

National Pg3 Journalist Erick Kabendera set free



National Pg 4 Improving schools infrastructure in Mara



National Pg 6 ASA launches palm oil seedling farm



'Evidence of herbal medicines weight loss effect still inadequate'

SYDNEY

RESEARCHERS from the University of Sydney have conducted the first global review of herbal medicines for weight loss in 19 years, finding insufficient evidence to recommend any current treatments.

Senior author Dr Nick Fuller said with overweight and obesity rates reaching epidemic



This finding suggests there is insufficient evidence to recommend any of these herbal medicines for the treatment of obesity

proportions worldwide, many people are turning to herbal supplements as an alternative approach to maintain or lose weight.

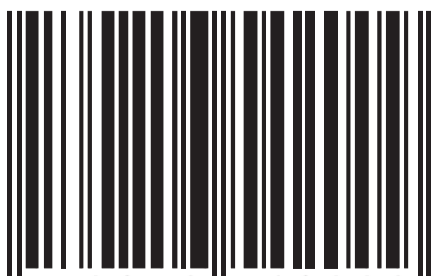
"The problem with supplements is that unlike pharmaceutical drugs, clinical evidence is not required before they are made available to the public in supermarkets or chemists," said Dr Fuller from the University of Sydney's Boden collaboration for obesity, nutrition, exercise and eating disorders based at its Charles Perkins Centre.

The systematic review and meta-analysis, published in the journal Diabetes, Obesity & Metabolism, analysed the latest international research in this area. It found 54 randomised controlled trials comparing the effect of herbal medicines to placebo for weight loss in over 4000 participants.

The research team found that despite some of the herbal medicines showing statistically greater weight loss than placebo, weight loss was less than 2.5kg and therefore not of clinical significance.

"This finding suggests there is insufficient evidence to recommend any of these

TURN TO PAGE 2



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Kibaha biolarvicide key for anti-malaria efforts



President John Magufuli holds talks at State House in Dar es Salaam yesterday with German Chancellor Angela Merkel's envoy for Africa, Guenter Nooke. Photo: State House

JPM confers with close Merkel aide

By Guardian Reporter

PRESIDENT John Magufuli yesterday met with the German Chancellor's Personal Representative for Africa, Guenter Nooke, where they agreed to continue strengthening the two countries' historical relations for mutual benefit.

In the meeting at the State House in Dar es Salaam, Nooke presented a message from the Chancellor Angela Merkel and commended the government's efforts in fighting corruption and intensifying economic growth.

He said Tanzania has made a lot of develop-



Tanzania has made a lot of development strides compared to previous years

ment strides compared to previous years.

He assured the government that Germany will continue cooperating with Tanzania in various sectors including investment, trade and boosting social services.

Dr Magufuli also assured the Chancellor's envoy that the government will continue strengthening the bilateral and historical ties, welcoming investors from Germany to invest in various productive sectors.

In the meeting, Nooke was accompanied by the German ambassador to Tanzania, Regine Hess - meanwhile as President Magufuli later met with Kenyan lawyer and renowned pan-Africanist, Prof Patrick Lumumba.

During the meeting they discussed vari

TURN TO PAGE 2

Health experts from across the continent are meanwhile discussing ways of implementing health technologies to combat tropical diseases in their countries and already the Kibaha Biotech Plant is standing out as a prime example of such strategies

By Correspondent Marc Nkwame, Arusha

THE country's biological arsenal aimed at eliminating malaria through the production of biolarvicides has been proved to be so efficient such that some African countries are importing the formula to eradicate the deadly tropical disease.

But while the Kibaha-produced biolarvicide is helping other countries, Tanzania is still lagging behind in using it. Experts here explain that what holds the project back is poor background knowledge among imple-



The workshop takes place in Arusha under the auspices of Access and Delivery Partnership aiming at accelerating access to and delivery of new health technologies for tropical diseases tied up with poverty

Brokers, auctioneers set to obtain licences online

By Getrude Mbagu

THE Ministry of Finance and Planning has launched an online facility to enable brokers and auctioneers to apply for and obtain licences electronically, to reduce the time and cost spent in following up license applications.

Speaking at the inauguration of the facility in Dar es Salaam yesterday, Permanent Secretary Doto James (pictured) said that before the facility was conceived, brokers had to travel long distances to the Treasury headquarters to obtain licences.

He said that with the new facility, the



companies will apply for the license online and pay fees through mobile phones or banks.

"The move will also enable more auctioneers and brokers in real estate and other fields to register and conduct their activities legally and freely. This will also increase revenue collection for the government," he stated.

He directed brokers and auctioneers across the country who are yet to register to do so immediately as the government will not spare anyone conducting the business illegally.

TURN TO PAGE 2

menting officials.

"Experts have been testing the Biolarvicide formula produced at the Tanzania Biotech Products Ltd (TBPL) and have vouched for its efficacy," stated Prof Yunus Mgaya, the Director General of the National Institute for Medical Research (NIMR).

Prof Mgaya was speaking to journalists here during the ongoing five-day consultative workshop, addressing implementation research for effective access and delivery of health technologies for East and Southern African countries.

The NIMR chief executive pointed out that already various countries in the SADC region are using the formula to eliminate malaria. "We may need to train health personnel at district level on how to apply biolarvicide in their respective areas," he stated.

Health experts from across the continent are meanwhile discussing ways of implementing health technologies to combat tropical diseases in their countries and already the Kibaha Biotech Plant is standing out as a

TURN TO PAGE 2

Kibaha biolarvicide key to anti-malaria efforts

FROM PAGE 1

prime example of such strategies.

The regional implementation research training workshop has been organized by the international agency for Research and Training in Tropical Diseases (TDR) through the coordination of NIMR.

The workshop takes place in Arusha under the auspices of Access and Delivery Partnership aiming at accelerating access and delivery of new health technologies for tropical diseases tied up with poverty. These include tuberculosis (TB), malaria and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), supporting efforts of the United Nations to attain universal health coverage (UHC).

The training workshop brings together more than 30 participants from six countries of Kenya, Uganda, Malawi, Ethiopia, Zambia and hosts Tanzania. These countries share common major diseases with varying burdens and it is expected that South-South cooperation through implementation research training will provide a platform for sharing experience extensively.

