardian Reporter

PLAN International Tanzania has donated Personal Protective Equipment worth 76.8m/- to Kisarawe District in Coast Region to support health workers in heightening the fight against Covid-19 pandemic.

The donated items, which were handed over to Kisarawe District Commissioner Jokate Mwegelo include face masks, gloves, goggles, gowns, hand sanitisers, liquid soap, water tanks, sanitary pads and other cleaning supplies.

Speaking during the event

yesterday Plan International manager for Kisarawe said health workers are working under hard and risk environment, hence the need to support them remains important.

"I am pleased to say as a community we have come together to show our support to healthcare workers who are at the frontline protecting the lives of many Tanzanians. We are also concerned on the safety of the public that is why we have donated water tanks to be used in public places," he said, adding that the support complement government's efforts in containing the spread of the pandemic.

He vowed that the organisation in collaboration with the government will undertake a special campaign to educate the public on the pandemic in the district.

For her part, DC Mwegelo commended Plan International and all stakeholders for supporting the government's efforts to combat Covid-19 and in particular helping healthcare providers.

"As district authorities, we appreciate all the contributions given to us by different stakeholders. This support has come at the right time when we need it most," she said.



Ulanga legislator Goodluck Mlinga (in robe) explains at the weekend how an ambulance President John Magufuli has assigned to the constituency's Lupilo Health Centre ought to be used. He had just handed it over. Photo: Correspondent Ashton Balaigwa

Lupilo residents applaud JPM, Ulanga MP for ambulance aid

By Guardian Correspondent, Ulanga

THE government has provided an ambulance to residents of Lupilo Division in Ulanga District that will solve their long time woes including incurring great expenses to transport their sick to Kilombero District Designated Hospital.

The residents were forced to spend between 300,000/- and 500,000/- for hiring to the St Francis Designated Hospital in Ifakara, Kilombero District over 50 kms away.

Lupilo Division has more than 36,000 residents but is served by only one health centre.

Speaking at the presentation ceremony of the ambulance at Lupilo health centre, the Ulanga Member of Parliament Goodluck Mlinga said the

government has donated the vehicle following a long time request for an ambulance.

Mlinga used the occasion to warn the health centre's management that the vehicle should be used for the intended purpose and not otherwise, such as using it for carrying charcoal, rice from farms, adding that stern measures will be taken against those who will be found misusing it including dismissal.

"This ambulance has facilities for emergency aid to patients who are being rushed to the hospital, it is also fitted with communication equipment that shows its location wherever it is, hence any other use than carrying patients will be known and the health centre's Doctor in Charge will be answerable," said Mlinga.

Earlier, speaking about the

challenges they had Lupilo ward Councillor Madunda Mkalimoto thanked president Magufuli and the MP for the ambulance.

He said lack of an ambulance for the ward had caused the death of one person while he was being rushed to St Francis Hospital in Kilombero District.

Elizabeth Isaya, a Lupilo resident said some pregnant women who needed surgery during delivery have died due to lack of transport.

Doctor in Charge of Lupilo Health centre, Dr iddi Kibwana said the ambulance is a big savior especially to pregnant women and promised to supervise its use and thanked the MP for his efforts in assisting the centre including funds for its major renovations.

Govt emphasises usage of fortified foods in efforts to halve stunting among under-fives

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

THE government announced yesterday that it had intensified programmes targeting to increase production and consumption of fortified-blended foodstuffs in attempts to halve stunting and anemia rates among under-five children.

Ministry of Agriculture said it was working with eight other ministries in providing training for the preparation, production and consumption of fortified food in six regions with over 40 per cent of stunting rates for children below five years.

Official figures show that Njombe region has 53.6 per cent of stunting rate. Other regions include Rukwa (47.9 per cent), Iringa (47.1 per cent), Songwe (43.3 per cent), Kigoma (42.3 per cent) and Ruvuma (41.0 per cent). The Minister, said in his written response to Mkinga legislator, Dustan Kitandula (CCM) that the fortification process has been mainly been commissioned in collaboration with the Ministry of Industry and Trade.

"We fortify commodities with high consumption rate. For instance, Iron, Zinc and Folic acid is fortified on flours

and Vitamin A is fortified on cooking oils," he said noting that principally the ministry has been educating the general public on crop diversification and consumption of their food produces.

The legislator had in his principle question inquired clarification on why the government was not investing in programmes that could help get quality food producing technique that ultimately would push high-access to

permanent nutrition. He said nutrition was the best approach towards high stunting rates in the country.

"Anemia and stunting is a national disaster," he alleged claiming that in every 100 children, 30 children are mentally stunted and in every 100 children, 59 children aged between 6 months and 5 years are anaemic.

The problem eventually cost the country at least 2 per cent of its gross domestic product and some 518million US dollars in purchase of vitamin A and Folic acid.

Hasunga said the eight ministries are working together to improve nutrition quality in the country.

He went on explaining that the ministry of Agriculture is charged with ensuring sufficient production of food supplements required to execute the national nutrition programme.

The agricultural research centres have been working with stakeholders in the production of biofortified crops such as orange-fleshed sweet potatoes, pro-vitamin A maize and iron-fortified beans. Such food produces are benefiting residents in Morogoro, Pwani, Iringa, Singida, Shinyanga, Mwanza and Kagera regions.



MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR HEALTH (MDH)

Provision of Consultancy Services for the Final Evaluation of MDH HIS Project

Background

Management and Development for Health (MDH) is a non-profit Tanzanian public health organization that focuses primarily on public health service, education and research in the United Republic of Tanzania.

From 2015 MDH with funding from The Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has implemented the Health Information System (HIS) Development and Systems Integration Support Project.

The project aimed to strengthen the health information system in order to support the use of patient information for providing quality HIV and other health services. Furthermore, the project aimed at improving retention, improving linkages along the continuum of care, improving the use of available resources, and improving evidence-based decision making across all levels of health care in Tanzania mainland and Zanzibar.

Management and Development for Health (MDH) is seeking an experienced and qualified organization to perform the project final evaluation.

Scope of the Assignment

Prepare and submit a technical proposal to MDH on how the assignment will be undertaken through working on but not limited to the following:

- 1) Create a checklist of the requirements for final evaluation; continuous reports, best practices and compile in one document and dataset.
- 2) Conduct consultative meetings with MDH HIS staff to collect information, review the baseline indicators and data on various systems/components and compare what is existing in our systems, identify data gaps and needs to collect more evaluation data then work on list and tools required to collect additional data to ensure all data necessary for quality and sound final evaluation will be available and clean.
- 3) Develop evaluation protocol and facilitate submission for review and approval by ethical boards both in Tanzania Mainland (NIMR) and Zanzibar (ZAMREC)
- 4) Conduct detailed review of various Health Information systems in Tanzania, including, client level systems for various programs: HIV, RCH, TB, HIV-Laboratory, HIV supply chain, and other electronic medical records systems, National level systems (DHIS2, HFR, mHealth, NHCR) and any other area that will be suggested in addition to these that might provide valuable information.
- 5) Conduct detailed review and interview various stake holders including MOHCDGEC, PORALG, Funders (CDC, USAID, DOD), National HIS Partners, Regional IPs, Sub grantees (UCC, UDSM) etc. involved in the implementation process
- 6) Review all best practices, ensure that they are all properly documented as per acceptable standards and review data appropriateness for inclusion in the final evaluation.
- 7) Review available data sources such as program report, supervision reports, SIMS reports to facilitate establishment of project outputs and outcomes.
- 8) Undertake a random sampling process for facilities (management, data clerks and health care providers), R/CHMTs and Regional IPs who are beneficiaries of the supported systems under this HIS project.
- 9) Sample and visit facilities using these systems (CTC-2, CTC-3, HFR, NHCR, Biometrics). Conduct focus group discussions, key informant interviews and checklist guided observation to document processes and the infrastructure for best practices and challenges /limitations and how they are addressed at site level.
- 10) Review and document the impact of these systems with respect to defined project goals
- 11) Perform data Analysis of data and presentation of findings

Expected Outputs

- 1) Evaluation plan and tools approved by the appropriate ethical review boards
- 2) Progress reports
- 3) Final Evaluation report
- 4) At least 5 case stories and best practices (high impact stories)
- 5) Visual presentations (video clips, photographs and graphs) should be included in the report to depict trends and performance.
- 6) Policy briefs, flies, brochures to facilitate dissemination of evaluation findings

Timeline

MDH expects to finalize selection of the consultant by end of June 2020 and the consultant have to start work by July 1st 2020. It is imperative that applicants have internal resources and capacity to undertake this work and accomplish by September 27, 2020

The Evaluation Criteria and Award shall be based, at a minimum, on the following:

- Understanding the terms of reference
- Overall quality of the proposal, quality of the work and methodology.
- Qualification of experts and experience in the field of the proposed assignment
- List of local experts.

How to apply

Interested and qualified organization/consultants are invited to submit technical proposal (maximum 10 pages, 12-point Times New roman font) on how they will undertake the evaluation. The proposal should specify capacity of lead consultant (CV, Experience) and at least 3 other consultants readily available to rapidly undertake the assignment.

Also include the financial proposal ,in a separate attachment, describing clearly the budget in relation to each proposed activity. Appendices will not count towards the page limit.

Application Deadline

All proposals should be sent through e mail to the address below before 5pm June 10, 2020. Hand delivered proposals will NOT be accepted.

Chief Executive Officer
Management and Development for Health
Mwai Kibaki Rd Plot 802, Mikocheni B
P. O. Box 79810
Dar es Salaam.
mdh@mdh-tz.org

16,139 tonnes of grapes produced during 2018/2019 season, House told

By Henry Mwangonde, Dodoma

SOME 16,139 tonnes of grapes were produced in Tanzania in the last 2018/19 season, of which 11,552 were sold to both domestic and foreign markets, National Assembly heard yesterday.

In a response issued by the Ministry of Agriculture to Special Seats MP, Felister Bura (CCM), the ministry said production of the key commercial crop in the country has risen by 114 per cent from 7,527 tonnes produced in the 2013/14 season. The government's production plan, however, is to reach 22,000 during 2024/2025 season.

Japhet Hasunga, the Minister for Agriculture said during the last season out of 11,552 tonnes, at least 7,551 tonnes were sold to local processing factories for winemaking with 2,205 tonnes being sold on retail market.

"About 1,796 tonnes were exported to neighbouring Kenya," the minister noted.

The minister insisted that the demand for both wine making and table grapes in the local market are relatively high, but authorities will keep on exploring new markets especially in the neighbouring countries.

Hasunga's clarification followed concern from the lawmaker that the grapes produced in Dodoma had no reliable markets.

Bura said the farmers are investing heavily and that the cost of production is high.

She requested the government to highlight strategies to ensure reliable markets for grapes production in the country. Responding, the minister said the government has also been using its diplomatic missions all around the

world to market grape production in Dodoma.

"The government will continue helping to secure markets through other means including the bilateral and trade agreements it signs with foreign countries," he said.

Nonetheless, the minister said the state has been encouraging local investors and farmers to process their products in an attempt to add value to at least 15 tonnes from 2.25 tonnes per acre.

Grapes are widely produced in Dodoma but crop studies show there are potentials for it to be farmed in other regions including Singida, Tabora, Mara, Manyara, Tanga, Iringa and Ruvuma. During the last season, some 2,079 hectares were farmed in Dodoma.



The government will continue helping to secure markets through other means including the bilateral and trade agreements it signs with foreign countries



A Tulia Trust representative (R) pictured on Monday presenting iftar items to Mbeya's Forest Masjid officials for onward distribution to 80 families with special needs. Photo: Correspondent Grace Mwakalinga

By Guardian Reporter

MINISTER for Industry and Trade Innocent Bashungwa has called upon owners of industries in the country to ensure their facilities are insured against fire to ease compensation payment.

Bashungwa issued the call at the weekend while on a visit in Karagwe, Kagera Region after inspecting Amri Amir AL-Habssy coffee curing factory that was gutted down by fire and witnessed the destruction of plant and machinery.

It is claimed that the factory was struck by a lightning bolt on May 7 this year that caused electrical fault.

Bashungwa consoled the factory's director Karim Amri and workers who have now lost their jobs.

Insure your plants against fire, Bashungwa tells factory owners

"When we have factories we do not know what may happen tomorrow or the day after, as no one expects accidents to happen hence I appeal to all factory owners in the country to insure their facilities against fire and other hazards," he said.

Earlier the Factory Manager Daniel Ndayanse enumerated the loss incurred from the fire as 1,328,940,000/- to plant and machinery and 49,275,750/- buildings and infrastructures and added that it had 16 permanent workers and between 800 to 1,000

casual workers.

He said, "our factory was a modern one and we were able to cure 50 to 65 tonnes of coffee each day or 800 to 1,000 bags of cured coffee per day.

The factory owner Amri Karim thanked president John Magufuli for putting in place good industrial investment policies.

He also issued a special request to the minister to push their insurers - Britam Insurance to speed up compensation payment so that they buy new equipment so that the

factory can resume production in July this year.

Due to rampant fire incidents in Karagwe District, the district's Defence and Security Committee under its chairman, Karagwe District Commissioner Godfrey Mheruka decided to establish a fire and rescue services station.

This decision prompted Bashungwa to contribute 200 bags of cement towards its construction and appealed to other development stakeholders to do the same.



Shinyanga regional administrative secretary Albert Msovela (gesturing) briefs Industry and Trade ministry Permanent Secretary Prof. Riziki Shemdoe (3rd-L) in Shinyanga municipality at the weekend on a baking machine made by Small Industries Development Organisation (Sido) technicians in the region. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

TARILI comes up with blended goat species

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo,

Mpwapwa

Mpwapwa centre is implementing a special project on production and dissemination of

THE Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARILI) Mpwapwa centre is implementing a special project on production and dissemination of improved blended goat species to livestock keepers in the country.

The ambitious project which has already benefited hundreds of livestock keepers from across the country, will be a solution to the increasing demand

for goat meat in the country.

Recently, there has emerged a sharp demand and shortage of goat meat in the country's capital-Dodoma. The situation which is attributed to increased human population.

TALIRI Head (Small Ruminant Department) at the Mpwapwa centre, Mary Magonka told The Guardian that produced breeds are being derived from mixtures of different three goat species, which are Boa (South Africa), Kamorai (Pakistan) as well as East African goats.

She added: "The blended goats have been purposefully made for meat and milk productions and are of high

quality".

She observed that since commencement of the project many success stories have been reported among livestock keepers and farmers who have adopted the improved species.

"We have, and still continue receiving good responses from livestock keepers from different regions who are coming here to purchase the improved goat breeds," she stated.

Dr Wilfred Munisi, Director of TARILI Kongwa centre said the initiative was a prestigious economic opportunity which must be utilised bravely by residents in central zone

corridor.

"The blended goat species are commercial oriented as they attain market weight of between 60 and 70 kgs only after reaching 17 months. The goat's milk production capacity reaches 2 litres per day," he noted.

According to him, the institute sells the improved breeds at a patriotic price of 100,000/- per goat.

TALIRI was established by Act No. 4 of 2012 and is charged with the mandate of coordinating and conducting livestock research that will provide technologies to improve and sustain the development of livestock sector in the country.

Imbibe a culture of using bee milk due to its medicinal value, Tanzanians advised

By Guardian Correspondent, Iringa

TANZANIANS have been challenged to inculcate a culture of using bee milk due to its nutritious and medicinal value as it boost the immune system, and counters allergic reactions.

Beekeeping officer at Sao-Hill forest plantation in Mufindi, Said Aboubakar made the call here yesterday when speaking on the World Bee Day, an annual event which is marked on May 20. The day is aimed at drawing the attention of the world's public and political decision-makers to the importance of protecting bees.

Aboubakar described bee milk as a milky secretion produced by worker honey bees, which is known for a wide range of medical benefits, including boosting immune system and countering allergic reactions, helping alzheimer's patients and containing beneficial probiotics. He said that it is also used as a general health tonic for fighting the effects of aging and skin disorders.

Apart from supporting environmental conservation, the expert said that bees make excellent pollinators because most of their life is spent collecting pollen, a source of protein that they feed to their developing offspring.

"Many plants require this kind of pollen distribution, known as cross-pollination, in order to produce viable seeds," he said.

Commenting on Sao Hill Plantation in Mufindi, which is managed by Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFS) he said they harvest three products from beekeeping-honey, beeswax and pollen, "and we're currently working on better ways of harvesting other products such as bee milk."

Beekeeping in the Sao-Hill Plantation started in 2013 with

50 modern beehives and now the number of beehives has reached 1,263.

"The money we get from beekeeping helps in conserving the forest, creating employment opportunities and beekeeping education to people living around the plantation," he said.

In 2013, the plantation had assisted 10 women and youth groups whereby every group was empowered with 10 modern beehives and honey harvesting equipment.

Acting Director of Mafinga Town Council Voster Mgina commended the role played by Sao-Hill Plantation in scaling up education on beekeeping.

Chief conservator of the Sao Hill - Mufindi, Juma Mseti described the plantation as key in promoting Tanzania's industrialisation agenda.

"We are also working hard to establish honey processing plant in the country," he said.



The money we get from beekeeping helps in conserving the forest, creating employment opportunities and beekeeping education to people living around the plantation



Prisons Commissioner General Suleiman Mzee pictured in Dodoma city yesterday speaking at a working session with Prisons officers who have just moved to the department's headquarters in the capital. Photo: Prisons

THRDC appeals for peace, tranquility during forthcoming General Election

By Correspondent Gerald Kitabu

THE Tanzania Human Rights Defenders Coalition (THRDC) has called on the government to ensure peace, tranquility and better environment to allow the public and other stakeholders to participate in the entire electoral process in the forthcoming General Elections.

The coalition has also urged CSOs to demonstrate readiness to continue with their watchdog role and fulfill responsibility of advising the government in various election matters.

THRDC National Coordinator Onesmo Olungurumwa said that the government should show the will to cooperate with Civil Society Organisations to promote national development and democratic processes.

He also urged the CSOs to express interest to observe the elections and to provide voters' education saying this is a continuous process therefore, they should make follow up on their applications in respective authorities.

"CSOs are supposed to cooperate with local and foreign partners to get financial resources for running election related projects such as providing voters education, election observation, issuing reports and other duties according to the law," he said.

"They should continue to work jointly and in unity during this election time, carry out their election duties as it has been done in past, such as research and conducting opinion polls," he added.

He called on the National Electoral Commission and Zanzibar Electoral Commissioner (ZEC) to collaborate

with CSOs to provide voters education during the entire electoral process.

NEC and ZEC should issue permits to CSOs that have applied for permission to provide voters education and election observation as soon as possible in order to let them start carrying out their duties in time, he said.

The electoral commissions are supposed to conduct their affairs transparently and promptly respond to the public about organisations that have been accepted to give voters education and to monitor the election.

To ensure they work in accordance with the law in order to foster freedom, justice and without leaning to ideologies of the political parties.

In another development, Olungurumwa called on the National Electoral Commission to investigate individuals who visited some CSOs office and asked for sensitive information from such organisations without any formal letters issued by relevant government authorities while claiming they were senior officials from the commission.

"We would advise the National Electoral Commission to issue official letters and special identification to those officers, if indeed the exercise is legally conducted to avoid confusion and to guarantee their own safety," he said.

CSOs are important key stakeholders in the elections and other democratic processes. In 2015 for example, THRDC conducted election monitoring and prepared the CSO's Election Barometer Report. Moreover, THRDC has in this year started to monitor CSOs participation in the election from the outset of the 2019 local governments elections.

By Correspondent Mutayoba Arbogast, Bukoba

MP donates PPE to support children, elderly in Kagera

SPECIAL Seats MP, Oliver Semuguruka (CCM) has donated some Covid-19 protective gear to Kagera Regional Commissioner as part of efforts to protect residents from the pandemic.

The protective gears handed over to Kagera RC, Brig Gen Marco Gaguti include hand sanitisers, face masks, buckets and soap.

Semuguruka said the donated items will be distributed to children with disabilities at Mgeza Mseto primary school, Kilima centre for the elderly and officials of the regional fire and rescue force.

She called upon the residents to adhere to Coronavirus preventive measures to control its spread as well as protecting health care workers.

"You should not panic; we can all together combat the disease. President John Magufuli has regularly urged Tanzanians to adhere to preventive measures by health experts and encourage us to continue with our economic activities," she said.

She commended the president for not imposing lockdowns due to the pandemic saying the move is worthwhile.

Receiving the gears, Brigadier General Gaguti said since the pandemic is a threat to both children and adults, it was important to take every precaution against it.

He warned those who are disturbing churchgoers insisting to take stringent legal measures against them. He

underscored the need for people to continue praying so that God saves the nation from the pandemic.

He noted that Coronavirus affects mainly adults with cardio respiratory comorbidities and children with underlying chest conditions.

"One of the best and easiest way to contain the disease is to ensure regular hand washing with running water and soap or by using sanitisers," said the regional commissioner.



Members of the Fire and Rescue Force consult yesterday shortly after putting out a fire which destroyed a transformer standing opposite the Kisutu Resident Magistrate's Court in Dar es Salaam. Photo: Correspondent Miraji Msala

By Guardian Reporter

Msigwa apologises to Kinana

IRINGA Urban legislator, Rev Peter Msigwa has apologised to the former Secretary General of CCM, Abdulrahman Kinana, saying allegations he made against him in the past were baseless.

At various times, and in several places -inside and outside the Parliament, Msigwa made serious allegations against Kinana; claiming that he was involved in illegal activities which included poaching and selling of government trophies.

Speaking to journalists in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Msigwa said all the allegations he made against the former minister and a prominent public figure were not true and that he is "unreservedly" apologizing for his remarks.

"It is obvious that I have wronged Kinana. I have humiliated and slandered him. We have met to talk about this issue and I sincerely apologized. I am happy to tell you today that he has accepted my apology," Msigwa said, adding:

"We are all in agreement that Comrade Kinana is a patriot, a man of integrity and a gentleman who doesn't

deserve the slander and humiliation I have caused him. I will continue to respect him for the rest of my life as he showed courage and magnanimity to me, my family and Tanzanians as a whole."

The High Court of Tanzania, through Civil Case number 108 of 2013, ruled that Msigwa was guilty of defamation and slander against Kinana.

The presiding Judge, Zainab Muruke, ruled that Msigwa prepared and made the wrongful allegations against Kinana; not with facts and evidence but with political motivation to defame and alter his standing in the society, both local and international.

Before taking the matter to court, Kinana through his lawyer, Erick Sikujua Ng'maryo, wrote a demand letter to Msigwa asking him to refute his allegations against him and apologize publicly because they were all lies. Iringa MP refused to do so, saying he was ready to submit all the evidence in court.

But, for three years when the case was at the High Court - Msigwa never provided the evidences and, in fact, did not appear in court even once. The

case was brought before Judge Muruke 84 times across the three years.

Msigwa was initially represented by learned counsel Peter Kibatala who later dropped out of case to leave the case to advocate Hekima Mwasapu who attended the latter stages of the case.

In her written judgment, Judge Muruke showed her disgust at the way political leaders could utter dangerous and damaging allegations against their fellow leaders in the name of doing politics.

"There has been a notion that politics is a dirty game in which opponents could utter reckless, dangerous and defaming statement against each other without care. I say this is unacceptable as leaders have the duty to show good manners.

"In arriving at this judgment, the court has recognised the exemplary and the honourable leadership showed by Kinana who has been; among others, a minister, MP, Speaker of the East African Assembly and the Secretary General of the ruling party. He has a good name and a reputation to keep," said the Judge.

COMMUNICATIONS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SPECIALIST

Position Description

SERA BORA, which in Swahili means Better Policies, is a USAID funded project through Michigan State University and implemented in collaboration with ASPIRES NGO in Tanzania. The 5-year project aims to accelerate adoption of more effective policies and programs, drive broad-based agricultural sector growth, improve household food security and nutrition, and reduce poverty in Tanzania. SERA BORA project has three components, namely:

Policy Research and Data; Policy and Regulatory Reforms; and Institutional Capacity for Policy Architecture.

ASPIRES Tanzania in implementing SERA BORA and works closely with Agriculture Sector Lead Ministries. ASPIRES Tanzania seeks to recruit qualified dynamic Communication and Knowledge Management Specialist (C&NM) who will have the following responsibilities:

a) Technical and Leading Roles

- Support implementation of SERA BORA communication strategy that includes media outreach and social media content creation
- Manage USAID branding and marking plan for SERA BORA Project
- Manage internal communications (memos, brochures, newsletters etc.)
- Draft content (e.g. press releases) for mass media or SERA BORA website
- Lead effort in preparing policy briefs from various research reports
- Organize initiatives and plan events and press conferences
- Liaise with media and handle requests for interviews, statements, etc.
- Acquire and maintain a detailed knowledge of SERA BORA policies, principles and strategies and to keep up to date with relevant developments
- Foster relationships with advocates and key stakeholders of SERA BORA
- Perform "damage control" in cases of bad publicity
- Provide quality assurance for SERA BORA communication materials
- Assist in communication of strategies or messages from senior leadership
- Development of success stories for the project
- Build and maintain relationship with journalists and key external role players

b) Administrative and Supporting Roles

- Liaise with the M&E Specialist in the preparation of monthly, quarterly, annual and end of project reports
- Liaise with the M&E Specialist in reviewing various internal documents including the Annual Work Plan; Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning Plan; and similar documents
- Liaise with M&E Specialist in ensuring quality control of various project documents

Requirements (Knowledge and Skills)

- Proven experience of at least 5 years as communications specialist in development projects
- Experience in digital communications including managing content for organizations' website and social media
- Experience in copywriting and editing
- Working knowledge of MS Office; photo and video-editing software is an asset
- Excellent communication (oral and written) and presentation skills
- Outstanding organizational and planning abilities
- Proficient command of English

Interested individuals must submit their CV, cover letter, sample work and three references, referencing the position in the subject line to aspiretanzania@yahoo.com.

Deadline to receive complete applications is 31st May 2020, 11:59 p.m local time.

We should develop horticultural sector to open more opportunities for farmers

HORTICULTURE has been defined as the agriculture of plants, mainly for food, materials, comfort and beauty for decoration. According to American horticulturist Liberty Hyde Bailey, Horticulture is the growing of flowers, fruits and vegetables, and of plants for ornament and fancy. A more precise definition can be given the cultivation, processing, and sale of fruits, nuts, vegetables, and ornamental plants as well as many additional services. It also includes plant conservation, landscape restoration and soil management.

Govt is set out to revive, directly export horticultural produce. A strategy to revive the country's horticultural industry with direct export of flowers, fruits and spices produced in the country will soon be unveiled.

It seeks to change the current situation whereby most horticultural produce from Kilimanjaro and Arusha regions is sent abroad via Kenya and counted as belonging to the neighbouring country.

Agriculture minister Japhet Hasunga said recently that in the strategy, the government will review various levies to attract cargo services of international airlines to land at the Kilimanjaro International Airport, the Julius Nyerere International Airport, along with Songwe and Mwanza airports.

Hasunga spoke when he joined up with various private institutions to view products of the Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA) at KIA, the second horticultural consignment destined for European markets.

"There is a long time problem faced by Tanzania's business people especially producers of horticultural products in the export of their products through Kenya. It is a problem that is now being eased after TAHA chartered a cargo plane to airlift the products," he said.

"The harm was that some of our products were treated as originating in Kenya, while they originate in Tanzania. Therefore we have made these efforts to ensure we have a plane

that flies direct, pick the products and directly fly back to Europe.

"This is the first time we are directly accessing the European market. An Ethiopian Airways plane will be coming at least three times per week to airlift our products to Europe. This is a great opportunity for a country like ours, as this long time challenge is being solved."

Hasunga said these achievements are a result of great efforts by TAHA in collaboration with the ministry and other stakeholders.

The ministry continues discussions with Emirates Airlines to also chip in airlifting horticultural products to Arab countries, he further noted.

"The third issue....as you all know, in the past our country used to produce flowers in abundance as well as fruits, and we had big firms that were engaged in the cultivation thereof especially in Kilimanjaro and Arusha regions. Many of them were faced with huge foreign debts and hence they had to close business," he said.

Due to the problem, the government has decided to take deliberate steps to ensure all those firms should come back and continue with what they have been doing, he stated.

The fourth issue that will be worked upon by the government is to review levies that were seen as a hindrance to the growth of the horticultural sector.

"Trade is competition, airlines compete with each other and stakeholders do that as well. When Kenya heard that we have acquired a plane, they started reviewing some of the issues, hence we as government we will also review various levies as outlined by TAHA so that our products and our airports become more attractive to foreign dealers," he specified.

The fifth issue is to develop the horticultural sector to open more opportunities for farmers, youth, women and elders to invest in commercial horticulture as the country now has a reliable market for the produce.

An informed public is the most effective in countering financial crime threats

FINANCIAL crime is crime committed against property, involving the unlawful conversion of the ownership of property belonging to one person to one's own personal use and benefit. Financial crimes may involve fraud (cheque fraud, credit card fraud, mortgage fraud, medical fraud, corporate fraud, securities fraud including insider trading, bank fraud, insurance fraud, market manipulation, payment (point of sale) fraud, health care fraud; theft; scams or confidence tricks; tax evasion; bribery; sedition; embezzlement; identity theft; money laundering; and forgery and counterfeiting, including the production of counterfeit money and consumer goods.

Financial crimes may involve additional criminal acts, such as computer crime and elder abuse, even violent crimes such as robbery, armed robbery or murder. Financial crimes may be carried out by individuals, corporations, or by organised crime groups. Victims may include individuals, corporations, governments, and entire economies.

For most countries, money laundering and terrorist financing raise significant issues with regard to prevention, detection and prosecution. Sophisticated techniques used to launder money and finance terrorism add to the complexity of these issues. Such sophisticated techniques may involve different types of financial institutions. Money laundering is, however, a fundamentally simple concept. It is the process by which proceeds from a criminal activity are disguised to conceal their true origin. Basically, money laundering involves

the proceeds of criminally derived property rather than the property itself.

Recently Refinitiv has released its Financial crime in sub-Saharan Africa Report 2020, which highlights several noteworthy compliance trends.

Responses show a high level of awareness of financial crime and a desire to upgrade compliance systems. The survey highlights that the crime threat continues to evolve, with techniques used by organised crime groups and fraudsters becoming more diverse and sophisticated.

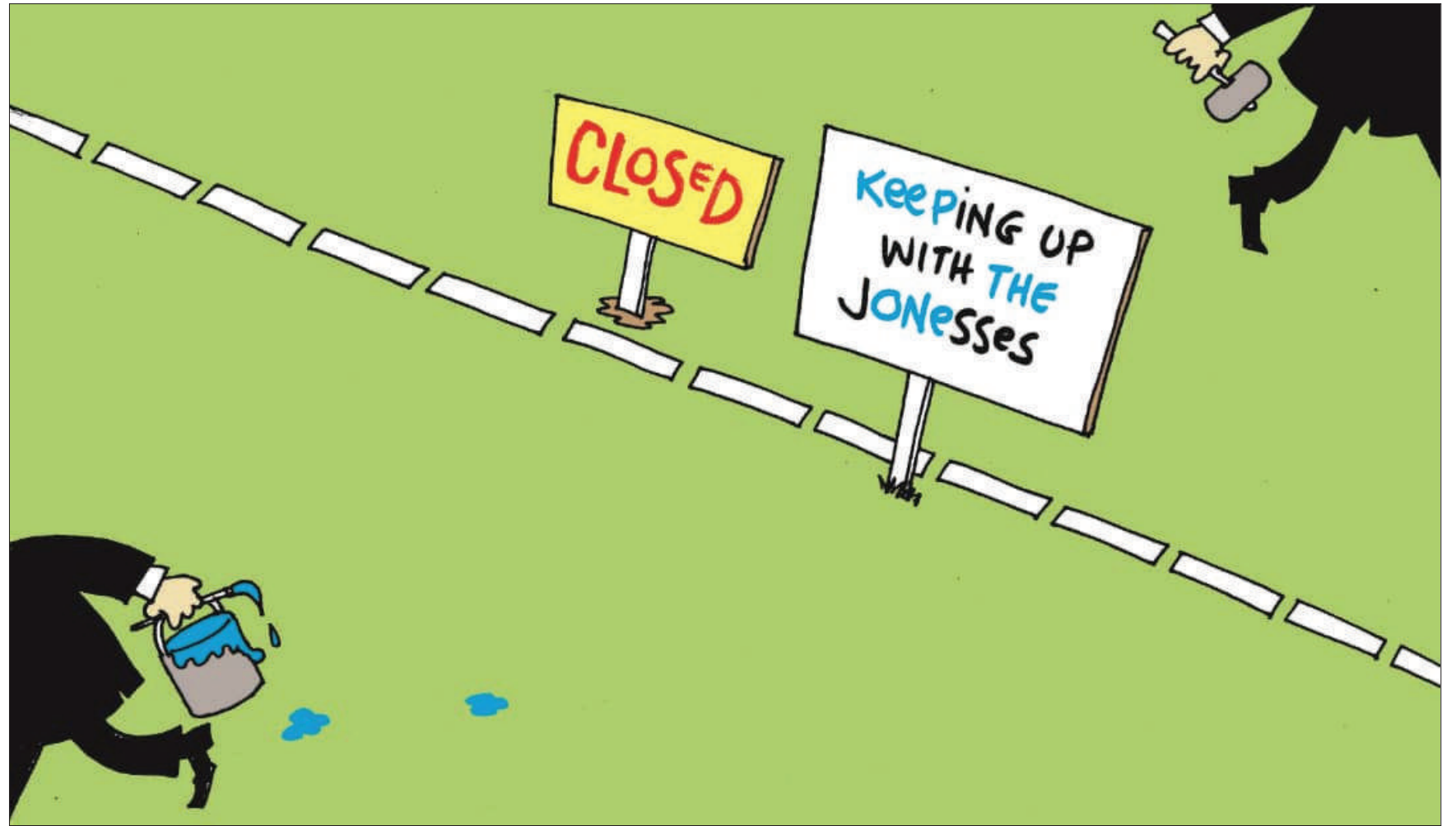
Africa is at the forefront of embracing mobile technology and is host to more than half the world's mobile money services. With this increased mobile access comes the threat of identity theft and money-laundering. In response, digital identity technologies are quickly evolving to meet this need.

Ethiopia and Tunisia have been removed, but four African nations are now on a financial crimes watch list issued by the European Union.

Botswana, Ghana, Mauritius and Zimbabwe are identified as high-risk countries for money laundering and the potential for funding terrorism, according to an EU statement. The additions are meant to bring the EU effort to prevent financial crimes in line with the work of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), a global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog group that also lists Uganda as a country of concern.

"We need to put an end to dirty money infiltrating our financial system," said Valdis Dombrovskis, the EU executive vice-president for economic affairs, as he introduced a comprehensive anti-money laundering plan.

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Gender and COVID-19: Where can research help?

By Jemimah Njuki

NAIROBI, Apr 10 2020 (IPS) - As of April 8, there have been 1.5 million reported cases of coronavirus and over 83,000 deaths. Most of these deaths are of men. Italy, for example, has so far had 71 percent of all case deaths attributed to men while Spain, another major global hotspot, has seen 65 percent of all deaths being men.

While the mortality rates for men are higher, women are disproportionately affected by the social and economic impacts of the pandemic. Indeed, there is evidence that pandemics affect men and women in different ways, and COVID-19 is no different.

Women comprise seven out of ten health and social care workers and contribute US\$ 3 trillion annually to global health, half in the form of unpaid care work. Health workers continue to be exposed to the virus due to lack of basic protective equipment.

Women are facing higher risks of infection compared to men due to their large numbers in the health sector. The health and social sector, with its 234 million workers, is one of the biggest and fastest growing employers in the world, particularly of women.

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Historically, aid to developing nations by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has typically been marred by strangling economic policies and structural adjustment programmes. In a teleconference, Minister of Finance Tito Mboweni ruled out IMF help with strings attached, saying South Africa was not looking for budget support but rather Covid-19-specific packages.

However, as the world faces the unprecedented financial impact of the pandemic, the argument against approaching the IMF needs to be carefully considered. The investor community would probably welcome some conditionality imposed by the IMF, given the government's well-publicised difficulties in implementing

basic protective equipment.

The care work burden which disproportionality falls on women has increased with the pandemic. In addition to women making up most of health-care workers, women are overwhelmingly the primary caretakers in their families.

As schools have closed, as COVID-19 measures, which require services and activities mainly done by women, such as requirement for water, women have found themselves with a bigger workload. Gender based violence has increased as families find themselves in lockdowns with low economic security and feeling of helplessness. For example in France, domestic violence cases went up by 30% during the lockdown, while calls to the domestic violence line in Argentina went up by 25%.

New research has shown the multiple pathways between pandemics and gender based violence. Recently, UN chief António Guterres called for measures to address a "horrifying global surge in domestic violence" directed towards women and girls linked to lockdowns.

The economic impact of COVID-19 has hit women harder, as more women work in low-paying, insecure and informal jobs. Disruptions, including movement restrictions, are likely to compromise women's ability to make a living and meet their families' basic needs, and access much needed sexual and reproductive health and maternal health services.

basic protective equipment

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In addition to understanding these kinds of gender differences at times of pandemics like COVID-19, research can play a much more long-term role.

Indeed, it can play a critical part in documenting and studying the long-term impacts of the pandemic and suggesting ways to ensure that systems protect women and girls during pandemics. This is how.

First, research can help understand, test and scale interventions that build the economic and social resilience of women and girls, as well as provide evidence on how programs can be designed to cope with and minimise the gendered impacts of future pandemics.

For example, unconditional and conditional cash transfers that aim to shift power imbalances by targeting women are likely to be important design features for reducing gender based intimate partner violence. While there have been studies out of pandemics, research during pandemics can help understand the impacts and potential adaptations of these programs.

Second, while the focus with COVID-19 has been on the negative impacts on women's workloads and women's rights, pandemics can bring much desired shifts in gender roles and responsibilities.

The key question is how to sustain these changes long after the pandemic has passed. Understanding how short-term pandemic-induced changes in gender roles and responsibilities can be sustained over a long time can generate

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evidence on pathways to equitable role sharing within households.

For example, the Spanish flu disproportionately affected young men, which in combination with World War I, created a labor shortage gap that was filled by women, entrenching women's right to work.

Third, research can provide insights that inform a more gender sensitive and effective response to epidemics. While there has been a focus on the role of social sciences in understanding and managing pandemics, there has not been enough application of a gender lens to this research.

For example, understanding how men and will be affected in different ways before pandemics occur, how proposed management and response measures will affect them and can be designed to have positive outcomes, and even understanding the power dynamics and how they will affect response are all key areas of research.

And finally, research and researchers can play a role in ensuring the collection and analysis of age and sex disaggregated data both so that the needs and realities of men and boys, women and girls women's do not fall through the cracks.

As we address the very immediate needs of different groups in the pandemic, let us also invest in long term gender research that ensures there is no disproportionate impact of pandemics, especially on women and girls and that their voices are heard.

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The many coronavirus conspiracy theories

By Jon Allsop

ON February 2, more than a month before the World Health Organisation deemed the spread of Covid-19 a pandemic, it declared that the virus had led to a "massive infodemic".

WHO observed "an overabundance of information - some accurate and some not - that makes it hard for people to find trustworthy sources and reliable guidance when they need it".

A few months later, the infodemic has only intensified. Conspiracy theories are sloshing around the internet, alleging, among other wild claims, that China deliberately engineered the virus in a lab, that the US military implanted the virus in China, that Bill Gates wants to use vaccination to microchip the world's population, and that the virus is spreading via 5G technology.

Often, right-wing media outlets have boosted the signal; last week, for example, One America News Network, an outlet beloved of Trump, implicated Gates, Hungarian-American billionaire investor and philanthropist George Soros, and the Clintons in a "globalist conspiracy to establish sweeping population control".

Sometimes, the White House has been the booster. We all remember bleachgate.

Early this month, a viral YouTube video brought some of these strands together. The video - a clip from a "documentary" called Plandemic - starred Dr Judy Mikovits, a discredited scientist who claims, among other things, that wearing a face mask can actively make you sick, and that Dr Anthony Fauci, the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, suppressed her work on the harms of vaccines. (There is zero evidence for any of this.)