"This workshop has been made possible by the Access and Delivery Partnership (ADP) through TDR. NIMR has been implementing ADP activities focusing on Implementation Research for the past five years," the director noted.

He was of view that health

experts have observed an enormous impact on the implementation of various interventions for neglected tropical diseases as well as malaria and tuberculosis.

"To date, implementation research programmes have strengthened the capacity of vertical programmes to identify gaps, which have been affecting the implementation of interventions for years, thus leading to poor outcomes and low impact."

"You may wish to know that your selection to attend this workshop embraced the first step of the implementation research approach. TDR invited applicants to submit a project abstract or synopsis with identified problems or implementation gaps.

"By the end of this week participants will come up with proposals ready for submission for funding consideration, those working with vertical programmes readying to submit the proposals for ethical clearance before beginning the implementation of the projects," the director elaborated.

Leading officials attending the workshop include Dr Joseph Okeibunor, the World Health Organization (WHO) Africa representative, along with Dr Olumide Ogundahunsi, who is the ADP coordinator. Others are Dr Paul Kazyooba who is director of research coordination and promotion for NIMR and Dr Nyanda Ntinginya, the director for the NIMR Centre in Mbeya.



Tourists from various countries have a view of the Ngorongoro Crater from a hilltop observatory shortly after visiting the crater at the weekend. The world-renowned natural attraction is situated in Tanzania's Ngorongoro District, Arusha Region. Photo: Correspondent Woinde Shizza

'Evidence of herbal medicines weight loss effect still inadequate'

FROM PAGE 1

herbal medicines for the treatment of obesity. Furthermore, many studies had poor research methods or reporting and even though most supplements appear safe for short-term consumption, they are expensive and are not going to provide weight loss that is clinically meaningful," said Dr Fuller.

As for herbal medicines

for weight loss, the most recent data on the use of weight loss supplements from a US study, showed that among people trying to lose weight 16 percent on average (12 percent of men and 19 percent of women) reported past-year use.

Herbal medicines or 'herbal supplements' as they are commonly known, are products containing a plant or combinations

of plants as the principal active ingredient. They come in various forms including pills, powders or liquids.

Common herbal supplements used for weight loss include green tea, garcinia cambogia, white kidney bean and African mango.

The authors write that between 1996 and 2006, 1000 dietary supplements for weight loss were listed

on the Australian Register of Therapeutic Goods without evaluation of efficacy.

These substances can be sold and marketed to the public with sponsors (those who import, export or manufacture goods) only required to hold, but not necessarily produce, evidence substantiating their claims. The authors note that only 20 percent

of new listings are audited annually to ensure they meet this requirement.

In some countries, the only requirement is that the supplement contains acceptable levels of non-medicinal substances.

"The growth in the industry and popularity of these products highlights the importance of conducting more robust studies on the effectiveness

and safety of these supplements for weight loss," said Dr Fuller.

The review excluded studies where the herbal medicine did not include the whole plant, was comprised of plant oils or combined with other dietary supplements such as fibres and proteins. This analysis will be reported in a future paper, the reviewer added.



William Makoreho (L), NMB Bank Plc's head of institutional banking, briefs Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa in Dar es Salaam at the weekend. The PM visited the bank's pavilion at an exhibition that ran concurrently with the just-ended 2020 International Mineral and Mining Investment Conference held in the city. Photo: PMO

JPM confers with close Merkel aide

FROM PAGE 1

ous issues concerning Africa's development and various efforts taken to strengthen regional economies.

Dr Magufuli hailed Prof Lumumba for being open in criticizing and advising African countries on the best ways towards development.

He said Prof Lumumba has been openly outlining mistakes done by African countries thus thwarting economic, political and social development.

He also explained various development strategies taken by the Fifth Phase government to strengthen the country's economy.

"I have never met you before, but I have been seeing you through media networks and I am really impressed by what you are doing for the sake of Africa. I am also happy that you speak positively and wish well about Africa," the president affirmed.

Prof Lumumba on his side thanked President

Magufuli for taking time to talk to him and for the tireless efforts he takes to fight for Tanzania's development.

"Africa should now learn from Tanzania. There are a lot of things to learn including the protection of natural resources, restoring diligence in the public service, intensifying economic growth, fighting corruption and economic sabotage among other things," the noted Kenyan academic and activist intoned.

Traditional healers to 'diagnose' and refer TB patients to hospital

By Guardian Correspondent, Tunduru

TUNDURU district hospital has started using traditional and alternative healers that have been registered to identify people suffering from tuberculosis (TB) and refer them to hospitals for treatment.

People in the district have hailed the decision by the hospital, saying it will contribute in eradicating the disease.

Some residents of Mdingula in Namasalau village were found in a 'clinic' of a famous traditional healer Hausi Mohamed receiving treatment advised the government to continue respecting the healers as they have great contribution in eradicating the disease and save peoples' lives.

Two of them - Rahim Hussein and Mohamed Abdallah said if the government will use traditional healers in the strategic campaign against TB, its achievement will be great due to a large number of people seeking treatment for their various ailments from them.

Rahim said in these traditional 'clinics' there are huge groups people from vari-

ous regions in Tanzania Mainland and the Isles including neighbouring Mozambique who go to seek treatment.

He said their participation in identifying sufferers of TB and referring them to hospitals for proper treatment will save a lot of lives.

On his part, Mohamed Abdallah said many people in the society still believed in alternative cure as a solution to their ailments as some diseases do not have professional cure, but when they go to traditional healers they get well.

The coordinator of TB and leprosy at Tunduru district hospital Dr Mkasange Kihongole said already there are more than 40 traditional healers who have received training on how to identify TB victims and referred them to hospital for further examinations.

Dr Kihongole who also doubles as coordinator for traditional and alternative cure said due to the high prevalence of TB in the society the government has seen it necessary to recognize and incorporate them for TB eradication campaign by 2035.

Brokers, auctioneers set to obtain licenses online

FROM PAGE 1

number of auctioneers and agents in real estate conduct their activities without having a legal license, which denies the country its required revenues.