The video was promoted aggressively by anti-vaccination activists and by adherents of QAnon, a convoluted deep-state conspiracy theory; the Epoch Times, a right-wing media outlet with ties to Falun Gong, also boosted Mikovits's message.

This week, Davey Alba, of the New York Times, reported that mentions of Mikovits on social media and TV have "spiked to as high as 14,000 a day".

Facebook and YouTube eventually removed the video, but not before it reached millions of users. Erin Gallagher, a social-media researcher who charted the video's spread, concluded that "both platforms were instrumental in spreading viral medical misinformation".

According to Anna Merlan, of VICE, Zach Vorhies, a former YouTube and Google staffer who now has ties to QAnon and anti-vaxxers, helped orchestrate the video's virality.

The Mikovits video reached at least eight million people, and it may only be a small taste of conspiracies to come. Kevin Roose, who covers technology for the Times, writes that he was watching the clip from Plandemic when a "terrifying thought" struck him: "What if we get

a Covid-19 vaccine and half the country refuses to take it?"

Roose sees a number of reasons for a future COVID vaccine to play into the hands of propagandists - it'll likely have been fast-tracked, adding rocket fuel to existing vaccine-safety fears; it'll likely be mandatory, at least for certain groups, boosting anger about perceived government overreach; and anti-vaxx boogymen, including Gates and the WHO, may end up being closely involved in its development.

The anti-vax movement, Roose writes, is highly organised and media savvy. By contrast, the messaging of authoritative official health sources can be clunky and poorly suited to online discourse.

As Renée DiResta, a researcher with the Stanford Internet Observatory, wrote in a recent column for The Atlantic: "All too often, the people responsible for protecting the public do not appear to understand how information moves in the internet era."

The pandemic is particularly fertile ground for conspiracists. "There is not, as yet, an authoritative, established scientific consensus about the virus and its spread, leaving wide informational gaps for nonsense to fill.

And the fact that the coronavirus is, as I wrote in March, an "everything story", affecting every single aspect of our lives, lends itself conveniently to a conspiracist's habit of thinking in terms of sweeping theories with unifying explanatory power.

The Atlantic has just launched "Shadowland", a series of pieces, on themes broader than the coronavirus, examining America's vulnerability to paranoid thinking. In an introductory note, Jeffrey Goldberg, The Atlantic's editor in chief, writes that "the conspiracy theorists are winning". That, he believes, poses an "existential threat".

Deep, insightful coverage of our poisoned information ecosystem is welcome. Still, conspiracy theories are highly fraught terrain for the reality-based press. By debunking theories, we risk reinforcing their appeal, and furthering their spread.

"Throw a fact check at a subversion myth, and it will transform into proof for believers," Whitney Phillips wrote for this magazine's recent disinformation-themed issue, adding: "After all, trying to disprove the existence of a Satanic plot is exactly what a Satanist would do."

Journalists must decide, on a case-by-case basis and in real time, which theories are widespread - and harmful - enough to demand rectification, and the best way to go about doing that. It isn't an easy task. It's especially hard when lives are on the line.

Below, more on the coronavirus, including that Rick Bright, a whistleblower who says he was ousted from a top federal health job for pushing back on Trump's advocacy of unproven coronavirus drugs, has testified (in person) before a House subcommittee.



Bright warned lawmakers that the country faces "the darkest winter in modern history" if it doesn't improve its handling of the pandemic. Addressing reporters at the White House, Trump and his press secretary, Kayleigh McEnany, blasted Bright, and boasted about the administration's preparedness.

On Wednesday, the LA Times reported that the FBI seized the cellphone of Senator Richard Burr, a Republican of North Carolina. The bureau is investigating claims that Burr, who chairs the Senate Intelligence Committee, traded stocks based on private briefings he received before the pandemic hammered the US economy.

Burr insists that he acted based on publicly available news reports out of Asia; still, he has stepped back as Senate Intelligence chair while the FBI investigates him.

At least three other senators - James Inhofe, Kelly Loeffler, and Dianne Feinstein - have also faced scrutiny related to recent stock trades. All three deny wrongdoing.

In March, CJR's Lauren Harris spoke with Robert Faturechi of ProPublica and Lachlan Markay of the Daily Beast, who were the first to report on the trades of Burr and Loeffler, respectively.

Citing the economic pressure of the pandemic, Quartz has just laid off around 80 staffers, slashed executive pay and moved to permanently shutter its physical offices in London, San Francisco, Hong Kong and Washington, DC.

The site is also trying to reduce its rent in New York. The union representing Quartz staffers said the layoffs had an "outsized impact" on its members.

Elsewhere, Matt McKinney reports for the Minneapolis Star Tribune that the pandemic has caused a wave of closures among Minnesota newspapers. Owen

Van Essen, a media-industry analyst, told McKinney that he expects up to 300 weeklies nationwide to close before the year is out.

For the Washington Post, Ben Strauss reports that in the absence of live sports, sports reporters have been hit particularly hard by layoffs and furloughs of late. Many fear that the pandemic will permanently reshape the sports beat.

Paul Sullivan, a sports columnist at the Chicago Tribune, who is about to go on furlough, was especially pessimistic - doubting whether sports would be back.

For CJR, Lauren Markham reports that newsrooms based in California were better prepared than most for the disruption caused by the pandemic because of the state's history of earthquakes, wildfires and power outages.

"Most California newsrooms have some form of disaster plan at the ready," Markham wrote.

Amazon has meanwhile announced that it is collaborating with Vogue and the Council of Fashion Designers of America to launch "Common Threads: Vogue x Amazon Fashion," a storefront that will seek to help independent high-end designers weather the downturn caused by the pandemic.

In Russia, Meduza, an independent news site, reports that officials have "fiddled statistics" to keep the country's Covid-19 death count down.

In Brazil, volunteer journalists are working to memorialise Covid-19 victims via a collaborative project called "Inumeráveis" ("Innumerable").

The Atlantic, which has been lauded for its Covid-19 coverage, added 70,000 new subscribers across March and April, while Reuters has reportedly hosted a "virtual singalong" for its employees.

-Columbia Journalism Review

How well prepared is US for the war on Covid-19 towards reopening? (1)

By Ed Yong

WHAT a difference a few months can make! In January, the United States watched as the new coronavirus blazed through China and reached American shores.

In February, hindered by an unexpected failure to roll out diagnostic tests and an administration that had denuded itself of scientific expertise, the nation sat largely idle while the pandemic spread within its borders.

In March, as the virus launched several simultaneous assaults on a perilously stretched-thin health-care system, America finally spluttered into action, frantically closing offices, schools and public spaces in a bid to cut off chains of transmission.

From April, as viral fevers surged through American hospitals and cabin fever grew in American homes, the US has cemented itself as the new centre of the pandemic - the country that should have been more prepared than any other; but that now has the worst Covid-19 outbreak in the world.

What will May bring? Or June? What happens as this seemingly interminable spring rolls into a precarious summer? When will things go back to normal?

The options are limited. Early inaction left the US with too many new cases, and just one recourse: press a societal pause button to buy enough time for beleaguered hospitals to steel themselves for a sharp influx in patients.

This physical-distancing strategy is working, but at such an economic cost that it can't be sustained indefinitely. When restrictions relax, as they were set to do on April 30, the coronavirus will likely have surged back, as it is now doing in Singapore, China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and other Asian states that had briefly restrained it.

As I wrote last month, the only viable endgame is to play whack-a-mole with the coronavirus, suppressing it until a vaccine can be produced. With luck, that will take 18 to 24 months. During that time, new outbreaks will probably arise.

Much about that period is unclear, but the dozens of experts whom I have interviewed agree that life as most people knew it cannot fully return. "I think people haven't understood that this isn't about the next couple of weeks. This is about the next two years," said Michael Osterholm, an infectious disease epidemiologist at the University of Minnesota.

The pandemic is not a hurricane or a wildfire. It is not comparable to Pearl Harbour or 9/11. Such disasters are confined in time and space. The SARS-CoV-2 virus will linger through the year and across the world.

"Everyone wants to know when this will end," said Devi Sridhar, a public health expert at the University of Edinburgh, adding: "That's not the right question. The right question is: How do we continue?"

I. Reopening

A lockdown is a measure of last resort, to be used only when a virus is spreading so rapidly that it cannot be controlled through other means. Having deployed that measure, albeit unevenly, the US has now bought itself some time.

It can use that time to address its lack of tests and medical supplies, and find less economically devastating ways of controlling Covid-19. When sufficiently braced, states could begin lifting their sweeping restrictions and

focus on finding and helping people who are actually infected.

But the conditions for making that switch are not clear. "We've never faced a pandemic like this before in modern times, so we're going to have to be flexible. There's no real playbook," said Caitlin Rivers of the Johns Hopkins Centre for Health Security.

The White House seems to be relying heavily on one mathematical model from the University of Washington that, in its first incarnation, was criticised for failing to accurately predict death rates even a day or two out.

While traditional models simulate how a disease spreads through virtual communities, this one simply made predictions based on death numbers in the US and death rates in other countries.

"When we make weather predictions or plan for hurricanes, we don't just plan based on one thing," said Natalie Dean, a statistician at the University of Florida. Alternative models are being built but, in the meantime, it's hard to accurately forecast how long the current phase of the pandemic will last.

Absent any certainty, one group of health experts led by Ezekiel Emanuel, an oncologist and former adviser to the Obama administration, argues that stay-at-home orders must continue until at least May 20.

Another team, led by Scott Gottlieb, a former US Food and Drug Administration commissioner, suggests that states should relax their restrictions only after new case counts have fallen for 14 consecutive days.

Currently, the US is still averaging about 30,000 new confirmed cases every day. "My sense is that we haven't turned the corner," said Rivers, who is a co-author on Gottlieb's road map.

Both groups agree that before relaxing the guidelines on social distancing the US urgently needs to expand its ability to test for the coronavirus and to shore up hospitals with sufficient supplies.

These recommendations are sensible, but they hinge on the expectation that the country can recover the ground it lost owing to its early inaction. It might not be able to.

For example, with help from private companies and academic institutions, the US is certainly testing more people than it was before. Over the past week, about 145,000 people have been tested every day, according to the Covid Tracking Project, a volunteer collaboration spearheaded by The Atlantic.

Those numbers look to rise even further, thanks to a new, rapid test from Abbott Laboratories that can deliver results in less than 15 minutes. But as testing capacity has grown, so has the pandemic.

As my colleagues Robinson Meyer and Alexis Madrigal have reported, private labs have taken on more orders than they can fulfil, and are experiencing huge backlogs. Demand for tests has ballooned, fuelled by a rise in actual infections and the fact that President Donald Trump keeps wrongly assuring the public that testing is no longer a problem.

"The net gain just hasn't been there," said Kelly Wroblewski of the Association of Public Health Laboratories.

Compounding these issues, testing companies all rely on the same chemical ingredients, which were already running low and are becoming even scarcer as the pandemic spreads.

Continues tomorrow

COVID-19 has blown away myth about 'first' and 'third' world competence

JOHANNESBURG

ONE of the planet's - and Africa's - deepest prejudices is being demolished by the way countries handle COVID-19.

For as long as any of us remember, everyone "knew" that "First World" countries - in effect, Western Europe and North America - were much better at providing their citizens with a good life than the poor and incapable states of the "Third World". "First World" has become shorthand for competence, sophistication and the highest political and economic standards.

So deep-rooted is this that even critics of the "First World" usually accept it. They might argue that it became that way by exploiting the rest of the world or that it is not morally or culturally superior. But they never question that it knows how to offer (some) people a better material life. Africans and others in the "Third World" often aspire to become like the "First World" - and to live in it, because that means living better.

For Anglophone Africans, it is doubly interesting that two of the greatest failures in handling COVID-19 are the former coloniser, Britain, and the English-speaking superpower, the United States of America.

So we should have expected the state-of-the-art health systems of the "First World", spurred on by their aware and empowered citizens, to handle COVID-19 with relative ease, leaving the rest of the planet to endure the horror of buckling health systems and mass graves.

We have seen precisely the opposite.

Fatal errors

"First World" is often code for countries run by Europeans or people of European descent; some of the worst health performers on the globe in recent weeks have been "First World". For Anglophone Africans, it

is doubly interesting that two of the greatest failures in handling COVID-19 are the former coloniser, Britain, and the English-speaking superpower, the United States of America.

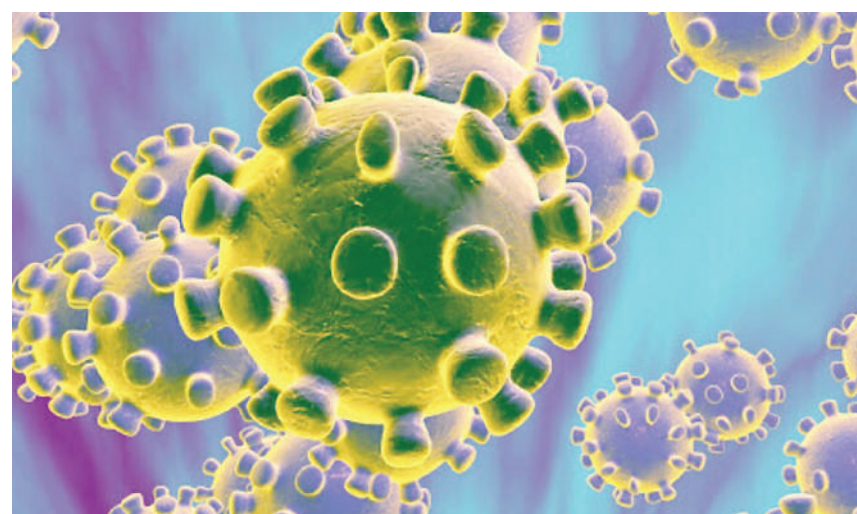
Both countries' national governments have made just about every possible mistake in tackling COVID-19.

They ignored the threat. When they were forced to act, they sent mixed signals to citizens which encouraged many to act in ways which spread the infection. Neither did anything like the testing needed to control the virus. Both failed to equip their hospitals and health workers with the equipment they needed, triggering many avoidable deaths.

The failure was political. The US is the only rich country with no national health system. An attempt by former president Barack Obama to extend affordable care was watered down by right-wing resistance, then further gutted by the current president and his party. Britain's much-loved National Health Service has been weakened by spending cuts. Both governments failed to fight the virus in time because they had other priorities.

And yet, in Britain, the government's popularity ratings are sky high and it is expected to win the next election comfortably. The US president is behind in the polls but the contest is close enough to make his re-election a real possibility. Can there be anything more typically "Third World" than citizens supporting a government whose actions cost thousands of lives?

Western European countries such as Spain, Italy and Africa's other wholesale coloniser, France, also battled to contain the virus. Some European countries have coped reasonably well, as have some run by the descendants of Europeans such as New Zealand and Australia. But the star performers are not in the historical "First World".



Effective responses

The most effective response was probably South Korea's, followed by other East Asian states and territories. This is partly because they are used to dealing with coronavirus outbreaks. But it is also because they learned from experience: South Korea's success is due to very effective testing and tracing of infected people. Whatever the reason, it is East Asia, not "the West", which has done what the "First World" is expected to do.

Some would reply that East Asia is now "First World". So, it is still superior, it has simply changed its address. This is debatable. But, even if it is accepted, some places have contained the virus in distinctly "Third World" conditions.

Kerala was the first Indian state to encounter the virus but has kept deaths

down to three. It had largely curbed COVID-19 but is now dealing with nearly 200 cases, all people arriving from other parts of India. Judging by its record so far, it will contain this outbreak too.

Kerala, too, has learnt from handling previous epidemics. It also has a strong health system. But one of its key tools is citizen participation: it has worked with neighbourhood watches and citizen volunteers to track the contacts of infected people. Students were recruited to build kiosks at which citizens were tested. Kerala also had the capacity to ensure that all children entitled to school meals received them after schools were closed: non-governmental organisations were mostly responsible, emphasising the partnership between the government and citizens.

AGENCIES

What to watch at China's 'two sessions' in crucial year

BEIJING

CHINA'S top legislature and political advisory body will hold annual sessions this week, more than two months after this key political event was postponed due to the COVID-19 epidemic.

The world will watch how China charts the course for a crucial year to build a moderately prosperous society in all respects and achieve its development goals, while effectively warding off coronavirus risks.

The following are some key topics expected at the sessions of the National People's Congress (NPC) and the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC).

REGULAR EPIDEMIC CONTROL

Public health is expected to be a hot topic during the "two sessions," with experience and lessons derived from combating COVID-19 to be discussed.

Hu Yu, a national political advisor and president of the Union Hospital in Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei Province, said the participants are expected to conduct in-depth discussions on how to fix the shortcomings in the country's major epidemic prevention and control mechanisms and the national public health system.

Through arduous efforts, China has achieved decisive results in the fight against COVID-19 to protect hard-hit Hubei and its capital city Wuhan. The nation has also made major strategic strides in curbing the spread of the virus.

As of Sunday, the overall confirmed cases on the mainland reached 82,954, including 82 patients who were still being treated and 78,238 people who had been discharged after recovery. Altogether 4,634 people had died of the disease.

National lawmakers and political advisors will discuss how to strive for good performances in all areas of economic and social development while implementing regular epidemic prevention and control measures.

GROWTH WITHIN REACH

This coming Friday, Premier Li Keqiang is expected to deliver a tone-setting government work report to the NPC for deliberation and approval which normally includes the country's economic targets for the year.

The wording of the targets,

either numerically or descriptively, will be more closely watched than previous years as it will offer a glimpse into how the world's second-largest economy is handling the fallout of the dicey COVID-19 epidemic.

In 2019, China reported a GDP growth of 6.1 percent, meeting the range target of 6-6.5 percent. Analysts expect this year's target will continue to be a feasible one, and with a slew of stronger counter-cyclical measures, China could achieve growth faster than that of all other major economies.

In the lead up to this year's "two sessions," the Chinese leadership has on different occasions said that the country will strive to achieve this year's economic and social development goals.

POVERTY ALLEVIATION

China is in the final push to achieve the target of poverty eradication as the nation is entering the home stretch in realizing its first centenary goal of building a moderately prosperous society in all respects in 2020.

Since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in late 2012, the country has achieved significant progress in poverty reduction, with over 93 million rural people lifted out of poverty over seven years.

There were still 5.51 million impoverished people by the end of last year. COVID-19 added to challenges but with only about half a year left, it is unlikely to disrupt the poverty eradication targets.

Special attention should be paid to ensuring the remaining poor people, most of whom are the elderly, the minors and those grappling with serious illnesses or disabilities, have access to social assistance, said Vice Minister of Civil Affairs Tang Chengpei.

The "two sessions" will pool the wisdom of national legislators and political advisors on how to fulfill the mission of eradicating absolute poverty and keep those who have been lifted out of poverty from returning to poverty.

JOB FIRST

The government work report will normally set goals for key economic indicators, including jobs, inflation and fiscal deficit, and employment is expected to consistently top the agenda. Given the challenges ahead in 2020, a stable job market will be a linchpin



Medical staff from Wuhan No.1 Hospital gesture to bid farewell to members of a medical assistance team from Guangdong Province before their departure in Wuhan, central China's Hubei Province, March 23, 2020. (Xinhua)

of enhancing macro-control to keep sound economic fundamentals.

Recent official data showed China's job market remained generally stable yet still under pressure in April, with the surveyed unemployment rate in urban areas standing at 6 percent, above the 2019 target of around 5.5 percent.

For a nation of 1.4 billion people, the government has pledged every effort to prevent massive lay-offs by using a combination of fiscal, monetary, social insurance and pro-employment policies. The upcoming "two sessions" are expected to further outline ways and means to ensure employment and people's livelihood.

Qu Hongbin, chief China economist at HSBC, said in a research note that further significant policies, including stimulus plans, will be in the pipeline to support epidemic-hit micro- and small companies and medium-size companies, self-employed businesses and export enterprises, which employ the majority of China's workforce.

CIVIL CODE

Lawmakers this year will deliberate a draft civil code, mov-

ing closer to Chinese people's decades-long aspiration of having such a basic civil law.

Consisting of general provisions and six parts on property, contracts, personality rights, marriage and family, inheritance and torts liability, the

draft has systematically integrated existing civil laws and regulations and modified them to adapt to new realities.

The decision to compile this civil code was announced in October 2014. According to the legislative plan, codi-

fication is expected to be concluded this year. Once adopted, the civil code will greatly boost the modernization of China's system and capacity for governance, said Wang Yi, dean of the law school at Renmin University of China.

Xinhua



An employer (L) communicates with a job seeker at a job fair in Haikou, south China's Hainan Province, April 18, 2020. (Xinhua)

FAO warns of 'catastrophic' food situation in Yemen

DUBAI / ADEN

YEMEN, already pushed to the brink of famine by a five-year war, could see a "catastrophic" food security situation due to the coronavirus pandemic and lower remittances from the Gulf, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) said yesterday.

The conflict between a Saudi-led coalition and the Iran-aligned Houthi movement has caused what the United Nations describes as the world's largest humanitarian crisis.

Some 80% of Yemen's population are reliant on aid and millions face hunger.

"The health system was already under heavy stress and will now be overwhelmed if COVID-19 continues to spread and in addition it will affect the movement of people and the movement of goods," Abdessalam Ould Ahmed, the FAO's assistant director-general and regional representative for the Near East and North Africa, told Reuters.

"That situation could be really catastrophic if all the elements of worst case scenarios come to be but let's hope not and the UN are working on avoiding that."

Yemen, alongside Syria and Sudan, is one of the most vulnerable states in the Middle East in terms of food security.

Lockdowns to prevent the spread of the virus are likely to impact humanitarian supply chains keeping a large part of the population fed, the UN agency said in a report on Monday.

Yemen has been mired in violence since the coalition intervened in 2015 against the Houthi group that ousted the Saudi-backed government in the capital, Sanaa, forcing it to rebase in the south.

The internationally recognized government has reported 128 COVID-19 infections with 20 deaths in areas under its control. The Houthis, who control most large urban centres, have announced four cases with one death, both in Sanaa.

The Saudi-backed government accused the Houthis of covering up a big outbreak and called for urgent global assistance to help Yemen's



Yemenis, some wearing protective mask, shop at a street market in the Crater district of Yemen's southern coastal city of Aden on Sunday, amid fears that coronavirus is spreading unhindered in the Yemeni city. (AFP)

health sector deal with the coronavirus.

"Reports on the ground indicate a large number of coronavirus cases in areas under the Houthis' control and hiding this information is completely unacceptable," Yemeni Minister of Local Administration Abdul Raqib Fath told a news conference on Sunday.

The Houthi movement, which ousted the internationally recognized government from Sanaa in late 2014, denies the charges.

The Aden-based government also said Yemen urgently needed financial assistance and protective

gear for health workers in addition to ventilators, polymerase chain reaction (PCR) and swab test equipment.

Circulating undetected

The World Health Organization said last Monday the virus was circulating undetected in Yemen, increasing the likelihood of a devastating outbreak among a malnourished population that would overwhelm a shattered health system with limited testing capacity.

The WHO says it has been advising local authori-

ties throughout Yemen, where testing capacity is limited, to report cases in order to secure resources, but that the decision to do so rests with a country's leaders.

Sources had told Reuters that both sides have not fully disclosed the extent of the pandemic in a country already plagued by other diseases.

There are currently 15.9 million Yemenis classified as food insecure out of a population of some 28 million.

The FAO does not currently have an estimate as to how much bigger that number could get if the disease continues to spread but it continues to monitor the situation.

The United States said on May 6 it would provide US\$225 million to the World Food Programme (WFP) for Yemen, including for reduced operations in the north.

The WFP had said it would halve aid in Houthi-held areas from mid-April over donor concerns that the group is hindering aid deliveries, a charge it denies.

The FAO said Yemen, the poorest Arabian Peninsula nation, would also be hit by an expected decline in remittances from Yemenis in Gulf countries, which amounted to US\$3.8 billion in 2019.

"This is a significant source of income for the country that may be considerably reduced," Ould Ahmed said.

Many foreign workers in the energy-producing region have lost jobs, been put on unpaid leave or had salaries cut due to the coronavirus and low oil prices.

"Without peace we will continue to struggle with food insecurity and there will be no long term recovery," FAO said.

The UN envoy to Yemen said on Thursday that "significant progress" has been made toward cementing a temporary truce prompted by the coronavirus pandemic and to pave the way for a resumption of stalled peace talks.

Agencies

Chamber seeks equal pay, leadership roles for women in the energy sector

By Gloria Nwafor

THE Equal by 30 Campaign has sought the commitment of the public and private sectors to work towards equal pay, equal leadership, and equal opportunities for women in the clean energy sector by 2030.

The 'Equal by 30 Campaign' is a joint initiative of the Clean Energy, Education and Em-

powerment Initiative (C3E), as well as the International Energy Agency (IEA), with endorsed principles and concrete action to accelerate the participation of women in the energy sector and close the gender gap in Africa.

The African Energy Chamber maintained that there is more urgency than ever to align political, financial, economic, and social resources to

create a more equitable energy sector in Africa for all, noting that as a coalition, it cannot be done without involving women.

The Equal by 30 Campaign is being rolled out with the aim to advance gender equality and ensure women are firmly at the centre of the energy industry.

As signatories, the chamber and its partners, who have

joined the call, all have multi-pronged and complimentary spheres of operation, making them a powerful group to promote the campaign's agenda far and wide across the African continent.

Executive Chairman, African Energy Chamber, NJ Ayuk, noting that the energy sector remained one of the most gender imbalanced in the world, maintained that transforma-

tion of the global energy sector would only succeed if nations harnessed all available talent, by removing barriers to women's participation, empowering women, and creating a more inclusive energy sector overall.

He argued that it is not in question that women add incredible value to the businesses they run and operate in the energy sector, the African

energy industry must move beyond words and platitudes and must ensure women are included in all facets of the sector.

He added: "We are proud to fully support this campaign as the Chamber and to bring a lot of companies operating in the energy sector on board as well."

There is a whole lot of change going on at the mo-

ment; therefore, there is no better time to ensure we build a bright future that includes women, looking ahead at 2030 and beyond."

Presently, Equal by 30, which is led and based at Natural Resources Canada, a division of the Government of Canada, now has 144 signatories in total, including 118 organisations, 13 partners, and 13 governments.

FAO needs \$350m to avert increase in hunger as nations reel from Covid-19 pandemic's impact

ROME

THE UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) is seeking \$350 million to scale up hunger-fighting and livelihoods-boosting activities in food crisis contexts where Covid-19's impact could be devastating.

Although the pandemic's full-scale and long-term impact on food security is yet to be revealed, evidence shows that in countries already hit by acute hunger, people are increasingly struggling to have access to food as incomes fall and food prices rise.

If farmers do not have access to their fields, or do not have the means or access to buy seeds and other inputs to plant or buy feed for their animals, planting seasons will be missed, cultivation will drop significantly and animals will be lost. This means that less food will become available too - in both rural and urban areas.

"We cannot wait until we finish dealing with the health impacts before we turn to food security. If we don't start implementing livelihoods assistance now, we will face multiple food crises. And a bill many times greater," warned FAO Di-

rector-General QU Dongyu at a briefing yesterday on the UN agency's revised humanitarian response to Covid-19.

"It's becoming increasingly clear that the pandemic's impacts go far beyond health," said Ramesh Rajasingham, Acting Assistant Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator.

"Acting early can prevent increasing vulnerabilities but also be a much more cost effective way of addressing this crisis. The role of emergency livelihoods interventions to save lives and livelihoods, and pull back people from the verge of famine is critical. Agriculture-based livelihoods are critical in most countries we work in as they are the main source of income for the majority of vulnerable populations. And this relies on seasons that cannot be missed or skipped," added Rajasingham.

"More and more global leaders are stressing that the pandemic could cost more lives in hunger than in those actually infected by the virus. The worst-case scenario is not a foregone conclusion, but we have to act fast - and at scale," said Dominique Burgeon, FAO's Director of Emergencies.



FAO's new funding request of \$350 million is about three times more than in late March as Covid-19's staggering socio-economic impacts become more evident.

Additional funding is urgently required to address new needs emerging from Covid-19. New activities will build upon critical livelihood-saving support currently being delivered, including in South Sudan, FAO carried out its largest seed distribution so that farmers do not miss the main planting season. To date, FAO has distributed over 4 million kilograms of the procured and pre-positioned 8 million kilograms of crop and vegetable seeds, and over 100 000 agricultural hand tools to about 1.8million people. This means that each family can grow enough food for at least 6 months and sell some surplus. In addition, nearly 50 000 people received fishing kits.

In Somalia, FAO fully transitioned its cash assistance to mobile cash delivery, and, over the last 60 days, transferred over

4 million dollars in mobile money to help 200 000 Somalis access food and other basic needs. FAO has registered more than 2.1 million people on its Mobile Money Platform.

In addition, 240 000 Somalis are receiving e-vouchers via SMS to get seeds, farm tools, irrigation service and storage bags from local traders. This way, FAO reinjects money into the local economy and avoids supply chain delays due to Covid-19.

In Syria, FAO supported vegetable producers to set up nurseries, which are estimated to bring farmers an additional income of almost \$2 000 per year.

In Pakistan, FAO carried out an online campaign, engaging 160 000 people to learn about preventing food waste; and raised awareness, including through its farmer field schools, on how to stay safe of COVID-19 transmission.

In Haiti, FAO distributed seeds and other inputs to nearly 50 000 people ahead of the main agricultural campaign.

Overall, FAO's humanitarian response to Covid-19 impacts will focus on: improving hunger data collection and analysis so that organisations can respond more effectively; maintaining food production, including through scaling up activities so that farmers can take advantage of coming planting seasons; ramping up support to post-production activities, like harvesting, storage, small-scale food processing and conservation, and linking producers to markets to ensure food supply chains stay functional; and, awareness raising so that people keeping food supply chains alive are not at risk of Covid-19 transmission.

USAID, USADF and CITI Foundation team up to invest in young African social entrepreneurs

WASHINGTON

THE US Agency for International Development (USAID) and US African Development Foundation (USADF) has announced plans to award a total of \$400,000 in grant funding,

with support from Citi Foundation, to 42 young African social entrepreneurs who are developing businesses to drive social and community change in 22 sub-Saharan African countries. All of the awardees are 2019 Mandela Washington Fellows

under the U.S. Government's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI).

By pairing seed capital with technical assistance, USAID, USADF, and Citi Foundation provide young entrepreneurs with the tools needed to invest in

their own communities.

Each winner of the competition will receive at least \$10,000 in seed capital to support the growth of his or her company - in sectors that range from agribusiness and health care to renewable energy and education.

The goal of the public-private partnership is to increase the commercial know-how and access to seed capital of Africa's next generation of business leaders and social entrepreneurs. The investments will allow the young businesspeople to create

jobs, train other youth, improve their communities, and create or expand markets by providing goods and services.

USADF is proud to work with Citi Foundation for the fourth year, and gains a new partner in USAID. USADF's goal is to

catalyze young African ingenuity through entrepreneurship and support entrepreneurs to expand their social enterprises. Since 2014, USADF has awarded over \$5 million to more than 250 young leaders in over 30 countries.

Anti-malaria drug studied to determine ability to protect health workers from the COVID-19

WASHINGTON

WITH \$9 million in philanthropic support, an international group of physicians and scientists is establishing a research network to evaluate promising therapies for Covid-19.

The group, called the Covid-19 Research Outcomes Worldwide Network (CROWN) Collaborative, is testing whether the antimalaria drug chloroquine can prevent Covid-19 infection or decrease its severity in front-line health-care workers.

An estimated 30,000 such workers from across the globe will participate in the clinical trial, which the collaborative is calling the CROWN CORONATION trial.

The collaborative and the trial are funded by the Covid-19

Therapeutics Accelerator, an initiative with contributions from an array of public and philanthropic donors, intended to support research and development to bring effective, accessible

Covid-19 treatments to market as quickly as possible.

Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis is the clinical coordinating center for this ambitious international trial.

The investigators comprising the CROWN Collaborative are from prominent research organizations in African, European, North American and South American countries, including Cameroon, Canada, Ireland, Ghana, Peru, South Africa, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Zambia.

"Because of their repeated close contacts with infected patients, front-line health-care workers in all parts of the world have a higher risk of contracting Covid-19 than most members of the general public," said one of the study's principal investigators, Michael S. Avidan, MD, the Dr. Seymour and Rose T. Brown Professor and head of the Department of Anesthesiology at Washington University. "In some places,

more than 10% of those who have become infected are health-care workers.

There is an urgent need to identify drugs that are effective at preventing infection or mitigating its severity."

The study will recruit front-line health-care workers globally, including those from lower- and middle-income countries.

That's important because in many such countries there are relatively few health-care workers per capita, and protecting them from severe Covid-19 infection would provide a substantial public health benefit.

"An important way to protect the public at large is to do our best to protect the health-care workers," Avidan said "It is very important that there is a global effort to protect health-care workers because when it comes to Covid-19, we're all in this together.

Finding ways to keep health-care workers from getting seriously ill is one of the most important ways to protect vulnerable people everywhere."



Sweden's top epidemiologist goes challenging conventional wisdom on Covid-19 pandemic

By Jennifer Dorroh

SWEDEN'S chief epidemiologist has challenged a wide array of public health practices - from wearing masks in public to keeping young children home from school - that countries are using in the fight against Covid-19.

He threw the challenge in a recent interview with the Washington-based International Centre for Journalists (ICFJ).

Dr Anders Tegnell also cast doubt on the likely availability of new therapies and vaccines in the near future. From the outset of the pandemic, Sweden, under Tegnell's leadership, has embraced a herd immunity approach to managing the outbreak.

Sweden's controversial public health policies have encouraged personal responsibility for physical distancing and other measures, offering recommendations to citizens without imposing strict emergency orders.

"The Swedish model is showing that you can get very far by voluntary measures," Tegnell said, in a webinar moderated by ICFJ President Joyce Barnathan. The conversation was sponsored by ICFJ's Global Health Crisis Forum in partnership with the Embassy of Sweden in Washington.

Other nearby countries, such as Finland, may have lower transmission rates than Sweden, but Tegnell said it will be difficult to keep those rates down when daily life returns to normal - and 99 per cent of the population is still susceptible to the disease.

Meanwhile, Sweden's approach has already led to about 25 per cent immunity among its population.

In Sweden, early detection of the novel coronavirus in the population made the less harsh restrictions feasible.

"We were very much alert, so we saw cases very early on," he said. By the time many countries knew there were positive cases in their populations, those cases were already spreading at a rate that would soon overwhelm hospitals. "This was probably due to limited testing in other places," he said. Here are key quotes from the conversation with Dr Tegnell:

How Sweden chose its approach to managing the pandemic

"I think we started out using the methods that we always use in public health. Having sort of a conversation with the public, putting a lot of trust in the public and giving a little responsibility to the individuals - which is exactly what our communicable disease laws are telling us to do - and by following the pattern. Doing this, we could keep the number of cases down, and we could keep our health services working."

"We did a number of smaller things... We also looked at the restaurants, which we knew from Italy and Austria and other places were places of great transmission. And we tried to minimise the transmission in those places. So in general, we said we don't want to lock down the whole thing. We want to sort of close down and



Dr Anders Tegnell

minimise the transmission in areas where we know that is a high risk of transmission."

On why Sweden's death toll has been higher than that of neighbouring countries

"We found that the big explanation behind it was really a lot of deaths in our elderly homes. And these are elderly homes in Sweden, which are not just for any kind of older people; these are suffering people who are really ill and very old. And unfortunately, we had a big introduction to those homes, especially in the Stockholm area. And that accounts for more than 50 per cent of all the deaths that we experienced in Sweden."

On outbreaks in Sweden's nursing homes

"I think we have known for a long time that the quality of care in those facilities has not always been up to standard, especially in respect of hygiene procedures. And there have been a number of investigations telling us that, no, the level is not high enough. And we also know that we get spread of antibiotic resistance, and so on, in those facilities. So they were known to be a weak part."

"The number of cases in those nursing homes is slowly coming down, especially in the Stockholm area. And the actual death toll is falling slowly, but falling."

On whether shutting down an economy saves lives

"We are now getting results from several countries showing that our Nordic neighbours, maybe 1 to 2 per cent of the population are now immune, while the estimate for Sweden is around 25 per cent. So, of course, we are much further into this epidemic, and much closer to having a level of immunity in the population. That would help us very clearly to keep a low number of cases every day while having a very open society. If this translates into death tolls exactly remains to be seen."

On whether Swedish hospitals were overwhelmed

"At the national board of health and welfare, which takes care of this, they say that there has been no time during this pandemic in Sweden where we have had less than 20 per cent of the beds free. And then beds are really beds, they are beds with staff, facilities, everything in place."

On the focus of Sweden's approach to managing the pandemic

Our goal has always been to keep the level of spread down - low enough for our health system and for society as a whole to keep on functioning at a good level. And I think we have managed to do that in Sweden with, of course, the very sad exception of the high death toll we have. We also know that eventually we would get help from the immunity in the population to keep the level of spread down. And in the long term, only a level of immunity in the population will keep the spread down to a reasonable level until we have a vaccine, which is going to be quite far off."

On whether contracting Covid-19 provides immunity

"Normally you measure immunity by the number of antibodies you can find in the blood. The level of antibodies among different cases seems to vary a lot. So it's going to be a bit tricky on the individual level to estimate if somebody is immune."

On the other hand, it is quite certain that immunity does exist. And I think there is a lot of proof of that. I mean, for all the cases we have had in Sweden, there has not been one single person who had this disease twice. And we have a very strict identification system. So there is no way we would miss a person who had it twice."

"I haven't heard any reports from any countries where there has been a certified case who has actually had this twice. There have been rumours about it. But in the end, they have been disclaimed. So I think that's not the problem."

"The problem is to say if an individual will be immune so that you can tell this person, 'you will never have this disease'. And that's where we still don't know because we don't have long enough observation periods, because we are not quite ready yet to say what level of antibodies is protective."

"And maybe there are other parts of the immune system that provide protection that antibodies would not do. And for how long this immunity would last. Our virologists said at least three to six months. They would say it's a minimum, but nobody knows because we haven't observed this for very long yet."

"We think that the now-slowed decline of the number of cases in Stockholm is due to the level of immunity in

the population because we do see a drop of cases and we haven't really changed any measures for the last four or five weeks."

"If anything, there is a slight sign that adhering to social distancing and so on is maybe a little bit less now than it used to be a few weeks back. So the one reason we can see for this slow decline in the number of cases is really that there must be enough immune people in the population to keep the spread down a bit."

On countries that issued stay-at-home orders, then plan to gradually open

"I think these countries are thinking about the same thing that they want to have a slow spread of the disease. And I think the lockdown, at least in some countries, is due to a very rapid increase in the number of cases. And then these sorts of softer measures - such as those Sweden is using - might not have stopped that. Now, maybe a level of softer measures can keep the level of new cases down."

On using testing and contract tracing to make decisions about opening economies

"If this thing about testing a lot, contact tracing and so on would really make this possible, that remains to be seen. I mean, we're talking about a huge undertaking in a country like Denmark with its population of four million. They are going to employ 18,000 people just to do the tracking. And that does not account for all the testing personnel and so on; so this is a huge investment by society. Really, I'm not quite sure about how well it's

going to work because Covid-19 is a tricky disease."

On why Sweden has not recommended that its citizens wear cotton masks in public, while many other countries have

"I think it's for two reasons. The first reason is that the science behind this is not very strong. I think everybody I talked to points back to one study from Hong Kong, a very theoretical study where they've studied how droplets pass through, mostly some droplets containing different kinds of viruses, not Covid-19, but similar kinds of virus. It might be true, but it's one small study. It has never shown that it's going to work out in public."

"In Sweden, one of our strong policies has been that if you feel the least bit sick in the morning, stay home. And we are afraid that if we start introducing masks, people will, instead of staying home, put on the mask and go to work, go out and shop and so on. And that will definitely be a lot more spread around those people than people staying home and isolating themselves."

"Our government has made it possible to stay home for the first time because you get your sick pay from the very first day from the government. So there is no financial incentive to go away to work. You can safely stay home and you keep on getting the same kind of money."