"We are going to embark on a countrywide campaign to unearth all illegal auctioneers. All who will be caught will be dragged to court to face criminal charges...We want

to maintain the good name of the industry and get rid of those who are ruining the quality of the sector," he cautioned.

For his part, Choto Sindo, acting director of government assets in the ministry said that the ministry will educate auctioneers and brokers on the new facility.

He directed regional verifiers of government assets to ensure that

they serve the group well and with due diligence to ensure that they understand the purpose of this innovation.

"From now onwards, it is strictly forbidden for any broker or auctioneer to operate without being registered," the director intoned.

Yono Auction Mart managing director Scholastica Kevela urged the government to finalise the review

of the law governing the sector so as to address some inconveniences which occur during operations.

"We are ready to help the government to identify unregistered brokers. There are so many in real estate and other industries...so we will support the government in arresting these people who spoil our industry," she told the gathering.



Prof Abdulkarim Mruma, a commissioner with the national Mining Commission, exchanges greetings with NBC Ltd relationship manager (public sector banking) Azza Mnzava (2nd-L) when the former toured the bank's pavilion at the just-ended 2020 International Mineral and Mining Investment Conference in Dar es Salaam at the weekend. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Journalist Kabendera set free after seven months in remand

By Guardian Reporter

FREELANCE journalist Erick Kabendera has been set free after spending seven months in prison.

Kabendera was released after pleading guilty to money laundering for which he was fined by the Kisumu Resident's Magistrate Court in Dar es Salaam yesterday.

His release follows 'plea bargain agreement' he entered with the Director of Public Prosecutions in which a charge relating to involvement in organised crime was dropped.

The journalist was fined 172 million/- (\$74,000) for tax evasion, which he agreed to pay in six months, and 100 million/- (\$43,000) for money laundering.

Senior Resident Magistrate Janeth Mtega also ordered him to pay 250,000/- (\$108) for his release. The sentence was read yesterday by Principal Resident Magistrate Janeth Mtega.

Earlier, the prosecution withdrew the charge of leading a criminal gang.

Before the sentence was read, State Attorney Faraja Nchimbi alleged in court that the accused was a habitual offender but has no past records hence asked the court to mete out punishment according to the terms agreed in the plea bargain arrangement.

On his part Defense Attorney Jebra Kambole claimed that his pleading to the charges has reduced the time in court for the conduct of the trial, as he has a family and other dependants and that he has been in custody for over six months.

He also claimed his client's health was not good and prayed in the first count to be given a 250,000/- fine according to tax laws and for the second count he is to be given a fine according to the provisions of the laws.

Earlier, reading the 'plea bargain' agreement reached with the DPP Senior State Attorney Wankyo Simon claimed that they have entered into plea bargain with the accused after he pleaded guilty to the money laundering charges and tax evasion hence the DPP withdrew the charge.

After reading the agreement magistrate Mtega took the oath of the accused and

asked him whether he signed the agreement from his own will and responded in the affirmative.

According to the State Attorney Nchimbi between January 1 2010 and July 29 2019 the accused involved himself with a criminal gang by entering into illegal contracts with other people outside the country including other prominent people not in court.

He claimed the accused agreed to commit offences including forgery; tax evasion and money laundering that contribute to the plummeting of the country's economy.

He claimed that in March 2010 with his company registered as Voxy Media Centre (T) Ltd b y BRELA and that on January 11, 2016 the accused and his spouse Loy Kabendera aka Loy Nganga registered a company known as Sitrep Company Limited and in that registration they forged various documents to show its premises were at House No 13 Block 213 in Mbweni Mpiji, Kinondoni District which is the house they live in.

He claimed that the accused in his criminal activities issued untruthful statements to government officials aimed to cheat it in order to obtain money through criminal means.

Nchimbi also claimed that on April 2 2016 the accused and his spouse opened two bank account with CRDB Bank, one of which was for foreign currency, as well the accused own bank account.

He said on January 1, 2015 the accused received USD 230,358.83 from his co-accused through his account, the money that came from various people including K2 Intelligence Ltd, Palladium (Tanzania) Ltd, Sitrep Co. Ltd, Eurasia Group Ltd, International Crisis Rou and from other foreign based institutions.

Nchimbi further claimed that on January 1 2015 and August 29 2019 the accused and his spouse Loy as directors of Sitrep Co Ltd received USD 432,000,541 and Pound Sterling 119,000,130 and during the whole period they never paid any tax to Tanzania Revenue Authority (TRA).

However Nchimbi claimed that the accused police investigators that he never received any money without following proper procedures from illegal sources.

Dr Shein urges improving quality seeds for farmers

By Guardian Correspondent

ZANZIBAR President Dr Ali Mohammed Shein has urged the ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries to directly meet farmers and deliberate on better ways to continue increasing the quality of their seeds.

Dr Shein made the remarks at State House in Zanzibar when he received a report on the performance of the ministry for the period of July to December in the 2019/2020 financial year.

He said despite the use of the media in sensitizing the use of quality

seeds, there is need for the experts from the ministry to meet farmers direct.

Dr Shein who is also the Chairman for the revolutionary council said the use of quality seed is a unique one which calls for continuity to increase productivity especially on paddy production.

He asked the ministry to devise some new ways to address various challenges affecting the ministry.

Dr Shein hailed the ministry for its efforts to train and further its staff's education which he said will have impact on the performance of the ministry.

Dr Shein called upon the leaders and officials from the ministry to love and prioritize home made goods and value their work.

He urged the officials on the need for proper adherence to the law whenever they make decisions especially when they are serving the society.

Earlier, the Minister for Agriculture, natural resources, Livestock and fisheries Mmanga Mjengo Mjawiri said the ministry has made tremendous achievements in implementing various projects.

According to him, the success came out of the availability of funds

where a total of 12.56bn/- was gathered to fund various development projects.

He named some of the achievements as the construction of irrigation infrastructure at Ole, Dobi, Michigini, Kibonde Mzungu, Koani, Mchangani, Bandamaji.

He said the construction of the fish market at Malindi is about to come to an end whereby it will help vendors to have a special place to sell their crops.

The Minister said during the period about 39,951 tourists entered Zanzibar where by 3,951 were locals and 35,955 were foreigners.