On Sweden's decision to move to distance learning for secondary school and college students

"The reason we said that high schools and universities should go to distance learning is two-fold. One is that we know that distance learning works quite well in that context. It's used quite a lot in universities and to a certain extent already in high schools. So they will still get their education and thus the system will still work. But, on the other hand, they travelled quite a lot, especially in universities - but also in high schools. You tend to sometimes travel quite long distances between your home and a high school."

On whether children are 'super spreaders' of the coronavirus

"There is no evidence whatsoever that children are spreading the virus at high levels. We see extremely few cases among children. Among the 15,000-16,000 Covid-19 cases in Sweden, only 200 were among people less than 20 years of age. So we don't see much disease in those age groups."

"And then people say, 'OK, children still have the disease but don't get very sick.' Children do have the virus now and then. But there is very little evidence that this spreads the virus from children to adults."

An IJNet (International Journalists' Network) dispatch. In partnership with its parent organisation, ICFJ, IJNet is connecting journalists with health experts and newsroom leaders through a webinar series on COVID-19. The series is part of the ICFJ Global Health Crisis Reporting Forum.

THE GUARDIAN SIMPLE WORD FIT // THE GUARDIAN CROSSWORD --00 87 00--

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

WORD-FIT

CROSSWORD

CLUES: Across

- Urodela is their scientific name
- a large number of people
- a ring-shaped reef or chain of Islands formed of coral.
- the subject on which one writes to utilize
- calm, tranquil
- the connective tissue of the nervous system
- out of the way
- follow a winding course
- largest continent
- the lowest layer of ionosphere able to reflect low frequency radio waves.

Down:

- an amount of, not all
- the end, final
- an observation stuck in the mind
- to sign up
- a covering for the foot
- amoeboid
- a maize plant in South Africa
- Mexico city is her mother city
- a record of the events of one year
- a rush, a flow
- a diagrammatic representation of an area showing features
- help or support

SOLUTIONS

WORD-FIT

MA D I A G N O S I S C A R S
 O C I U S
 O V E N A R O M A
 T E A S E A
 F I C A R I
 K A R A T E A
 R N I
 W A G E D A I L Y
 A G R A R I A N
 P A I D N A
 E D E N T I A L N

CROSSWORD

S L A V E T R A I D E
 O C
 S H I A S P E N T
 O D R O N E A
 C E A S T Y
 M O R A N I
 M O R E S C O R E
 M N L N
 A B A I T O I R D
 A M O D E N
 P O R A N G E R

Can I visit my hairdresser amid Covid-19 pandemic?

By Yasmin Tayag

AMONG the less grave but still pressing concerns of people stuck at home during the pandemic is how to deal with all their hair. While self-trimming, head-shaving and shaving it all under a hat remain viable options, some styles just need the care of a professional hairstylist or braider.

But Ellie Murray, PhD, an assistant professor of epidemiology at Boston University's School of Public Health, doesn't recommend visiting a salon just yet, even if they are open where you live.

One reason is that it can be hard to keep a safe distance between customers in salons, which she says are often "quite small indoor spaces". In addition, she notes, "the hairdresser or braider definitely needs to be within six feet of a client, so there is for sure a risk of transmission".

While masks offer some protection, they aren't perfect. And some research suggests that substantial amounts of virus can be resuspended in the air



when a person is taking off or putting on protective equipment, such as masks, although it's unclear whether those viral particles are infectious.

"We also know that a dose of virus affects transmission, and a longer time in contact with someone will mean that you are potentially exposed to a higher dose of virus if that person is infected," says Murray.

Having good hair, in other words, is probably just not worth it at the moment. But that doesn't mean that you can't support your stylist or braider in other ways.

"For these reasons, I would discourage visiting hairdressers or braiders until we have better ways of knowing who is infectious and of how to keep these businesses safe," says Murray.

She adds: "Because hairdressers and braiders are often small-business owners, people who can afford to be encouraged to purchase gift cards for future services or purchase hair products to help them get through this crisis. And you can always wear a hat."

Yasmin Tayag is senior editor at OneZero at Medium, covering science.

REMUNERATION

Tigo Pesa subscribers earn over 100bn/- in 'dividend' since 2014

By Guardian Reporter

TIGO Pesa subscribers in the country have earned a whopping 100.9bn/- in 'dividend' payments since 2014 when the telecommunications company first shared with its customers profits made from the platform.

In a statement yesterday, the company announced another quarterly payment of 2.7bn/- to all Tigo Pesa users for the first quarter of year ending March 2020, marking the 24th time since the telco started sharing profits with clients.

Tigo Tanzania's acting Chief Officer for Mobile Financial Services, Angelica Pesa, said that this year's first quarterly interest distribution comes at a time when the whole world has been affected by

the COVID-19 pandemic and businesses have slowed down.

"Following the COVID-19 pandemic that is affecting nations and citizens all around the world and here in Tanzania, this interest is payable to individual customers, retail agents, super agents and other Tigo business partners who each receive payment based on the e-value they stored in their Tigo Pesa wallets," Pesa said.

She noted that the telco's increased profitability is a result of the increased number of subscribers of the mobile money platform which has driven a significant increase in interest sharing income especially from the merchant segment.

Tigo Pesa currently has a network

of over 50,000 merchants enhancing transaction payments across the country and over 110,000 agents supporting customers' daily needs across the market, Pesa stated.

"We are really excited to be announcing this increased interest distribution for the 24th successive time, bringing relief to millions of Tigo Pesa users dur-

ing this difficult period, helping them to meet their various financial obligations. This underlines our commitment to provide financial access to our customers and the country at large," Pesa added.

The Tigo Tanzania acting Chief Officer for Mobile Financial Services hinted that earning to customers will be calculated based on one's average daily balance

stored in their mobile wallet adding that the profit share distribution scheme is in line with Bank of Tanzania's Circular issued in February 2014.

Tigo Tanzania is the domestic market's leading digital lifestyle telecommunications company which started its operations in 1995. Through its distinctive and 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.



Tigo Tanzania's acting Chief Officer for Mobile Financial Services, Angelica Pesa, speaks at a recent event. File photo

DEMAND

Lockdown: Homemade alcoholic brew finds a market as prices soar

CAPE TOWN

WITH The sale of alcohol banned for more than seven weeks since the start of the Covid-19 lockdown, the illegal booze trade has mushroomed and prices have rocketed, GroundUp reported.

People who used to frequent shebeens in the Southern Cape say syndicates have stepped in and are charging exorbitant prices for conventional brands of alcohol. In response, people have started to brew their own liquor at home. Pineapples and apples are mostly used.

On the south coast, many people are now making a living from it, brewing up 25-litre buckets of iqhilika in places such as Nekkie in Knysna, Nonqaba in Mossel Bay,

Nokuthula in Plettenberg Bay and Lawaakamp and Thembaletu near George.

Police Minister Bheki Cele has again expressed his disdain for liquor, this time saying that it was at the centre of the death of KwaZulu-Natal teenager Andile "Bobo" Mbuthu. The home-brewed alcohol sells for about R10 a litre or R20 for a 2.5-litre bottle.

In contrast, Zola Xhinwa, of Nokuthula, says a bottle of Smirnoff vodka is now going for R450 and beer prices have doubled, even tripled. "I have resorted to drinking home-made booze because it's much cheaper and affordable," he says.

"This township is dead without booze"

Pineapple alcohol is made with sliced pineapple, lukewarm wa-



A woman sells South African local brew, Iqhilika.

ter, brown bread, oats, ginger, yeast and sugar. Apple beer is a concoction of teabags, sugar, yeast and brown bread. The ingredients are left to ferment overnight.

A popular drinking spot in Nonqaba, which dates back to the 1950s, has become known for its cleanliness and the pleasant taste of its pineapple brew.

"Lockdown has actually taken us back to dark days [of apartheid], where people made alcohol from home and sold to community members," says the owner [name withheld].

"I make sure that I don't get in close contact with my customers. I wear gloves and mask and sell through the burglar

door. "This township is dead without booze. People are bored of sitting at home doing nothing. People don't sit here, they just buy and go drink in their homes," she says. Another seller in Nekkie, Knysna, says at first she only brewed for her family, but everyone in the area now wants her booze.

"People don't have money to buy expensive backdoor alcohol... We just pray that the government suspends the lockdown so that people can return to their favourite booze."

Thembaletu police spokesperson Captain Dumile Gwavu says the selling and brewing of alcohol during the national Covid-19 lockdown is a criminal offence.

PESSIMISM

IMF head warns global recovery unlikely by the end of next year

WASHINGTON

THE global economy will take far longer to recover fully from the shock caused by Covid-19 than initially expected, the head of the International Monetary Fund said.

Managing director Kristalina Georgieva said the Fund was likely to revise downwards its forecast for a 3 per cent contraction in GDP in 2020, with only a partial recovery expected next year instead of the 5.8 per cent rebound initially forecast.

In an interview with Reuters, she said data from around the world was worse than previously thought. "That means it will take us much longer to have a full recovery from this crisis," she said. In April, the global lender forecast that business closures and lockdowns to

slow the spread of the virus would throw the world into the deepest recession since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Data reported since then points to "more bad news", Ms Georgieva said earlier this month. The IMF is due to release new global projections in June.

Asked about renewed tension between the United States and China - the world's two largest economies - Ms Georgieva said she was urging member countries to maintain open communication and trade flows that had underpinned global growth for decades.

"We do need to keep trade flows open, especially for medical supplies, food and, longer-term, to find a pathway to overcome what is happening now with this crisis," Ms Georgieva said. "We

want to continue to build this more prosperous future for all by overcoming the scarring that may come from this crisis."

Tension between the United States and China has spiked in recent weeks, with officials on both sides suggesting a hard-won deal that defused a bitter 18-month trade war could be abandoned months after it was signed. Ms Georgieva issued a warning against retreating into protectionism as a result of the crisis.

"We should not turn away from what has worked for people everywhere: a division of labour and collaboration and trade, which allows the costs of goods and services to go down, allows incomes to go up and allows poverty within countries and across countries to retreat,"



IMF managing director Kristalina Georgieva

she said.

The IMF has provided emergency financing to 56 countries since the crisis began and will decide on 47 additional requests as quickly as

possible, Ms Georgieva said. An IMF spokesman said about \$21 billion in emergency financing, which carries very low interest rates, had been disbursed so far.

EXPANSION

Uber set to chop 3,000 more jobs

NEW YORK

UBER Technologies Inc will cut about 3,000 jobs, in addition to the 3,700 it had announced earlier this month, as coronavirus-led restrictions sap demand for ride-hailing services, chief executive Dara Khosrowshahi said in an email to employees on Monday.

The ride-hailing business has suffered a near-total collapse as large parts of the United States and the rest of the world shut to combat the spread of the virus. Almost two-thirds of Uber's revenue is generated in the United States and Canada, where stay-at-home orders were issued in the middle of March. The company said trip requests plummeted 80 per cent globally in April, but were slowly recovering.

Mr Khosrowshahi also said the company would wind down its office in Singapore within the next year and move to a new "hub" in the Asia-Pacific region. Uber would also close down about 45 of its offices, including one in San Francisco.

The company, which is also in talks with GrubHub Inc to reinforce its food delivery business, said it plans to reduce investments in several non-core projects.

Last week, it led a \$170m investment into scooter firm Lime, divesting its Jump e-bike business as part of the deal.

BLACK-MARKET

Global downturn risks becoming prolonged recession, WEF says

DAVOS

LEADERS need to do more to secure a quick and sustainable recovery for the global economy, according to the World Economic Forum.

In a survey of almost 350 risk professionals, the Geneva-based group said that two-thirds identi-

fied a drawn-out downturn as the greatest risk now facing the world over the coming year and a half. The pandemic has already thrown the economy into its deepest recession since the Great Depression and provoked a massive monetary and fiscal response.

The resulting build-up of debt

will likely burden government budgets and companies for years, the report said. A reduction in consumption, as well as changing production and competition patterns, could also hit businesses, and emerging economies could be submerged into deeper crisis, the report said.

High unemployment, especially among the young, a lack of progress in reducing carbon emissions and exacerbated inequalities are all possible side effects of the pandemic, too. Cyberattacks and data fraud are also major threats as the economy becomes further digitised, the report showed.

"We now have a unique opportunity to use this crisis to do things differently and build back better economies that are more sustainable, resilient and inclusive," said Saadia Zahidi, WEF managing director. "Leaders must work with each other and with all sectors of society to tackle emerging known

risks and build resilience."

In January, when the group took a survey of risks ahead of its annual meetings in Davos, climate-related issues occupied the group's top five long-term concerns. Now, the list is mostly economic, though the possibility of another global outbreak of Covid-19 or another infectious

disease is a potential threat.

Half of the survey's respondents said bankruptcies, industry consolidation, the failure of industries to recover and a disruption to supply chains were critical worries. Restrictions to trade and the cross-border movement of people and were also concerns.

COLLAPSE

FAB suspends acquisition talks for Bank Audi's business in Egypt

DUBAI

FIRST Abu Dhabi Bank, the UAE's largest lender by assets, has mutually agreed to suspend acquisition talks on the proposed acquisition of the Egyptian subsidiary of Lebanon's Bank Audi.

"This is due to the unprecedented circumstances and the uncertain outlook relating to the

Covid-19 pandemic, and is in the best interests of our shareholders, customers and employees," First Abu Dhabi Bank said in a statement to the Abu Dhabi Securities Exchange, where its shares trade.

The Covid-19 pandemic has hit the global economy, which is set to contract 3 per cent this year and is projected to slide into the deepest recession since the Great Depres-

sion, according to the International Monetary Fund.

The outbreak has hindered international trade and paralysed a number of industries. Globally, banks' profits are being squeezed as they make more provisions for potential bad debts.

In January, First Abu Dhabi Bank which was formed in 2017 following a merger of National Bank of

Abu Dhabi and First Gulf Bank, said it was in discussions with Bank Audi to acquire its business in Egypt.

It also formed a working group on the potential acquisition. Lebanon's banks have come under pressure as their country faces the worst economic crisis in three decades and liquidity issues prompted the central bank to in-

struct local lenders to raise their capital by 20 per cent.

Bank Audi's Egyptian subsidiary has 50 branches with total assets of \$4.4 billion (Dh16.1bn) at the end of September, Bank Audi's chief financial officer Tamer Ghazaleh told Reuters.

The lender began operations in Egypt after acquiring Cairo Far East Bank in 2006.

First Abu Dhabi Bank reported a slide in first quarter net profit as it took "prudent" provisions amid challenging market conditions.

The bank's net profit in the first three months of 2020 was down 22 per cent to Dh2.4bn due to higher provisioning while operating income fell 8 per cent year-on-year to Dh4.6bn.

Total assets, valued at Dh835bn,

were up 14 per cent from last year while loans and advances rose 6 per cent during the first quarter to Dh382bn.

Last month, Kuwait Finance House also suspended its acquisition process of Bahrain's Ahli United Bank until December, citing difficulty in finalising the transaction during the coronavirus outbreak.

RELIEF

Dutch firm's low-cost ventilators coming to Dar hospitals for COVID-19 patients

By Guardian Reporter

LOW cost FRD-e ventilators which are an initiative of Dutch firm, Stogger is now available for emergency deployment to several countries including Tanzania to help relieve coronavirus patients.

In a statement, the company production of the first 30 FRD-e's has started this week will also be shipped worldwide to countries including Romania, Ghana and Brazil.

"After five weeks of development, the first low-cost devices are ready and available to provide an additional solution to the worldwide need for

respiratory equipment," the statement said.

The FRD-e is an initiative of the Dutch company Stogger, intensivist Hugo Touw of the Radboudumc and an application building company, Cosmicnode.

"The initiators created the device in order to help hospitals all over the world in need of additional, easy-to-use and low-cost ventilation equipment," the statement added.

It further added that a breathing balloon is already positioned above a bed of every intensive care patient with an added device that can take over the manual use by a nurse or

doctor for 24 hours a day.

"With the respirators made in Netherlands, patients in need can be ventilated automatically and lives can be saved. Initially, the device was developed as an open source do-it-yourself package named the VentilatorPAL by FreeBreathing," the statement added.

Stogger's statement however said, due to the high demand for certified equipment, a professional version has been developed together with the NTS Group: named the FRD-e. The essential part is the ventilation balloon that is already positioned at every ICU bed, making the use of this machine very accessible, intuitive and effective, the company noted.



Dutch firm Stogger's FRD-e ventilators

used in ambulances and operating rooms," the company added.

Since the ventilator's website went live a few weeks ago, numerous parties from multiple countries showed interest with booming popularity among countries outside Europe due to its low cost and easy use.

Many professionals have contributed with the sole purpose of developing a device that can save human lives

and they include Prof Dr De Jong who is lung physiologist from University of Twente in the Netherlands.

"FRD-e complies with the basic requirements for use on patients with severe respiratory problems suffering Covid-19," said Prof de Jong who added that the FRD-e complies with the basic requirements for use on patients with severe respiratory problems suffering Covid-19.

used in ambulances and operating rooms," the company added.

GROWTH

Nigeria's first logistics market pulls monthly double-digit growth

LAGOS

AT a time that most businesses are battling the negative impacts of COVID-19, Nigeria's pioneer asset-free logistics marketplace, Dellyman, is recording double-digit growth, proof that aggregating logistics assets is the right solution to the challenge of same-day delivery in Nigeria.

The marketplace has seen an uptick in all major indices, including a 45 percent spurt in the number of active customers to 1,586 between March and April 2020 - a 91 percent growth from January 2020. The period also saw a surge in the number of logistics companies to 450, with over 100 verified and active on the platform.

Within the same period (March specifically), Dellyman inked its first major partnership with fintech firm, Opay to boost its delivery assets by deploying some of the idle motorcycle assets from ORide. This saw an increase in the number of riders on the platform and over 3,000 orders completed by the first week of May 2020 - a 93 percent increase from February this year.

Launched in March 2019, Dellyman set out to solve same-day delivery problems in Nigeria and has since grown rev-



Founder/CEO, Dellyman Logistics, Dare Ojo-Bello.

enue 20 times between January and April 2020 with average monthly growth within the same period averaging 145 percent. It

now targets over 5,000 orders in May alone.

The platform has seen 20 average daily customer acquisitions, with at about 38

percent of the total active customers placing at least one order since coming onboard. "The numbers we have seen within the past two months is a concrete validation of our business model. We had initially assumed that it is because of the lockdown alone, but we continue to see even a more increased adoption after the phased easing of the lockdown started.

"We are now looking to even expand our capacity to be able to keep up with the growing demand," said Dellyman's founder/Chief Executive Officer, Dare Ojo-Bello. According to Ojo-Bello, most of the orders have come from online retailers, restaurants, and home kitchens offering custom meals such as soups; pharmacies delivering drugs and other medical supplies, computer & electronics retailers, cake & confectionary makers, foodstuffs sellers, marketers dispatching multi-level marketing products and documents.

Logistics is one of the major pain points of electronic commerce in Nigeria. It constitutes the highest overheads for most online retailers making the e-commerce sector unprofitable and accounting for the number one reason many e-commerce firms have shut down in Nigeria.

Some existing e-commerce firms have had to build independent logistics infrastructure, but that comes at an incredible expense

threatening the industry's growth, which is projected to reach \$75 billion in value by 2025.

Dellyman has set out to solve these problems specifically by tackling the shortage of logistics assets and providers, especially for long-range last-mile deliveries.

It also seeks to provide solutions to the issues of idle capacity due to the inability of logistics companies to connect with available delivery requests, while providing critical robust technology for the efficiency of delivery services.

"Overall, these problems are complex and difficult but Dellyman's business model provides the right solution and the numbers prove it," said Ojo-Bello.

According to him, "The model leverages cutting edge technology that guarantees quick pick up and same-day delivery; provides increased access to logistics assets through aggregation; delivers an on-demand delivery service while offering a delivery infrastructure to retailers and e-commerce platforms so they don't have to own logistics assets or technologies.

"Dellyman also puts customers in control as they get to choose a delivery company, price, time of pickup, and delivery, as well as the ability to track their packages." Its current aggressive growth plan is bound to position it as the leading logistics marketplace in Africa.

COVID-19

More labs set for Tanzania border to ease cargo delays

NAIROBI

MORE laboratories are to be set up at Kenya-Tanzania border posts to ramp up testing for the coronavirus and facilitate faster movement of cargo into and out of the country amid complaints by truck drivers and businesses about losses related to delayed results.