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New York	953	3,960	6,496

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Govt assures livestock keepers of subsidised chemicals for diseases

By Guardian Reporter

THE Government says it will ensure to provide subsidized chemicals for livestock dipping aimed to completely eradicate animals' diseases.

Speaking at a public rally at Ndelema livestock auction in Handeni District in Tanga Region at the weekend, Deputy Minister for Livestock and Fisheries Abdallah Ulega also called on the herders not to ignore dipping their animals to ensure their good health in order to fetch better prices at the market.

"Last year we received more than 300m/- from the Government for the purchase of chemicals which was distributed to 1,000 cattle dips countrywide, this year we have received more than 400m/- for the same purpose with the chemicals distributed to 1,700 cattle dips. We will continue doing so that we completely eradicate all livestock diseases," said Ulega.

On the issue of Handeni District livestock keepers sending their animals into government forests the Deputy Minister spoke live by phone from the rally to the Chief Executive Officer of Tanzania Forest Service Agency (TFS) Prof Dos Santos Silayo in which he directed him to erect boundary beacons for herders to identify forests' demarcations.

Prof. Silayo promised the Deputy Minister that he will immediately dis-

patch experts to implement the directive so as to remove conflicts brought by absence of boundary beacons.

At the meeting the Deputy Minister also called on Handeni District Council leadership to ensure they solve various challenges facing herders and livestock business people including improvement to infrastructures at Ndelema livestock auction including its easy accessibility by roads.

On their part, herders who were given the opportunity to speak at the rally hailed the government for its endeavors in the improvement to business environment in the livestock sector, and also asked to be given education on various issues regarding their activities for better benefits and without infringing country's laws.

Earlier, while visiting the natural dam at Kweingoma Village in Handeni Rural District, Ulega called on the wananchi fishing from the four kilometer long dam to organize themselves to form a cooperative so as to receive government assistance in various areas while personally promising to provide two outboard engines for boats that will be constructed by the Council to simplify their fishing activities.

Deputy Minister Abdallah Ulega has ended his three-day inspection tour to Tanga Region during which he visited Muheza, Pangani, Mkinga districts and Tanga City to talk to herders and fishermen.



Finance and Planning ministry permanent secretary Doto James inaugurates GAMIS Portal-Auctioneers Licences in Dar es Salaam yesterday. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

CCM members happy with huge increase in Nile perch stock in Lake Victoria

By Guardian Correspondent, Simiyu

CCM has commended the huge increase of Nile perch (sangara) in Lake Victoria coming only three years since the government embarked on a campaign to control illegal fishing in the lake, urging for urgent steps to find reliable markets for the fish from within and outside the country.

Speaking during the tour of members of CCM secretariat for Simiyu region, some fishermen at Nyamikoma fish market in Busega district said in the past before the start of the operation they were handling 6 tonnes of fish per month, but after government moved in to control illegal fishing, they are handling an average of 60 tonnes of fish per month.

The chairman of the group that supervises fishing resources (BMU) at Nyamikoma fish market in Busega district Simiyu region George James said the huge increase has also brought down Nile perch prices from an average of 9,000/- per kg down to 4,000 per kg.

Apart from these achievements the fishermen have appealed to

the government for an ice making plant in the area as currently they have to travel to Mwanza city - more than 150 km away to get ice cubes.

Speaking at the public rally at the Nyamikoma fish market CCM's Simiyu regional secretary Haula Kachwamba called on the government through the Private Sector Desk in the Ministry of Livestock

and Fisheries to visit the market so as to enable them access the financial institutions for loans to purchase ice making plant. He also appealed to the government to widen the scope in looking for fish markets so as to benefit from the huge increase of Nile perch catches, saying the markets can be explored in neighbouring countries including Congo DRC,

Zambia, Burundi, Rwanda, Malawi and Mozambique.

On the war against illegal fishing, the CCM regional secretary said CCM 2015 election manifesto had called for the government to control the industry so as to have sustainable fishing that can earn the country foreign exchange as well increasing the income to fishermen.

Meanwhile the representative of Busega district commissioner David Palanjo witnessed the destruction exercise of illegal fishing nets that were impounded during the operation in Magu and Busega districts and called on the wananchi to support the government's efforts against illegal fishing.



Education stakeholders in Mara Region attend a meeting on ways to improve performance in primary and secondary schools education. It was organised at the weekend by Mara regional commissioner Adam Malima. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Mara Region resolves to improve education sector

By Correspondent Sabato Kasika

MARA Region has resolved to improve primary and secondary schools infrastructures including the construction of classrooms, increase the number of desks and other teaching aids aimed to improve pass marks on examinations.

The resolutions were endorsed during an education conference at the weekend in Musoma organised by the Mara Regional Commission-

er Adam Malima and attended by more than 400 stakeholders from within and outside the region.

Speaking to this paper after the conference, Mara Regional Education Officer Ephraim Simbeye said: "Among the resolutions endorsed include control of truancy in schools which has contributed to the fall of education standards; and the establishment of the procedure of providing food at schools as well as to ensure schools with farms

should produce food to be used by students."

He said the stakeholders also resolved to have good schools-society relationship, to enforce discipline on students and fight gender based violence (GBV) and students; pregnancies.

Other resolutions endorsed included the incorporation of the society in educational issues and safety of teachers and students.

Simbeye said a special commit-

tee has been established to follow up the endorsed resolutions, led by the Mara Regional Commissioner Adam Malima, while committee members will be district commissioners from all districts in the Region.

He said Mara Region has more than 204 secondary schools, and 847 primary schools which, according to the adopted resolutions, they have to ensure they get good examination results.

"In the past three years our region has been performing badly at national examinations, hence we saw the need to call up all stakeholders for opinions in improving education in the region," he said.

He said in the Std VI National Examinations last year the region was 26th nationally, while in Form IV examinations it took the 25th position nationally, the situation that he said needed a huge shake up.

Varsity don stresses need to save wildlife corridors despite rise in populations

By Aisia Rweyemamu

THE government and other stakeholders have been challenged to scale up conservation efforts on wildlife corridors, most of which are on the verge of extinction due to population pressure.