Health Chief Administrative Secretary Rashid Aman said Monday that testing centres will be opened in Migori town or Isebania, Taita Taveta and Lunga Lunga in addition to the Naman-ga mobile laboratory that is to be installed soon.

The Ministry of Health confirmed 25 new cases of the virus, bringing the national total to 912. At the moment, samples collected at the border points are

sent to the 16 laboratories spread across the country, with most of them in Nairobi and Mombasa. Truck drivers have complained about being forced to wait for over three days for the tests results causing snarl-ups at the border points and goods to go bad.

"The problem we currently have is along the Tanzanian border at Isebania, Namanga, and Taita Taveta where we do not yet have functional laboratories that can do the test and turn around the results very quickly," said Dr Aman. "Waiting for four days to get results is not an acceptable turnaround time, I think we will have to do much better in turning around the results as fast as possible." He noted that the country has enough capacity to test truckers at the border posts with Uganda, with laboratories in

Busia and Kisumu.

On Monday's test results indicated that the coronavirus has spread to Garissa, Meru and Taita Taveta, bringing the total number of affected counties to 23. Two cases confirmed in Garissa are from the Daadab refugee camp. Two truck drivers were confirmed to be positive for the virus in Taita Taveta. Meru's single case was from Buuri.

Other counties which reported positive cases are Kajiado (six), Mombasa (five), Nairobi (three), Kiambu (three) and Kwale (three). Fifty-three foreign truck drivers were denied entry at the Kenyan Tanzanian border after they tested positive. Twenty-two more recoveries were announced, bringing the total number of patients discharged to 336.



Kenya's Health ministry Chief Administrative Secretary, Rashid Aman.

WORLD

China announces concrete measures to boost global fight against COVID-19 as Xi addresses WHA session

BEIJING

CHINESE President Xi Jinping on Monday announced concrete measures to boost global fight against COVID-19 including providing international aid and making the country's COVID-19 vaccine a global public good when available.

Xi made the announcement as he addressed the opening of the 73rd session of the World Health Assembly (WHA) via video link.

"China will provide 2 billion U.S. dollars over two years to help with COVID-19 response and with economic and social development in affected countries, especially developing countries," Xi said.

China will work with the United Nations to set up a global humanitarian response depot and hub in China, ensure the operation of anti-epidemic supply chains and foster "green corridors" for fast-track transportation and customs clearance, he said.

Besides, China will establish a cooperation mechanism for its hospitals to pair up with 30 African hospitals and accelerate the building of the Africa CDC headquarters to help the continent ramp up its disease preparedness and control capacity, said Xi.

"COVID-19 vaccine development

and deployment in China, when available, will be made a global public good," said the president.

"This will be China's contribution to ensuring vaccine accessibility and affordability in developing countries," he added.

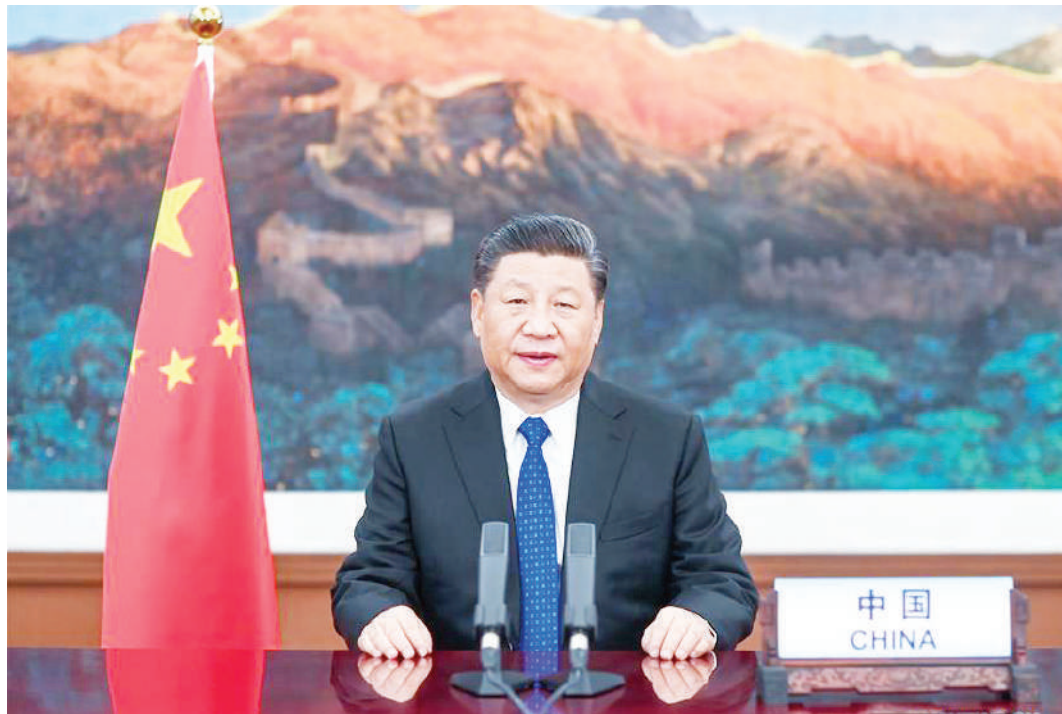
Moreover, China will work with other G20 members to implement the Debt Service Suspension Initiative for the poorest countries, Xi said, adding that China is also ready to work with the international community to bolster support for the hardest-hit countries under the greatest strain of debt service so that they could tide over the current difficulties.

The WHA is the decision-making body of the WHO. The 73rd session of the WHA, scheduled from Monday to Tuesday, is held via video link due to the impact of the current pandemic.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), its agenda was condensed only to essential issues, such as COVID-19 and the executive board members selection.

Currently, COVID-19 has hit over 210 countries and regions, affected more than seven billion people around the world and claimed over 300,000 precious lives.

"China stands for the vision of building a community with a shared future



Chinese President Xi Jinping delivers a speech at the opening of the 73rd World Health Assembly via video link in Beijing, capital of China, on Monday. (Xinhua)

for mankind," said Xi, adding that China takes it as its responsibility to ensure not just the life and health of its own citizens, but also global public health.

China has all along acted with openness, transparency and responsibility in the fight against COVID-19, said Xi, adding that the country "has done everything in our power to support and assist countries in need."

Noting that "nothing in the world is more precious than people's lives," Xi urged all countries to put the people first and do everything they can for COVID-19 control and treatment.

He expressed China's staunch support to the WHO, calling on the international community to increase political and financial support for WHO so as to mobilize resources worldwide to defeat the virus.

"At this crucial juncture, to support WHO is to support international cooperation and the battle for saving lives as well," Xi said.

Xi called on the world to provide more material, technological and personnel support for African countries, saying that "helping them build capacity must be our top priority in COVID-19 response."

Furthermore, Xi said the international community must strengthen global governance in

the area of public health.

"China supports the idea of a comprehensive review of the global response to COVID-19 after it is brought under control to sum up experience and address deficiencies," said Xi.

"This work should be based on science and professionalism, led by WHO and conducted in an objective and impartial manner," he added.

He also proposed to restore economic and social development and strengthen international cooperation.

Noting that the mankind is facing the most serious global public health emergency since the end of World War II, Xi said "solidarity and cooperation is a sure way through which we, the people of the world, can defeat this novel coronavirus."

He called on the international community to work as one and make concerted efforts to protect the life and health of people in all countries, safeguard planet Earth and build a global community of health for all.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres and leaders from other countries addressed the opening via video link, expressing their support to the WHO and multilateralism, as well as enhanced joint efforts in the global fight against COVID-19.

Xinhua

Scholars say Xi's proposals at WHA important to global pandemic combat

BEIJING

EXPERTS and scholars across the world spoke highly of Chinese President Xi Jinping's Monday speech at the 73rd World Health Assembly (WHA), hailing his proposals are of great importance to promote global cooperation in the pandemic fight.

Addressing the opening of the WHA session via video link, Xi announced concrete measures to boost global fight against COVID-19, such as providing international aid and making the country's COVID-19 vaccine a global public good when available.

According to the scholars, Xi's speech upholds the vision of building a global community of

health for all and demonstrates China's sense of responsibility amid the crisis.

Ren Minghui, assistant director-general for Universal Health Coverage/Communicable and Noncommunicable Diseases of the World Health Organization (WHO), said Xi's speech is visionary and pragmatic, which once again demonstrates China's firm belief in building a community with a shared future for mankind.

Xi not only talked about how to effectively prevent and control the spread of the disease, but also on support for economic recovery and social development of the affected countries, especially developing countries, as well as for the WHO's actions, Ren said.



Nadhum Ali Abdullah, an Iraqi analyst from Baghdad-based think tank Arab Forum, said Xi's speech at the WHA sent a message that "the mankind has a common destiny, and that China is opening its doors to international cooperation to combat this pandemic."

Igor Shatrov, deputy director of Russia's National Institute for the Development of Modern Ideology, said the coronavirus pandemic is a "serious test" in which "humanity must realize that we live in a single world and have a common destiny, so it should unite in the face of a global threat."

Noting that China's efforts are particularly remarkable amid the pandemic, Sylwester Szafarz, former consul general of Poland in the Chinese city of Shanghai, said, "They are aiming at sharing valuable Chinese experience and expertise, modern equipment and highly qualified medical personnel with numerous other nations in need."

Adhere Cavinca, a Kenyan re-

searcher of international relations with a focus on China-Africa relations, said that global health governance requires urgent strengthening, adding that "such cooperation can only take place when countries deal with each other in an honest, transparent, and reciprocal manner."

French writer and sinologist Sonia Bressler pointed out that Xi's speech confirms "an opening of China to the world and a shared and collective responsibility."

Noting China's support and help to African countries in the fight against the pandemic, she said the brotherhood is necessary, demonstrating Xi's Chinese vision of "Tianxia," which "means we all live under the same sky." Xinhua

Trump threatens permanent freeze of WHO funding

WASHINGTON

US President Donald Trump threatened on Monday to permanently halt funding for the World Health Organization (WHO) if it did not commit to improvements within 30 days, and to reconsider the membership of the United States in the body.

Trump (pictured) suspended US contributions to the WHO last month, accusing it of promoting China's "disinformation" about the coronavirus outbreak, although WHO officials denied the accusation

and China said it was transparent and open.

"If the WHO does not commit to major substantive improvements within the next 30 days, I will make my temporary freeze of United States funding to the WHO permanent and reconsider our membership," Trump told its chief, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, in a letter posted on Twitter.

Earlier, Trump said the WHO had "done a very sad job" in its handling of the virus and he would make a decision soon on US funding.

In his letter, Trump said the only



way forward for the body was if it could demonstrate independence from China, adding that his administration had already started reform discussions with Tedros.

On Monday, the WHO said an in-

dependent review of the global virus response would begin as soon as possible and it had received backing and a hefty pledge of funds from China. Geneva-based WHO, a UN specialized agency, is leading a global initiative to develop safe and effective vaccines, tests and drugs to prevent, diagnose and treat COVID-19.

More than 4.75 million people have been reported to have been infected globally and 314,414 have died, according to a Reuters tally.

The United States contributed more than US\$400 million to the WHO in 2019, or roughly 15 percent

of the organization's budget.

And this year, Washington has already paid the WHO about US\$58 million, senior Trump administration officials said last month, half of what it is required to pay for 2020 - known as an assessed contribution.

The United States traditionally provides several hundred million dollars annually in voluntary funding tied to specific WHO programs like polio eradication, vaccine-preventable disease, HIV and hepatitis, tuberculosis, and maternal, newborn, child and adolescent health.

Agencies

Russia, Pakistan, Iran, China envoys urge early launch of intra-Afghan negotiations

MOSCOW

SPECIAL envoys on Afghanistan from Russia, Pakistan, Iran and China have urged all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan, including the Taliban movement (outlawed in Russia), to pave the way for the negotiations, according to the joint statement circulated by the Russian Foreign Ministry on Monday.

The envoys "welcome the Agreement between two main political leaders [Ashraf Ghani and Abdullah Abdullah] and hope that this important event will expedite start of Intra-Afghan negotiations," the statement runs. With this in view, they "call on all Afghan ethnic groups and parties, including Taliban to act upon the opportunities preparing the situation to launch the Intra-Afghan negotiations as soon as possible," the statement reads.

Russia, Iran, China and Pakistan draw attention to the developments in connection with the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan and "call on foreign troops withdrawal in an orderly and responsible way so that the situation in Afghanistan will experience a steady transition."

They support the release of prisoners and detainees held by all parties to the conflict in Afghanistan and hope that Resolution 2513(2020) of the UN Security Council will be complied with.

The special representatives "support the initiative of the UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres for universal ceasefire and call for a simultaneous declaration of a comprehensive ceasefire throughout Afghanistan as agreed among parties to the conflict," the statement adds.

The envoys urge the Afghan parties to take resolute action against Al-Qaeda, Islamic State (both outlawed in Russia) and other international terrorist organizations operating against regional states, as well as to take measures against the production of drugs in the country and drug trafficking.

Russian, Iranian, Chinese and Pakistan's special representatives on Afghanistan reiterated their support to Kabul in combating the novel coronavirus infection. "The Special Representatives on Afghanistan Affairs of the four sides reaffirm their support to Afghanistan to overcome the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, welcome the international community to continue providing humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan," the document says.

The envoys "agree to maintain the contact on the Afghanistan issue, and work together to advance the Afghan peace reconciliation and reconstruction process," the statement stressed.

Taking part in the consultations were Russian Special Presidential Envoy for Afghanistan Zamir Kabulov, China's Special Envoy for Afghanistan Liu Jian, Pakistan's Deputy Foreign Minister Safdar Hayat, as well as Iran's Special Envoy for Afghanistan Mohammad Taherianfard.

Settlement in Afghanistan

On Sunday, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani and his political rival Abdullah Abdullah signed a deal on cooperation and dividing powers in the country. Under the deal, Abdullah will lead the High Council for National Reconciliation and his supporters will head a number of ministries in the Afghan government.

On February 29, the US and the Taliban movement signed a peace treaty in Qatar's Doha. Under the agreements, the US and NATO allies agreed to withdraw all troops from Afghanistan within 14 months. The Taliban, for its part, gives guarantees not to use the Afghan territory for actions threatening the security of the US and its allies. Before the start of the intra-Afghan talks on a comprehensive ceasefire, up to 5,000 Taliban militants must be released as well as up to 1,000 prisoners held by the Taliban.

Agencies

Nigerian extends easing of COVID-19 lockdown by 2 weeks

ABUJA

THE Nigerian government on Monday extended the gradual easing of the lockdown by two weeks, as a measure to curb the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic in the country.

According to Boss Mustapha, secretary to the Nigerian government, in spite of the modest progress made, Nigeria was still not ready for a full reopening of its economy.

"The measures, exemptions, advisories, and scope of entities allowed to reopen under phase one of the eased locked down, shall be maintained across the federation for another two weeks effective from midnight (May 18 to June 1)," Mustapha told the media in Abuja.

He said the government's focus by its latest decision is to intensify efforts to tell, trace, and treat cases, as well as elevate the level of community ownership of "non-pharmaceutical interventions".

On April 27, Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari approved a phased and gradual easing of lockdown measures in the capital city of Abuja, Lagos, the commercial hub, and Ogun in the south-west region from May 4, as the country continued to navigate the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Xinhua

Super cyclone Amphan weakens as it nears India, Bangladesh

NEW DELHI

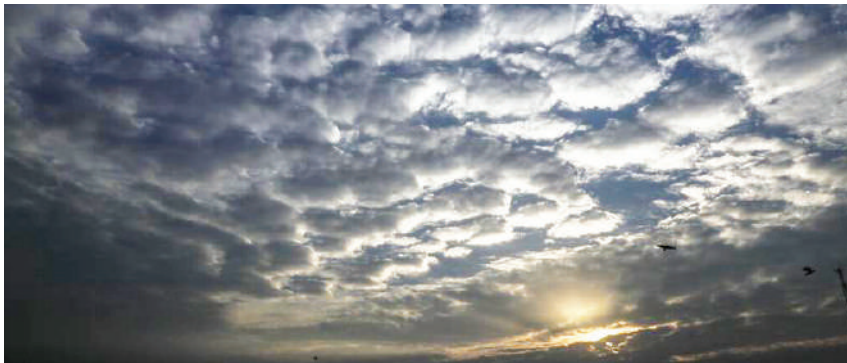
INDIA Meteorological Department (IMD) yesterday said super cyclone Amphan was likely to weaken into an extremely severe storm during the next six hours as it nears West Bengal and Bangladesh.

"The super cyclonic storm - Amphan over west-central and adjoining east-central Bay of Bengal moved north-northeastwards with a speed of 14 kmph during past six hours and lay centred at 5:30 am today near latitude 15.6°N and longitude 86.7°E over west-central Bay of Bengal about 520 km

nearly south of Paradip (Odisha), 670 km south-southwest of Digha (West Bengal) and 800 km south-southwest of Khepupara (Bangladesh).

It is very likely to weaken into an extremely severe cyclonic storm during next six hours," reads information released in the bulletin by IMD.

According to IMD, it was very likely to move north-northeastwards across northwest Bay of Bengal and cross West Bengal - Bangladesh coasts between Digha (West Bengal) and Hatiya Islands (Bangladesh) close to Sundarbans during the afternoon or evening as a very severe cyclonic storm with maximum



sustained wind speed of 155-165 kmph gusting to 180 kmph.

Officials said the super cyclone was being continuously tracked by the

Doppler Weather Radar at Vishakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh.

India's Director General of National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) S N

Pradhan said in West Bengal, 19 NDRF teams have been deployed and four teams were on standby while as in Odisha, 13 NDRF teams were being deployed while 17 have been kept on standby. He said the teams were helping in awareness drive, sensitization and evacuation of the people from low-lying areas.

The IMD has issued an "orange" warning for West Bengal and Odisha and cautioned against extensive damage in Kolkata, Hooghly, Howrah, South and North 24 Parganas and East Midnapore districts, besides Jagatsinghpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Balasore, Jajpur

and Mayurbhanj.

Authorities have advised fishermen not to venture into north Bay of Bengal along and off West Bengal-Odisha coasts until Thursday.

On Monday evening Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi took stock of the situation and reviewed the response preparedness as well as the evacuation plan presented by NDRF. He has directed that all necessary measures be taken to complete evacuation of people from areas in cyclone Amphan's path and maintain adequate quantities of essential supplies.

Agencies

China resolute to win fight against poverty amid epidemic control

By Gu Zhongyang

CHINA is resolute in winning the fight against poverty this year while fighting the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) epidemic as it plans to complete the building of a moderately prosperous society in all respects.

The country has demonstrated strong endogenous power for poverty relief when impoverished people worked with poverty alleviation cadres to eradicate poverty and overcome the impact of the epidemic since its outbreak.

In Changxi village, Haikou, south China's Hainan province, Wang Chuanshu and other four villagers who are out of poverty formed an anti-epidemic volunteer team. "Favorable policies have helped us shake off poverty, and now we want to contribute our part to the prevention and control of the epidemic," Wang said.

"I stayed home for over a month during the epidemic. Thanks to the chartered buses arranged by local government, I re-

turned to work. I'm confident to shake off poverty this year," said Yu Randuo from Huaping village, Lanping county, southwest China's Yunnan province.

Wang Tongbian, an impoverished farmer from Yuma village, Sanjiang county in south China's Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region, has planted tea-oil trees with the help of the poverty alleviation working team stationed in the village. "As long as we join the efforts and fight the epidemic and poverty, we can surely become rich through tea-oil tree planting," Wang said.

Such stories on the front line of epidemic control in poverty-stricken areas are heart-warming and encouraging.

China's impoverished regions have witnessed tremendous changes thanks to the country's targeted poverty alleviation campaign since the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in 2012.

Over the past years, about 2.78 million officials and 435,000 first Party chiefs in charge of poverty alleviation have offered pairing



A worker manufactures products to complete orders at a poverty alleviation workshop in Houzui neighborhood, Lianyungang, east China's Jiangsu province, May 8. Photo by Wang Chun/People's Daily Online

assistance to help the impoverished shake off poverty. Through their hard and sincere work, numerous people have been lifted out of poverty and lived a happier life.

Enjoying better living standards, people who are out of poverty have volunteered to join the

fight against the epidemic, which demonstrates their appreciation of the Party's favorable policies and officials' efforts from the bottom of their hearts.

Some may ask whether China can ensure the final victory over poverty this year because the epidemic has impacted employ-

ment of impoverished rural labor and made it difficult to increase the income of the impoverished through the development of industries.

Under the current trends, the outbreak's influence on China's poverty alleviation efforts is partial and short-lived, which

will not change the overall process. Seven provincial regions with their poverty incidence rate above one percent are less affected by the epidemic.

By the end of last year, the number of rural residents living below the current poverty line dropped to 5.51 million. In recent years, China has lifted an average of 13 million people out of poverty every year.

At its current pace, the country has the capacity to complete poverty alleviation tasks by the end of the year.

What's more, China has basically completed the top-level design for poverty alleviation and formed a pattern of poverty relief through special programs, development of industries and participation of all social sectors.

Last year, the country's poverty alleviation funds exceeded one trillion yuan.

This year, it will continue to allocate more funds for the purpose. It will assign responsibilities more clearly.

This year, secretaries of Party

committees at all levels will supervise poverty alleviation work in 52 poor counties and 1,113 impoverished villages.

The country has also cultivated an indispensable "iron army" of poverty alleviation officials with impeccable conduct on the front line of the fight against poverty. All these factors provide strong support for the final victory in the fight against poverty.

A united and shared aspiration from the top to the bottom will be invincible. China's epidemic control and prevention are now at their toughest and most critical period, so is its battle against poverty.

China will surely win the fight against the disease and clinch a complete victory in eradicating poverty, as long as it implements all prevention and control measures down to the last detail, never wavers in its resolve to reach its poverty alleviation objectives, sticks to overall arrangements, and forms strong synergy between officials and the masses.

E-commerce fast-forwards China's poverty alleviation

By Tian Xiaoli

IN Zhashui county, northwest China's Shaanxi province, black fungus has developed into a big industry.

It became a hot-sale product across China after being endorsed by Chinese President Xi Jinping during a visit to the village of Jinmi in Zhashui to inspect the region's poverty relief efforts.

During the inspection, the president visited a local e-commerce livestream center and hailed the local specialty fungus as a "small fungus, big industry".

E-commerce is an emerging business with great potential and can promote sales of agricultural products, help rural residents shake off poverty and facilitate rural vitalization, Xi said.

During a livestream show held by People's Daily on April 21, more than 80,000 bags of Zhashui fungus weighing 12.2 tons were soon sold out. Fungus also became the best-selling product on Taobao, the online marketplace of e-commerce giant Alibaba.

"It is exciting to snap up the fungus, and it brings pleasure to receive the products." "We must support the way to alleviate poverty by promoting agricultural products on e-commerce platforms," said Chinese net users.

The promotion from Xi became a hot topic on the internet. A net user named "Jiaolairen" said e-commerce is believed to accelerate poverty alleviation and inject vigor in rural vitalization.

On the evening of April 23, Shaanxi province held a largest ever charity livestream show, during which local specialties such as Zhashui fungus, cold noodles, and Chinese hamburgers were all sold out in seconds, and about 50,000 agricultural products were advertised by 3,800 merchants and farmers from the province.

The activity has resulted in a pace-setting effect, with net users believing that more mayors and county governors will join e-commerce platforms to advertise local products through livestream.

The fungus from Zhashui is also on the shelves of an e-commerce platform launched by People's Daily Online for poverty alleviation. Thanks to President Xi's presence in the livestream show, fungus produced in other impoverished places also witnessed significant sales growth on the platform.



A tea practitioner from Pu'an county, southwest China's Guizhou province presents tea making at a competition held by the province aiming at eradicating poverty by the tea industry and promoting local tea products, April 18. Photo by Zhao Song/People's Daily Online

The COVID-19 pandemic, though exerting a considerable impact on the economy, has also given a rise to new business forms. Nowadays, digital platforms have become a new agricultural production element; mobile phones have become a new farm tool; and livestreaming has become new farm work.

To increase farmers' income is a key target of agricultural and rural work, said a net user. Adhering to the people-centered development philosophy, and helping farmers get rich as soon as possible by using the internet to tackle the "Three Rural Issues", namely, the issues regarding the development of agriculture, rural areas and farmers have always been a concern of President Xi.

The digital economy is becoming a new driving force for rural economic growth as it continues to develop rapidly and generates tremendous vitality. E-commerce is gaining robust momentum for development in rural China, with advances being made in rural digital construction, demonstration projects of e-commerce in rural areas, and poverty alleviation by e-commerce, according to a report on rural e-commerce and logistics released by a research institute under People's Daily Online on April 24.



A young entrepreneur (second right) guides farmers to recognize pests and seek solutions at an orange orchard in Yongchun county, Quanzhou of Fujian province on May 12, where the local environment is well exploited to develop green industry by modern agricultural technologies, models and talents. Photo by Kang Qingping/People's Daily Online

Rural online retail is growing fast, and the development of rural e-commerce has effectively stimulated the demand for logistics, the report pointed out, adding that e-commerce platforms are becoming a representative of the "new infrastructure"

facilitating intelligent, systematic and large-scale logistics development in rural areas.

Some commentators said that it is necessary to make good use of new business forms such as e-commerce. They believe influencer marketing is only one character of the new business form, and e-commerce platforms have much more potential to be explored.

In addition, new business forms must be properly exploited. Through making stronger institutional arrangements, e-commerce platforms shall be lifted to a new level where they will play a greater role.

Member of CPPCC national committee in Inner Mongolia leads herdsmen to happier lives

By Wu Yong

OVER the past years, herdsman Ting Bartel has managed to turn the severely degraded grasslands of his family into oases and came up with the idea of increasing the number of cattle and reducing that of sheep, which has benefited numerous herdsmen in north China's Inner Mongolia autonomous region.

"He is already 65 years old, yet he works like a young man," remarked Erdenqijige, referring to her husband Ting, who got busy working at the crack of dawn and intended to get the work of his own family done before other herdsmen came to learn from his experience in animal husbandry.

Ting is a member of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee. He has been a representative to the 18th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC), a deputy to the National People's Congress, and has been honored with the titles of national model worker and national outstanding CPC member.

Ting's idea of increasing the number of cattle while reducing that of sheep is as widely known as his name. In 2009 alone, he received more than 10,000 person-times of herdsmen who came to learn from his experience in raising livestock.

Dahubayar, a major cattle raiser in Abaga banner, Xilingol league of Inner Mongolia, is one of the top students of Ting.



Photo taken in March 2019 shows Ting Bartel attending the annual sessions of the National People's Congress and the CPPCC as a member of the CPPCC National Committee. (Photo/Inner Mongolia Daily)

Six years ago, Dahubayar sold all the 1,000 sheep for which his father has worked his whole life and bought 60 head of cattle, which made his father so angry that he couldn't sleep well for days.

However, Dahubayar knew it was a right decision based on careful calculations after he learned from Ting's experience.

"Thanks to Uncle Ting's method, we are leading a life so much easier than before," said Dahubayar, explaining that after he changed the sheep for cattle, the income of his family hasn't diminished and their grasslands have recovered significantly. The method Dahubayar referred to is the conclusion Ting

drew from practice that the economic value of one head of cattle is equivalent to that of five sheep. However, sheep like to dig for grass roots, which means destructive effects to grasslands, while cattle only eat grass tips and that doesn't affect the growth of grass.

Since cattle bring far less damage to grasslands than sheep, plus it costs much more efforts to raise five sheep than to rear a head of cattle, the method of "increasing the number of cattle while reducing that of sheep" has become an important development strategy in Xilingol league.

The strategy has not only made herdsmen richer but grasslands

greener. Dahubayar is one of the new-generation herdsmen who have benefited from the idea of Ting. Promoting the idea so as to help improve the ecological environment of grasslands and increase the income of herdsmen is Ting's most glorious task as a member of the National Committee of the CPPCC.

Last year, Ting elaborated on his ideas about raising livestock at the CPPCC "members' passage" at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing during the second session of the 13th CPPCC National Committee.

After returning home from the session, Ting decided to work harder and serve as an example



Photo shows a herdsman milking cows in Xilingol league of north China's Inner Mongolia autonomous region. With animal husbandry and ecological tourism achieving development at the same time, herdsmen in Inner Mongolia have witnessed significant improvement in their lives. (Photo by Lu Changzai/People's Daily Online)

for fellow herdsmen. "It's better to get things done than to talk one's head off about them," Ting says frequently. "I'll feel satisfied as long as our fellow herdsmen can benefit from my efforts," said Ting, revealing the reason why he never rejects herdsmen coming to learn from his experience no matter how busy he is.

Ting also listens to and takes advice from other herdsmen. He has prepared his proposals targeting specific issues based on advice of his fellow herdsmen and problems he has encountered in work and life. Ting thinks it is a significant job to listen to the voices of local herdsmen and help make

their needs heard at the annual sessions of China's national legislature and political advisory body, so he has made efforts to get in-depth knowledge of local people's opinions about infrastructure construction regarding such aspects as roads, information networks, and power grids.

To Ting, well protected grasslands, improved infrastructure of the locality, and a new life for herdsmen where everyone enjoys electric appliances and the Internet will be the ideal life.

To help bring this ideal life to more herdsmen as soon as possible, Ting figured out further that local people must work out a way

to secure the apex of earning in production and operation and the minimum amount of expenditure while maintain ecological balance to the fullest extent with the least labor.

"I think the thinking is applicable to all the herdsmen across the country. I will give further exposition of relevant ideas during this year's annual session of the CPPCC National Committee so as to help more people understand the issue," Ting noted.

The
Guardian

SPORT



John Bodenhamer

US Open no longer 'open,' eliminates qualifying for major

By DOUG FERGUSON

THE U.S. Open might feel more like a closed shop this year.

The COVID-19 pandemic, which already has postponed the U.S. Open at Winged Foot from June to September, has forced the USGA to do away with qualifying for the first time since 1924.

Open qualifying is the hallmark of golf's second-oldest championship. The USGA often points out that typically half of the 156-man field has to go through either 36-hole qualifying or 18-hole and 36-hole qualifying.

It even invested in a marketing campaign that was rolled out in February titled, "From Many, One," to illustrate that more than 9,000 people apply to play in the U.S. Open, eventually yielding to one winner.

The USGA did not announce Monday how other players would become exempt.

Among those who have yet to qualify is Phil Mickelson, a runner-up six times in the only major he hasn't won.

Mickelson said in February he would not ask the USGA for an exemption, and that if he didn't qualify or become exempt, he wouldn't play. Winged Foot is where Mickelson made double bogey on the final hole in 2006 to lose by one.

The field presumably will be smaller because of the later date, though the USGA did not mention the field size in its April 6 announcement that the U.S. Open was moving to Sept. 17-20 at Winged Foot, in Mamaroneck, New York.

"As you can imagine, this was an incredibly difficult decision, as qualifying is a cornerstone of USGA championships," said John Bodenhamer, senior managing director of championships for the USGA. "We take great pride in the fact that many thousands typically enter to pursue their dream of qualifying for the U.S. Open and we deeply regret that they will not have that opportunity this year."

AP

F1 says UK quarantine would make British GP impossible

LONDON

FORMULA One says the UK government's quarantine plans would rule out a British Grand Prix and affect tens of thousands of F1-related jobs if exemptions are not granted for sport.

Ministers have said they plan a 14-day quarantine for most people arriving in the country in the coming weeks to try to prevent a second peak in the COVID-19 pandemic.

Formula One is planning two grands prix without spectators at Silverstone, which this year marks the 70th anniversary of hosting the first world championship race, immediately after two in Austria in early July.

"A 14-day quarantine would make it impossible to have a British Grand Prix this year," a Formula One spokesman said on Tuesday.

"It has a major impact on literally tens of thousands of jobs linked to F1 and the supply chains. If all elite sport is to return to TV, then exemptions must be provided."

Seven of the 10 Formula One teams are based in England.

Formula One plans to hold the Austrian

races within a controlled 'bubble', with all team members tested repeatedly for the virus, travelling on charter flights and avoiding contact with anyone outside the paddock.

Silverstone would be similarly isolated. Quarantine also threaten English soccer clubs' progress in Europe if still in force once matches resume.

Manchester City and Chelsea are in the Champions League while Manchester United, Wolverhampton Wanderers and Scotland's Glasgow Rangers remain in Europa League contention.

Asked in parliament on Monday about exemptions, transport minister Grant Shapps said that while it would initially be a blanket approach, the government was in "active discussions" about what more it could do.

"We should, indeed, consider further improvements. For example, things like air bridges enabling people from other countries who have themselves achieved lower levels of coronavirus infection," he said.

REUTERS

LeBron: 'Definitely not giving up on the season'

By TIM REYNOLDS

LEBRON James reiterated Monday that he is hopeful the NBA season can resume, with the caveat that the health and well-being of players won't be jeopardized by a return to play.

The Los Angeles Lakers star, speaking on the Uninterrupted platform's "WRTS: After Party" show that was released Monday, said it remains his wish that the season comes back "sooner than later." The NBA suspended the season on March 11 because of the coronavirus pandemic, and two unidentified members of the Lakers were among the league's players who subsequently tested positive for the virus.

"Definitely not giving up on the season," James said. "Not only myself and my teammates, the Lakers organization, we want to play. There's a lot of players that I know personally that want to play. And obviously, we don't ever want to jeopardize the health of any of our players or any of the players' families and so on and so on."

"This is a pandemic that we have no idea (about). We can't control it," James added.

James was among a group of some of the league's highest-paid players, National Basketball Players Association president Chris Paul of the Oklahoma City Thunder also part of the group, who met last week to talk about the season. Those players affirmed to one another on that call that they would like to see the season resume.

NBA Commissioner Adam Silver told players' union members on May 8 that he was hoping to make some sort of decision about the future of the season within no more than a four-week window. By that timeframe



LeBron James

– barring any adjustments based on what's happening with the pandemic – Silver and the NBA would be hoping to decide upon some course of action by June 5.

That said, there has been no definitive timetable from the NBA on when a decision would be made. The league is prepping for many options.

As of Monday, just over half of the league's 30 franchises had reopened their practice facilities for voluntary workouts. But other sports are showing promising signs, with NASCAR restarting its season this past weekend, baseball working through some plans that could lead to a summer opening day, and live

golf returning to television Sunday with a skins game in South Florida.

"We're seeing a lot of sporting events, UFC, soccer, we're hearing baseball's about to get going in a little bit," James said. "You know, I want to get back to playing. I love to play the game of basketball. I know how inspiring the game of basketball is. I know how inspiring sport is, itself. As soon as possible, when we can get back out there, we'd love to bring the game of basketball back to our fans."

James and the Lakers were atop the Western Conference standings when the NBA suspended play. At 49-14, the NBA's second-best record behind Milwaukee, the Lakers had

already clinched what would be their first playoff spot since 2013.

"I know we all miss it," James said. "I'd be sitting here lying if I said we don't."

Meanwhile, LeBron James, Jimmy Fallon, Spotify and HBO are among the 2020 Webby Award winners for internet excellence.

The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences announced the winners Tuesday.

Fallon's "The Tonight Show Starring Jimmy Fallon" won a Webby for best website promoting a celebrity, while James was honored for his ESPN's "Welcome to Bron Bron Land," which took home the best user interface award.

This year's Webby Home Internet Celebration is dedicated to honoring individuals and organizations who are using the internet in response to the coronavirus pandemic.

Kristen Bell won for helping children understand the pandemic, while DJ D-Nice won artist of the year for his #ClubQuarantine sets on Instagram Live. Avi Schiffmann, a 17-year-old from Washington state, was honored for launching an early COVID-19 tracking database and site.

Google and National Geographic won the most awards with 14 each. NASA came away with the best overall social presence.

Lil Nas X's "Panini" won a Webby for people's voice award for best art direction. Spotify scored an award for best use of online media, while HBO claimed best branded editorial experience.

Tom Hanks' "#NiceTweets with Tom Hanks" won a people's voice award for arts and entertainment.

Patton Oswalt will host the 24th annual Webby Awards' beginning at 3 p.m. EDT.

AP

Cricket: ICC recommends ban on using saliva to shine balls



India's Ravichandran Ashwin (L) tosses the ball as his team's coach Anil Kumble looks on during the team's practice session at Saurashtra Cricket Association Stadium in Rajkot, India in this 8/11/16 file photo. REUTERS

MUMBAI

THE age-old trick of using saliva to shine a cricket ball could be a thing of the past when cricket resumes, with the International Cricket Council (ICC) on Monday recommending a change to the sport's laws in the wake of the novel coronavirus.

The committee, chaired by former Indian spinner Anil Kumble, unanimously agreed to recommend a ban on saliva although players will still be allowed to use their own sweat to try and achieve the fabled 'reverse swing'.

Cricketers have long used saliva and sweat to shine one side of the ball while allowing the other to become increasingly scuffed over the course of an innings.

The technique alters the

aerodynamics of the ball, allowing pace bowlers to generate movement in the air.

"We are living through extraordinary times and the recommendations the committee have made today are interim measures to enable us to safely resume cricket in a way that preserves the essence of our game," Kumble said.

The committee saw no need to prohibit the use of sweat as it is unlikely the virus can be transmitted that way, the ICC said, adding that the recommendations would be presented to its Chief Executives' Committee for approval in early June.

Shane Warne previously suggested using weighted balls to help pace bowlers generate swing without risking health, while Australian cricket-ball manufacturer Kookaburra says it is developing a wax applicator to enhance shine and aid swing.

Cricket has been suspended since March due to the pandemic which has killed over 318,000 people globally.

Meanwhile, India's cricket board (BCCI) will wait for more clarity on international travel restrictions before making a call on the limited-overs tour of Sri Lanka in July, a top board official told Reuters.

Virat Kohli's team are scheduled to play three one-dayers and the same number of Twenty20 Internationals in Sri Lanka but the series is under threat due to measures imposed to battle the COVID-19 pandemic.

"Nothing has been decided as yet, because we are not sure what would be the travel restrictions then," BCCI treasurer Arun Singh Dhumal told Reuters by telephone.

"There is no clarity about it. So we'll wait for that and accordingly take a call."

India has extended a nationwide lockdown to May 31 while all commercial flights in and out of Sri Lanka remain suspended at least until the end of the month.

Bangladesh are being similarly cautious for their three-test series in Sri Lanka in July and August.

"We have to look at travelling restrictions in Bangladesh, and the quarantine protocols in both countries," Bangladesh Cricket Board chief executive Nizamuddin Chowdhury told ESPNcricinfo.

"We have to be mindful of the players' readiness ... we have to figure out other details about this tour."

Sri Lanka have already had to postpone home series against England and South Africa because of the global health crisis.

REUTERS

The night Real Madrid and European football struck gold

PARIS

EXACTLY 60 years ago, in an era when going to a big football match meant cramming together with no thought to social distancing, 127,000 people crowded into Hampden Park in Glasgow to see the European Cup final and were rewarded with "a fantasy staged in heaven".

Real Madrid beat Eintracht Frankfurt 7-3 to win a fifth straight European Cup in a game that marked both a start and an ending.

It was just the fifth year of the European Cup's existence, but the brilliance of the football and an international television audience of 70 million, a record for a live broadcast by the BBC, created an unprecedented buzz.

The match also marked the end of Real's first period of European domination and a final international peak for a pair of 33-year-olds: Ferenc Puskas and Alfredo Di Stefano.

Real had other stars including winger Francisco Gento, defender Jose Santamaria and captain Jose Maria Zarraga, but Di Stefano and Puskas were the first 'Galacticos'.

For Di Stefano this was a fifth straight final but for Puskas, who had joined Real in 1958 and missed the previous year's final against Reims through injury, it was a first.

The Hungarian great was nervous, he recalled in an interview reproduced in the book 'Puskas on Puskas'.

He said: "I was 33 years old. I had a bad feeling in the pit of my stomach in the dressing room beforehand. I was thinking 'you're not 20 any more, are you up for this?'"

- 'Greatest club side' -

Burly forward Richard Kress gave the West Germans the lead after 18 minutes. But Di Stefano and Puskas scored the next six goals. "I reach the pitch and I feel: 'I can do this. I know how to do this and I want to do it.' That's how I was able to play in a footballer's old age," said Puskas.