A senior lecturer at University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM), College of Natural and Applied Sciences Dr Elkana Kalumanga made the call when speaking recently in Dar es Salaam at the master class training workshop on reporting wildlife conservation, trafficking and poaching in Tanzania, organized by the Journalists' Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET).

The don suggested the need for the country to invest heavily in conserving the remaining wildlife corridors in the country in order to maintaining ecological and genetic connectivity.

He said: "It is time for wildlife corridors conservation that any other time; this is due to rapid population in those areas".

Dr Elkana explained that the conservation of corridors was not much needed before because the population was very low, but now the population is much increasing and threatens the disappearance of the corridors.

He added: "Joint effort is needed in making this possible, because public sector itself cannot protect corridors. The invasion of wildlife corridors has been creating frequent human-wildlife conflicts in different parts of the country. These human interferences to these corridors aren't health to the wild animals."

According to him, wildlife corridors allow animals to move from place to place without interference. Increase gene flow between wild animals, improve species richness and help to secure national interest.

"Since the wildlife is the key sector in supporting national development, more effort is needed to protect corridors in order to facilitate this".

He further cited biodiversity conservation as an important environmental issue, and it plays an integral role in supporting many sectors of development. Biodiversity is supporting soil fertilization, recreation and ecotourism, provide food and raw materials as well as regulating climate change, he noted.

Chairperson of JET Dr Ellen Oturu said that the training is part of the implementation of the project on Promoting Tanzania's Environment, Conservation and Tourism (PROTECT) funded by the USAID. The project seeks to promote effective and consistent oversight by the media on reporting wildlife conservation, trafficking and poaching, contributing to their improved use for the public good in Tanzania.

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Journalists' Environmental Association of Tanzania (JET) executive director John Chikomo addresses journalists from various media organisations at a just-ended two-day master class workshop on the effective coverage of issues relating to wildlife conservation, trafficking and poaching in Tanzania held in Dar es Salaam. The training formed the second phase of the implementation of Promoting Tanzania's Environment, Conservation and Tourism (PRO-TRECT), a project funded by USAID. Photo: Aisia Rweyemamu

ASA launches palm oil seedling farm in Tanga

By Correspondent Valentine Oforo, Tanga

AGRICULTURAL Seed Agency (ASA) has established a special farm in Mkinga district, Tanga region aiming at producing quality and affordable seedlings to farmers. The 969-hectare farm is projected to play key role in boosting production of edible oil in the country.

ASA's Production Manager, Benjamin Mfupe said the agency will also initiate another production farm in Kilosa, Morogoro. "Our plan is to ensure we are producing abundant palm oil seedlings in a bid to sensitize more farmers to cultivate the crucial economic crop," he expressed.

Tanzania stands among countries within the continent with a major challenge of shortage of production and availability of edible oil.

As per the available statistics, the country annually spends 675bn/- to import between 400,000 and 570,000 tonnes of edible oil. Moreover, in effort to improve the situ-

ation, recently, the agency supplied 200 seedlings of palm oil to farmers in Kasulu District, Kigoma Region to revive cultivation of the cash crop.

Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa had directed all agricultural institutions in the country to invest on production of hybrid seeds of edible oil producing crops.

"We have also opened a vast project for the raising of pre-germinated palm oil seeds at Bugaga seed farm in Kigoma Region," Mfupe added.

To add up the production muscle, the Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) launched a special center in Kigoma region, christened (TARI-Kihinga).

The regions that support cultivation of palm oil in Tanzania include Kigoma, Morogoro, Tanga, Coastal region, Mtwara, Mbeya, Mpanda, Rukwa, Lindi, Geita, Bukoba (Karagwe) and Tabora.

Mbeya, Tabora and Coast are leading for having large plantations of palm oil.



Our plan is to ensure we are producing abundant palm oil seedlings in a bid to sensitize more farmers to cultivate the crucial economic crop

Activists, traffic police drill pupils on road safety

By Correspondent James Lanka, Moshi

ROAD safety ambassadors in Kilimanjaro region have teamed up with regional traffic police office and provided road safety training to primary and secondary school pupils from 12 schools in the region.

The move aims at cutting down high rate of accidents that that authorities attribute to lack of road safety awareness among

road users in addition to reckless driving.

Speaking here at the weekend during the road safety competition after a six-month training to eleven primary schools and one secondary school the Kilimanjaro Regional Traffic Officer (RTO), Superintendent of Police Zauda Mohammed said that the training entailed the good use of the road by pedestrians, road safety and first aid skills.

Mohammed said the trainings

which kicked off in September last year and ended on Friday were sponsored by the Foundation for Civil Society adding that the initiative will continue in all districts of Kilimanjaro region.

She further explained that, most of the roads accidents in the region are caused by reckless driving who don't abide with road regulations where by 80 per cent of accidents are caused by reckless drivers, 12 per cent of the road accidents

are caused by the mechanical problems of the vehicles, 6 per cent of the road accidents are caused by climate change, while only 2 per cent of the road accidents are caused by bad infrastructures.

She further explained that, there are other new road signs like Deaf Sign, and Disabled signs, among many others, appealing the drivers to participate in various road safety and vehicle users' trainings to learn

them.

"This is not an end, my office will continue providing to you various training on road safety, road user's guiding trainings for sustainable road safety in our region," the RTO said.

Hamadi Hoza who was the Chief Judge of the competition and Francis Maneno who was among the trainers said that the after the training, they assessed to see if the pupils properly understood.

Primary schools that entered into the competition are Sango, Njiapanda, Uchira, Mnazi, Kiboriloni, Magereza, Karanga, Mwereni, Mailisita, Mabungo, Dr Shein primary schools located around Arusha/Dar-es-salaam highway, as well as St. Amachus Inclusive secondary school located along Moshi-Arusha highway in Hai district, Kilimanjaro region.

Hoza named the winners as Mnazi primary school, followed

by Saint Amachus Inclusive secondary school and Sango primary school.

Kilimanjaro Regional Police Commander Salumu Hamduni commended the initiative, saying that his office is open for such further efforts in the region.

"My appeal to all drivers and other road users is to abide by road use rules and regulations to avoid accidents and loss of lives," the RPC said.