Intricate passing and relentless movement set up Di Stefano for close-range goals in the 27th and 30th minutes.

"The sort of football that has made them the greatest club side the world has ever known," said BBC commentator Kenneth Wolstenholme.

Puskas scored the next four in the space of 26 minutes, starting with a left-foot drive from a nar-

row angle in first-half injury time and ending with a spin and shot into the top corner in the 71st.

"It was one of those blissful times when the whole team seemed to play brilliantly and we achieved some kind of footballing perfection," said Puskas.

Eintracht hit back two minutes later with a goal by Erwin Stein, but Madrid replied from the kick-off as Di Stefano hit the only goal of the game scored from outside the box with a low left-foot drive.

Di Stefano also struck the woodwork twice.

Stein ended the scoring two minutes later.

"We couldn't hear the whistle at the end for the 'Hampden Roar,'" said Puskas.

"The whole team seemed to strike gold at the same time. It was a privilege to be there."

"We couldn't get away from Glasgow. It took a day to leave. We were paraded through the centre of town," he said. "Everywhere, cheering crowds greeted us. You'd have thought their team had won."

"For a few days at least, life was perfect. It was a wonderful match."

- 'Gobsnacked' -

In Budapest, the England team preparing to face Hungary, without the exiled Puskas, watched on television.

"It was football on a different level than I'd been taught," recalled Bobby Charlton. "My first thought had been, 'this match is a phoney, edited, film, because these players are doing things that aren't possible, aren't real, aren't human.'"

England striker Jimmy Greaves said he watched "gobsnacked".

One of the youngsters in the crowd was 15-year-old Jimmy Johnstone, later one of the 'Lisbon Lions' in 1967 but at the time a junior at Celtic.

"The match remained the biggest single influence on my career. It was like a fantasy staged in heaven," Johnstone said later.

Di Stefano stayed at Real until 1964, Puskas until 1966 when he collected a third European Cup although, as in 1959, he again did not appear in the final.

For both, the game represented a late peak.

Before a large live audience at last, Di Stefano, who never played in a World Cup, and Puskas, who had limped through the 1954 final as Hungary let slip a two-goal lead against West Germany, showed what football could be.

AFP

Bundesliga coaches find their voices without crowd noise

DUSSELDORF, Germany

CALL it the sound of silence. With the stands empty, players and coaches in Germany are changing how they communicate.

Coaches know opposing teams could listen in on tactical chatter, but they also need to motivate their team without fans to drive them forward.

Freiburg coach Christian Streich drew on years of experience from his old job with the club's under-19 team as his players earned a surprise 1-1 draw at title contender Leipzig on Saturday, the first day of the Bundesliga's empty-stadium restart.

"I was remembering back to that. You can hear yourself the whole time there too," he said. "It could be that I was speaking more now because the players pick up on more of it."

Volume is no problem for Streich.

"I don't have that quiet a voice either. You can hear it from 50 meters away," he said.

Players on the field and head coaches aren't muffled by wearing masks, though substitutes and other staff have to wear them.

Freiburg scorer Manuel Gulde summed up the approach. "Be loud, push your teammates, give commands and get the energy going on the field," he said in comments reported by German agency dpa. Leipzig defender Lukas Klostermann also said the team had tried to emphasize on-field communication.

AP

Without fans, viewers at home have heard unexpected soundbites, whether it's a player appealing a decision or loudly cursing after a shot's blocked. Inside the stadium, dpa reported hearing referee Guido Winkmann saying, "I don't speak so much Spanish, only 'cerveza,'" after his comments to Cologne's Colombian forward Jhon Cordoba were apparently lost in translation.

The silence could be stripping teams of a home advantage, too. Only one home team, Borussia Dortmund, won any of the first eight games played.

Referees typically tend to punish away teams more harshly - perhaps because of pressure from the crowd - but on Saturday and Sunday slightly more fouls and yellow cards were awarded against home teams. However, the small sample makes it impossible to draw firm conclusions yet.

No crowd doesn't mean no conflict. The new rule change allowing teams to make five substitutions per game had broad support among clubs for giving players more rest in a packed schedule. Not everyone agreed how it should work in practice.

After a 2-2 home draw with Mainz on Sunday, Cologne's sporting managing director Horst Heldt claimed the visitors had broken a gentlemen's agreement between the clubs that they would only change up to two players at a time. When Mainz made a triple substitution late on, "it got emotional," Heldt told broadcaster Sky.

Liverpool may not get Prem trophy presentation

LONDON

LIVERPOOL could be in danger of not having a trophy presentation should they clinch the Premier League title following the planned resumption of play this season, league chief executive Richard Masters said.

According to Masters, the Premier League will assess the social distancing and safety aspects of organising a presentation before giving the runaway leaders the green light for players to take part in the traditional end-of-season medal ceremony, if they confirm the club's first league title since 1990.

English football's top flight has been suspended since March 13 due to the coronavirus crisis, and although players will return to contact-free training on Tuesday, no date has been set for Premier League fixtures to resume. June 12 remains the favoured date for fixtures to start again.

Liverpool went into the shutdown with a 25-point lead over closest challengers Manchester City, with Jurgen Klopp's team needing just two wins from their remaining nine games to seal the title.

There had been some talk of cancelling the season - although that is looking increasingly unlikely with clubs voting to resume training soon - and Klopp rubished that talk, trophy presentation or not.

"There were those discussion to null and void the season," Klopp told kicker. "I only thought: 'What? We played 76 percent of the season and they want to void that thing?' That would have been something I would have felt hard done by on a personal level. That you just say it never happened."

With the Premier League only able to return if football adheres to strict social distancing measures, Masters has said that safety concerns must be allayed before a trophy presentation can be sanctioned.

"If at all possible, yes [we want a trophy presentation]," Masters told reporters on a conference call Monday. "We would like to have a trophy presentation to give the players and staff the moment they have worked so hard for."

"We would try to do it unless it wasn't possible because of safety concerns."

With Tuesday's return to training the first significant step in Project Restart, the Premier League hopes to be able to follow the German Bundesliga, which began playing again Saturday, by restarting its competition next month.

But all games will be staged behind closed doors - the Premier League has yet to secure government permission for games to be played on a home and away basis rather than at neutral venues - and



supporters will not be able to watch their teams at stadiums for the remainder of this campaign.

Masters also said that the Premier League could not guarantee that fans will be back inside stadiums next season after admitting that government advice will be the deciding factor on how the 2020-21 season plays out.

"From a planning perspective, we are focused on finishing the 2019-20 season, but we also have to plan for all eventualities," he said. "We don't know where we will be further down the line regarding fans in stadiums. No one knows yet."

"We simply don't know is the clear answer and we are reliant on government and medical advice."

"So it is prudent for us to plan for the start of next season in different ways and that's exactly what we're doing. Obviously we simply don't know at this stage."

"All of today's focus has been on [getting] back to training, which is the very first step in all of this. The conversations on next season will take place at a future date."

Mark Gillett, the Premier League medical advisor, supported Masters' comments by saying that football must accept a "new normal" just like every other area of society.

"The only way that you can eliminate risk completely is to lock yourself in the house and not go out," Gillett said. "In terms of a vaccine and everybody becoming immune, and the vaccine being distributed, I don't think any expert is saying that is going to happen in the next few months."

"So certainly, in terms of social distancing and the new normal, that cultural change we are asking footballers to make, I think we are going to have to be facing

that for the foreseeable future. "I think that is an important point to get across."

Meanwhile, Richard Garlick, the Premier League director of football, said that clubs would be monitored at training grounds to ensure that all protocols are followed to avoid some attempting to gain an advantage by training for longer than the maximum allowed time of 75 minutes.

"We can request information from videoing of the sessions and GPS data, too," Garlick said. "We are also looking at bringing in our own independent audit inspection team that we'll scale up over the next few days which will give us the ability to have inspections at training grounds to start with on a no-notice basis."

"Gradually, we aim to ramp that up so we can have an inspector at every training ground." (Agencies)

Fans torn as Spanish football prepares to begin recovery without them

MADRID

LA Liga's proposed restart next month has left fans juggling the excitement of football's return and the disappointment it will resume without them.

More than two months after the coronavirus pandemic halted the season in Spain, players have begun training in small groups as they aim to be as ready as possible for the planned reboot on June 12.

Yet goals, saves and tackles will all be greeted by silence or at best, artificial cheers approved by authorities to be pumped out of a sound system.

Even for Sevilla against Real Betis, the usually-heart thumping Andalusian derby that encapsulates the importance of supporters more than any other Spanish fixture, the atmosphere will be non-existent on the first weekend back.

But for clubs, there is a financial necessity given La Liga president Javier Tebas has estimated cancelling the season could cost them 1 billion euros (\$1.08 billion).

"People need their dose of football," Adolfo Barbero, a commentator on Movistar, Spain's primary football broadcaster, told AFP.

"There is that want for fans to go to matches but for many now, the priority is to play. They want to see 22 guys, a ball and a green pitch, the rest will be for afterwards."

For fans, there is an acceptance that the sport returning in muted form is better than it not coming back at all.

"We understand that football without fans is not the football we want," says Jose Manuel Mateo, president of Aficiones Unidas, an association of fans from different clubs.

"But given the exceptional nature of the situation, we have no choice but to accept it."

"I don't think football can afford just to wait or stand still until there is a vaccine, which guarantees safety," Mateo added.

According to La Liga, playing without fans is not without cost too as clubs surrender considerable sums in matchday revenue.

But finishing the remaining 11 rounds of the season and completing European competitions would limit losses to around 303 million euros, a third of the figure contemplated for cancellation.

- 'Without fans it's not football' -

Resumption allows players to return to work and staff too, many of whom have had their wages cut in recent weeks.

"Many families also depend on football for income, it's not only the players," Mateo said.

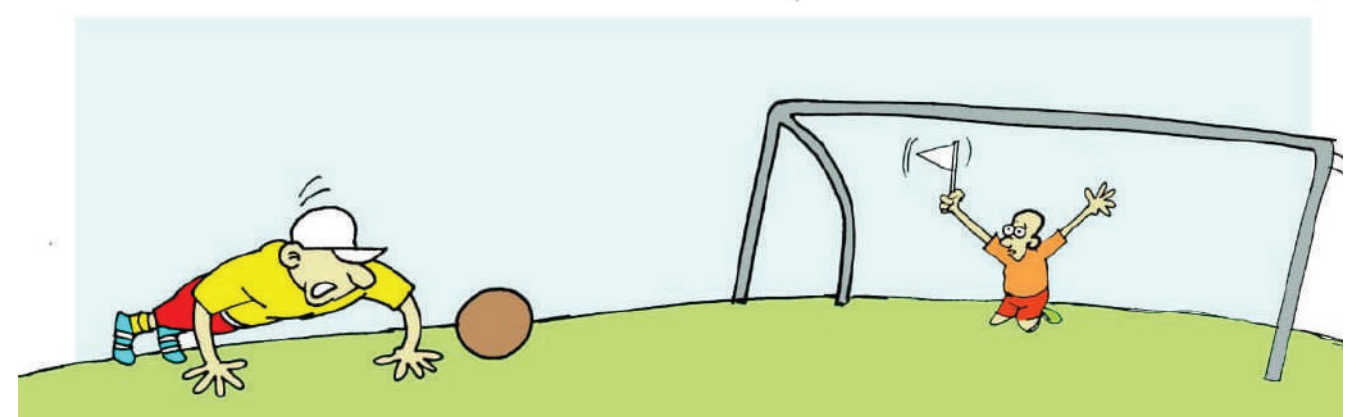


Spanish clubs began training in groups of 10 players on Monday (AFP Photo)

Playing the last eleven days of the league "behind closed doors is a way to save the season," admits Gerardo Tocino, president of the Real Madrid fans' club, La Gran Fa-

milia. "Those of us who really feel the colours of a club, what we seek is the best for the team, even if that means seeing your play-

Gwiji by David Chikoko



SPORT

Liverpool may not get
Prem trophy presentation

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19



Said Ndemla

Agent parts ways with Simba SC midfielder

By Correspondent Faustine Feliciana

RENOWNED Tanzanian soccer agent, Jamal Kisongo, that had in the past served as an agent for Simba SC midfielder, Said Ndemla, has said people who are advising the latter to extend his stay at the club are wasting the player's time.

Kisongo noted much as he has stopped serving as Ndemla's agent, he is still the latter's fan and he wishes to see the player play professional soccer outside Tanzania.

He pointed out Ndemla is a good midfielder but he unfortunately faces enormous challenges in his attempt to secure a place in Simba's lineup given there are foreign players in his position at the side.

"Honestly Ndemla is not in the right place lately. He is skilful player that can play elsewhere and win plaudits as well as get back to his best form," he sated.

"Ndemla is a very good player and he can don any other squad's kits, there are people who advise him to keep on playing for Simba but I ought to genuinely note he should head to another squad."

"He was in great form after returning from Sweden, as opposed to his level of performance presently."

Kisongo disclosed Ndemla must understand football is an extremely short career and therefore he ought to come up with wise move so he can have better future.

In another development, Kisongo stated he is no longer serving as Ndemla's agent, pointing out they have gone separate ways.

"I'm still Ndemla's fan and I genuinely appreciate his talent. I wish to see him in great form and ply his trade outside the country," Kisongo disclosed.

Ndemla is one of Simba SC U-20 squad players who later went on to land a place in the outfit's first team with several others including midfielders, Jonas Mkude, Ibrahim Ajibu, and defender Mohammed Hussein.

Ramadhan Singano that is playing for DR Congo's TP Mazembe, Polisi Tanzania's William Lucian 'Gallas', Kagera Sugar's Abdallah Seseme and Hassan Ishaka, Mtibwa Sugar's Haruna Chanongo, as well as Miraji Adam, a Coastal Union defender, are also in the list.

Chess player cherishes featuring in Africa championship

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

TANZANIAN chess player, Albert Njau, has described his experience at the inaugural Africa Individual Free Online Chess championship as very memorable.

Njau who is rated 1805 on International Chess Federation (FIDE) ratings was the only Tanzanian who competed at the championship which attracted more than 1377 strong and experienced players.

He scored 28 points from 15 games and finished 125th, he described the experience as very great.

The 30 years old player won 10 games and lost five games.

"It feels great to compete with experienced players, it was memorable to me and has helped me grow as a player, this was the first ever Africa Online Chess tournament, which was well organised," he said.

He said the games were played three minutes each and he won the first, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, 11th, 13th and 14th games. He lost games number two, three, 10th, 12th and 15th.

Africa Chess Federation (ACF) organised the online contest as a trial tournament in the wake of coronavirus disease (Covid-19) pandemic and is set to slot the tournament into the body's calendar.

"I'm looking forward to other future online events, the just ended championship has opened my eyes and I'm sure I will, in the next tournament, perform well so as to make my country proud," he said.

The tournament saw Malawian Fide Master (FM) Joseph Mwale emerge the winner with 64 points, South African Candidate Master (CM) Keith Khumalo finish as runner-up with same points while Nigerian International Master (IM) Odion Aikhonje was third with 60 points.

Burundian keeper now targets move to Simba SC

By Correspondent Adam Fungamwango

BURUNDI's national football squad's keeper Jonathan Nahimana that plays for Mainland Premier League outfit, KMC FC, has disclosed he wishes to ply his trade at the league's other club, Simba, given the latter are eager to regularly take part in continental club competitions.

He stated the Msimbazi Street-based club also pays its players well.

In an interview with a Dar es Salaam radio station, Nahimana, who has put impressive displays throughout his stint at KMC FC, disclosed much as he has got several offers from in and outside Tanzania, he fancies playing for Simba.

He stated he has though yet to communicate with Simba officials.

"I'm targeting to feature for a more prominent side, I do not want to extend my contract with KMC FC, I want to play elsewhere," he stated.

He disclosed he has been presented with offers from clubs including Guinea champions AC Horoya, Zambia's Nkana FC, Mainland Premier League's Azam FC and Yanga but he has not sealed agreement with any of the mentioned outfits.

"Yanga wanted to pay me a salary which is almost like the one KMC FC pay me. I nevertheless had set out to move to Azam FC once the squad had hired coach Etienne Ndayiragije but the plan did not come to fruition since the squad had foreign keeper, Razack Abalora, it was not possible for Azam FC to rope in two foreign keepers," he added.

"Ndayiragije told me I had to wait for the conclusion of the top flight season, given his contract with the side was set to end this season, the tactician, though, parted ways with Azam FC and the deal, for that matter, was forfeited." Nahimana's contract with KMC FC is set to end after the completion of this season's Premier League.

He disclosed he does not doubt his form because he learnt a lot from his participation in the 2019 African Nations Cup (AFCON) finals in Egypt with his country's national team.

He stated despite sustaining injury which had him miss out on several matches, he is in good form and he put in good displays in games he took part in.

Benjamin Sitta, KMC FC Board Chairman, pointed out Nahimana has showcased lack of professionalism given he is eager to play for Simba whereas he has running contract with KMC FC.

"I have not heard his comments, maybe he was not understood. If he either wishes to feature for Simba or the club wants to rope him in, they have to follow proper channels," Sitta stated.

"Simba may as well wait for his contract to come to an end, a player is not expected to openly express his wish to feature for another club whereas he is still contracted to a certain club."



Some of domestic athletes feature in training at National Stadium in Dar es Salaam recently to prepare for domestic and international competitions. PHOTO: CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

AT not expecting IAAF bailout amid Covid-19 crisis, says official

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

ATHLETICS Tanzania (AT) has said it does not expect any financial bailout from the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) to cushion the financial impact of Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic on the former.

AT information officer, Tullo Chambo, yesterday said the national athletics governing body is using its financial resources to pay for its two staff.

He said IAAF has not communicated to them on any financial bailout.

"We do not expect any financial support from IAAF to cushion us during this period of Coronavirus spread which has affected athletics hard, the only thing which we are doing is to keep on paying our two staff," he said.

He explained that if Tanzanian athletes Failuna Matanga and

Alfonse Simbu were in camp in Kenya preparing for the 2020 Olympics, which have been postponed to next year, meeting the duo's training expenses could have been AT's duty.

"If Failuna (Matanga) and Simbu (Felix) were in camp preparing for the Tokyo Olympics and the government suspended sporting activities due to Covid-19, surely AT would have been responsible for them," he said.

Chambo said he understands that Covid-19 has affected the economy of many athletes who were earning their living through athletics, but AT has no any financial power to support them.

He said the Coronavirus spread should serve as a reason for athletes to develop the culture of saving and investing in businesses.

"We understand that many athletes in the country earn their living through athletics, and this crisis has affected them

and their families greatly," he stated.

"But as the association we have no any financial power to support them, this pandemic should serve as a reason for our athletes to develop the culture of either saving or investing," he said.

The AT official also hailed President John Joseph Magufuli for his decision to consider ending the indefinite suspension of sporting activities, starting with giving green light to resumption of football competitions, saying this is a good development.

"There is a ray of hope now and, as AT, we thank the President for his decision to uplift sporting activities' suspension, starting with permitting football competitions, we are sure that after football, other sporting activities will resume," he disclosed.

"This is welcome considering that we have many people in the country who depend on football

for their daily life," he said.

The official also urged athletes in the country to continue focusing on keeping fit while observing social distance.

The AT official's remarks have come after world soccer governing body, FIFA, had announced a relief package to be presented to FIFA member associations to cushion them from the negative financial impact of the novel coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.

Meanwhile, Dennis Makoi, who is Tanzania Tennis Association (TTA) president said they do not expect financial backing from either the International Tennis Federation (ITF) or Confederation of African Tennis (CAT).

"Tennis players and coaches have been affected by this Coronavirus heavily, but we haven't heard anything from ITF on financial support, maybe in the future they will come up with that," he said.

Flexibles by David Chikoko



TONIGHT @ 7:00

EATV SAA 1

WEDNESDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 Weekend Movie (r)
13:30 Kall 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 Kibishara 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.

eastafrica RADIO

06:00 Supa Breakfast
10:00 MAMAMIA
12:00 Kipenga Xtra
13:00 Planet Bongo
16:00 EA Drive
20:00 Kipenga
21:00 The Cruise

88.1FM
DAR ES SALAAM