Guidelines for dialogues between public and private sectors all set

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

THE government has launched guidelines for dialogue between the public and private sectors across regional and district levels, emphasizing the document as vital in addressing challenges facing businesses and investors in the country.

Prepared by the Tanzania National Business Council (TNBC) with support from the Enabling Growth through Investment and Enterprise (Engine) and the Local Investment Climate (LIC) project, the guidelines are meant to strengthen the relationship between the government and the private sector.

Jenista Mhagama, Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office responsible for Policy, Parliamentary Affairs, Labour, Employment, Youth and the Disabled speaking shortly before launching the guidelines yesterday said, "these guidelines will enable both parties involved to have productive deliberations."

The guidelines according to the minister were adopted to complement the private sector support to the government's development vision and the race to an industrial powered economy. "The private sector is an engine to the government's economic growth efforts," she said.

"We have every reason to provide friendly-environment to ensure the private sector flourish."

Although the TNBC was established in 2001, the regional and district councils come to effect in 2005 and 2008 respectively. TNBC National chairman, President John Magufuli held a meeting with representatives of the business community in June last year directing the councils to be strengthened across the country.

Minister of State in the President's Office (Re-

gional Administration and Local Governments) Suleiman Jafo said out of 26 regions in the Tanzania Mainland, only 16 regions had substantive and active councils while a dozen districts had neither held or organized such councils.

The minister was quick to defend that lack of guidelines by then ought to be a major reason for inactive councils across the country.

He offered three months to every region to submit a report on the progress of the implementation of councils across the region and district levels.

Dr Godwill Wanga, the newly appointed Executive Secretary of the Tanzania National Business Council told delegates here that the councils were not clearly organised and therefore failing to meet their intended goals of unearthing and forming part of a solution to address challenges facing businesses and investments in the community. "The new guidelines provide formality, procedures and requirements to be followed for an effective council. These guidelines also offer condition for financial support of each council," he said. Technically the public and private sector are to share the cost of organizing the council meetings at district and regional level.

Rehema Mbugi a representative from the private sector and Dr Binilith Mahenge, Chairman of the Dodoma Regional National Business Council acknowledged the importance of the councils in building up the country's economy.

Mbugi attributed the private sector's commitment towards facilitating the council meetings but cautioned that the business and investors would need fully enforcement from the government on key issues suggested during the council meeting.



Livestock and Fishing deputy minister Abdallah Ulega (in light green T-shirt) inspects roast meat at Ndelema auction site in Handeni District at the weekend. Photo: Correspondent Boniface Gideon

Religious leaders challenged to warn politicians against anti-peace remarks

By Guardian Correspondent, Dodoma

SPECIAL seats Member of Parliament Felister Bura (CCM) has appealed to religious leaders to speak up against politicians who utter statements that can breach the country's peace.

Speaking here at the weekend at a gathering of religious leaders from various denominations at

prayers to install the Bishop for Dodoma Diocese of Tanzania Methodist Church John Mjelwa, the MP said political leaders should not be feared.

"Some bishops and pastors have feared political leaders for the sins they commit, instead they hold them in high esteem as if they are the type not to be reproved, but remember, all human beings are equal before God," she said.

She also called on women, the youth and people with disabilities to form groups so as to be able to access interest free loans from the district councils.

She said the money is there, what is needed is to start productive projects to eradicate poverty.

"Since the government decision to move to Dodoma, there are many economic opportunities to

be found in the city than can be fully exploited to push up the economy," she said.

For his part the Bishop of Tanzania Methodist Church Joseph Bundala said the church will continue to speak up against all bad deeds without considering the status of a politician as without doing so they will be participating in their sins.

Bundala appealed to leaders of the church in-

cluding its followers to serve God that can bring development changes especially in the issue of economic enhancement through divine and material undertakings.

For his part Bishop John Mjelwa said one of his strategic plans is to ensure church adherents engage in productive work and reject dependency that has always increased poverty.

EI Bank commits to continue supporting African investment

By Tasneem Bulbulia

THE European Investment Bank (EIB) expects to significantly increase engagement in both sub-Saharan and North Africa and to provide €4-billion to support public and private investment across the continent this year.

This will include increased support for infrastructure that drives private sector growth, enabling job creation by entrepreneurs, startup companies and corporates, and new financing for climate-related investment and sustainable development, the bank said in a release on Monday.

It pointed out that it had, during 2019, provided €3-billion of new financing to support €10.7-billion of transformational investment across Africa.

"In recent months, the EIB has launched pioneering new initiatives to accelerate new investment essential to enabling women to fully participate in economic activity under the pioneering ShelInvest programme, to ensure African innovation companies can expand and to combine our financial understanding with philanthropy to tackle malaria," EIB president Werner Hoyer said.

The EIB directly supported 58 new investment projects located in 22 African countries and, in cooperation with both African and international financial partners, backed projects in many other countries across the continent through regional financing programmes.

"The European Union bank is continually increasing the impact of investment that supports sustainable development and addressing climate change in Africa.

"New support confirmed last year is providing thousands of schools and health centres with reliable electricity for the first time, ensuring that African farmers in the Sahel, Eastern and Southern Africa can access finance, providing clean water



Jenista Mhagama (C), Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office (Policy, Parliament, Labour, Employment, Youth and People with Disabilities), pictured in Dodoma yesterday launching guidelines on discussions involving the public and private sector at the district and regional levels. She is with Selemani Jafo (R), Minister of State in the President's Office (Regional Administration and Local Governments), and Tanzania National Business Council executive secretary Dr Godwill Wanga. Photo: Guardian Correspondent

Mkapa formally unveils his biography

By Guardian Correspondent, Mwanza

RETIRED President Benjamin Mkapa has officially unveiled by attesting his signature to his biography "My Life, My Purpose" which was launched by President John Magufuli on November 12 in Dar es Salaam.

Speaking at the official unveiling and signature of his book in Mwanza Region by bringing together various government and religious leaders, students, business people and other stakeholders, Mkapa said the reason for writing the book was to respond to all those who faulted him over his policies implemented during his presidency.

He said he had talked with transparency and truth on many various issues including leadership which had not been known and also knows that the society and politicians were directing their complaints at him especially over

the issue of privatization, hence he wanted the society to know the truth regarding his pursuits.

On his part, the Managing Director of Mkuki na Nyota, the publishers of the book, Walter Bgoya complained of the piracy of fake books in Mwanza Region saying he is saddened by the pirates who make copies of their books and sell them cheaply.

He asked the society to cooperate in identifying those people and educate the wananchi to understand that such kind of piracy is a criminal act that can send the perpetrator to jail.

"I have proof for this, they take our books, they reprint them anyhow and sell in the streets at low rates, they destroy book publishing industry, help us in identifying them," said Bgoya.

The Ag St Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT) Prof. Costa Mahalu said the contribution from Mkapa and

his participation in the liberation of Africa which he said truthfully and transparently shows that he was a man who does not hesitate to spot mistakes he committed without accusing anyone.

He said Mkapa hates discrimination and humiliation and liked to promote human rights, and this was evident in his struggles of Africa's liberation from the colonialists when he was the country's foreign minister.

A member of Chama cha Mapinduzi National Executive Committee (CCM-NEC) Christopher Gachuma contributed 10m/- towards cost of translating the book into Kiswahili so that many more people could read it.

He said apart from the monetary contribution he will also buy 20 sets of the book including speeches to various schools to offer opportunities to the youth to understand what Mkapa did during his leadership.

Ministry of Industry inaugurates productivity, quality improvement strategies for manufacturing sector

By Francis Kajubi

Dar es Salaam will be the first region to benefit with a new Ministry of Industry and Trade's (MIT) National Framework for Quality and Productivity Improvement (KAIZEN) in Manufacturing Sector project 2020-2030 (NFK 2020-2030) to be launched next month that targets at improving productivity capacity and efficiency of small and large manufacturing enterprises through cost cutting approach among others.

The Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) through Tanzania Kaizen Unit (TKU) bring the project into effect with the aim of enhancing efficiency and quality in the industrial production value chain of 50 small and large enterprises based in the city.

The 50 small and large enterprises will have their production, promotion and sales officers trained to Kaizen philosophy of business expansion through approach of cost cutting, better techniques to raw materials management, good use of space at place of work and time keeping.

Jane Lyatuu, Kaizen Master Trainer from the department of industrial development at the ministry, at the sidelines of a special seminar to groom journalists on the functions of Kaizen held in Dar es Salaam last week, told The Guardian that the project is designed to roll-out with a preliminarily estimated budget of 511.565mm/- in the first year of its implementation 2020/21 to cover the 50 enterprises.

"With the context of improving efficiency and quality of industrial manufactured products, the ministry through TKU in collaboration with project partners including Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) and College of Business Education (CBE) has developed this project" said Lyatuu.

She said number of enterprises may

also include members of industrial clusters whereby in the second year of implementation 80 enterprises will be targeted from other four regions.

"The four regions to be covered in the 2021-2022 term will be specified by June 2020. The first five years will be the area expansion phase in which the regional coverage grows, while the following five years will be the permeation phase in which KAIZEN practice in an area intensifies," she explained.

The Framework aims at making use of already created capacity to spread out Kaizen countrywide, inclusively and sustainably during 2020-2030 in Tanzania.

The Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Industry and Trade (MIT) will be responsible for the overall administration of the NFK implementation as the Project Director. The Director of Industrial Development, MIT, will be responsible for the managerial and technical matters as the Project Manager. The Deputy Project Managers, namely the Head of TKU, the Director General of SIDO, and the Principal of CBE, will be responsible for the administration of activities concerning each organization.

The TKU will serve as the Project Secretariat and coordinate day-to-day operation as well as the planning, monitoring, and evaluation processes of the NFK implementation as a whole. SIDO and the CBE will designate their Focal Points who are responsible for day-to-day operation of activities concerning each organization.

She asserted that implementation of NFK 2020-2030 will be promoted by a range of partner organizations. Partner organizations as of November 2019 included the Tanzania Bureau of Standards (TBS), the Export Processing Zone Authority (EPZA), the Vocational and Educational Training Authority (VETA), the National Institute of Productivity (NIP), and the Confederation of Tanzania Industries (CTI).

FOR SALE - BEACH PROPERTY

PWANI MCHANGANI - ZANZIBAR







On behalf of our client, we offer for sale by expression of interest on the following property:

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WWF for a living planet

JOB ANNOUNCEMENT

Environmental and Social Safeguarding Advisor

The WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature), an international conservation organization, is seeking for a competent and experienced Environmental and Social Safeguarding Advisor, to be based in Dar es Salaam.

Under the direct supervision of the WWF Tanzania Country Director the Environmental and Social Safeguarding Advisor (ESSA) is required to assist in championing the development and implementation process of Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) guidelines, framework, projects and programme as well support other staff regarding social screening of programmes and capacity building of WWF Tanzania staff and partners in consultation with the WWF Environmental and Social Safeguarding Regional Focal Point/Lead.

Major duties and responsibilities:

The ESSA will play a lead role at WWF Tanzania Country Office in projects and programme design and implementation as well as other departments regarding social policies and safeguards, screening and capacity building. The advisor will work with a range of stakeholders across four priority landscapes (Southern Kenya – Northern Tanzania Trans-boundary Landscape- SOKNOT, Ruvuma Landscape (Tanzania / Mozambique), Water Towers and the Rufiji Delta – Mafia Island – Kilwa District - RUMAKI Seascape) to:

- Improve WWF Tanzania's understanding of the perspectives of local communities and potential ESS issues in the priority landscapes, including in relation to the rights of communities as concern land, access to resources, human rights, indigenous peoples rights amongst others and how these are linked to nature conservation and Natural Resource Management;
- Facilitate greater ownership and effective participation of relevant rural communities, particularly vulnerable groups, in Natural Resource Management, through equitable and locally appropriate governance structures based on mutual respect and equitable collaboration with WWF Tanzania; and,
- Co-create jointly with communities, initiatives that will enhance coexistence between people and wildlife and contribute to improved wellbeing of communities.

Required Qualifications and experience: A University Degree in the field of Social Sciences or Development Studies ideally including modules regarding Natural Resource Management (A relevant Master's Degree is an added advantage). At least 7 years' active engagement and experience of working with communities on social development. Previous experience in working with communities on social safeguarding. Previous experience of working with communities on environmental and social safeguarding in a conservation setting is an advantage

Additional information: Detailed Terms of Reference can be obtained via http://wwf.panda.org/who_we_are/jobs/. Applications must include a Cover letter and complete CV with full contact details of three referees and should be addressed to the People & Culture Manager, via email to: hresources@wwf.tz by **Tuesday, 03rd March 2020** at 4:30 pm. Only the shortlisted candidates will be contacted and the interviews will take place in Dar es Salaam.

WWF is an equal opportunity organization.

The Guardian

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TUESDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2020

**Taking A New Look
At The News
ESTABLISHED IN 1995**

We should underscore the importance of joint investments on the Nile River

THE Nile is a major north-flowing river in northeastern Africa, and is the longest river in Africa and the disputed longest river in the world, as the Brazilian government says that the Amazon River is longer than the Nile. The Nile, which is about 6,650 km (4,130 mi) long, is an international river as its drainage basin covers eleven countries: Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, Ethiopia, Eritrea, South Sudan, Republic of the Sudan, and Egypt. In particular, the Nile is the primary water source of Egypt and Sudan.

The Nile has two major tributaries - the White Nile and the Blue Nile. The White Nile is considered to be the headwaters and primary stream of the Nile itself. The Blue Nile, however, is the source of most of the water and silt. The White Nile is longer and rises in the Great Lakes region of central Africa, with the most distant source still undetermined but located in either Rwanda or Burundi. It flows north through Tanzania, Lake Victoria, Uganda and South Sudan. The Blue Nile begins at Lake Tana in Ethiopia and flows into Sudan from the south-east. The two rivers meet just north of the Sudanese capital of Khartoum.

The northern section of the river flows north almost entirely through the Sudanese desert to Egypt, then ends in a large delta and flows into the Mediterranean Sea. Egyptian civilization and Sudanese kingdoms have depended on the river since ancient times. Most of the population and cities of Egypt lie along those parts of the Nile valley north of Aswan, and nearly all the cultural and historical sites of Ancient Egypt are found along river banks.

Without joint planning and investment, Nile Basin countries miss out on opportunities of development, which benefit the Nile people. Truly joint

Investments on the Nile for regional transformation is one of the key elements that needs to be in place in order to achieve sustainable development goal number six on 'clean water and sanitation'.

We ought to call upon development partners and the private sector to support the Nile Basin Initiative in its efforts to realise regional investments. The various projects worth more than USD 6.5 billion are key to supporting member states in their quest to meet the growing demand for water, food and energy.

Among other things, members states ought to provide an opportunity for the various stakeholders to support the achievements of Nile Basin Initiative as well as the various cultures in the Nile Basin. The Nile Basin Initiative is a regional intergovernmental partnership of ten Nile Basin countries, namely; Burundi, DR Congo, Egypt, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, The Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. It was established on February 22, 1999 by Ministers in charge of Water Affairs in the Nile Basin countries. NBI is the only basin-wide institution mandated to facilitate the cooperative development and management of the shared Nile Basin water resources on behalf of the 10-member states, for win-win benefits and to promote regional peace and security.

The setup of NBI is comprised of the headquarters - NBI Secretariat (Nile-SEC) based in Entebbe, Uganda and two Subsidiary Action Programmes Offices leveraging unique sub-basin potentials and mitigating unique sub-basin risks.

These are the Eastern Nile Technical Regional Office (ENTRO) based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia for the Eastern Nile sub-basin and the Nile Equatorial Lakes Subsidiary Action Programme Coordination Unit (NELSAP-CU) based in Kigali, Rwanda for the Nile Equatorial Lakes sub-basin.

Serengeti shall not die: Promoting Africa's leading national park award

SERENGETI Shall Not Die is a 1959 German documentary film written and directed by Bernhard Grzimek. His son, the cinematographer Michael Grzimek, died on-location during the filming of the documentary when a plane he piloted collided with a vulture. It won the Academy Award for Best Documentary Feature in 1960.

The Serengeti ecosystem is a geographical region in Africa, spanning northern Tanzania and some of south-western Kenya.

The Serengeti hosts the second largest terrestrial mammal migration in the world, which helps secure it as one of the Seven Natural Wonders of Africa, and as one of the ten natural travel wonders of the world.

The Serengeti is also renowned for its large lion population and is one of the best places to observe prides in their natural environment. Approximately 70 large mammal and 500 bird species are found there.

This high diversity is a function of diverse habitats, including riverine forests, swamps, kopjes, grasslands, and woodlands.

Blue wildebeests, gazelles, zebras, and buffalos are some of the commonly found large mammals in the region. The Serengeti also contains the Serengeti district of Tanzania.

The name Serengeti is often said to be derived from the word from 'seringit' in the Maasai language meaning endless plains.

Much of the Serengeti was known to outsiders as Maasailand.

The Maasai are known as fierce warriors and live alongside most wild animals with an aversion to eating game and birds, subsisting exclusively on their cattle.

Historically, their strength and repu-

tation kept the newly arrived Europeans from exploiting the animals and resources of most of their land.

Tanzania has made a strong showing in last year's World Travel Awards with the Serengeti clinching Africa's Leading National Park award, along with three other wins.

The Serengeti National Park was emerged tops at the awards ceremony that took place in Mauritius, after beating other five nominees including Kenya's Maasai Mara Game Reserve and South Africa's Kruger National Park.

This is the second recognition in a row for Serengeti after it won the best African Safari Park in 2018 ratings organized by SafariBookings.com. The win followed an in-depth study that included more than 2,500 reviews from safari tourists and industry experts.

Last year's World Travel Awards, Thanda Island in Mafia district was also named Africa's Leading Luxury Island 2019.

The exclusive luxury privately-run island off the Indian Ocean coast beat three other contenders in the category.

In 2017, Tanzania was named Africa's Best Safari country by SafariBookings.com after an in-depth analysis of reviews from safari tourists and acclaimed Africa experts. In its announcement of the win, SafariBookings.com said more than 2,500 reviews were used in the comprehensive research which included contributions from safari-goers all over the world and 22 reputable guidebook authors.

Tanzania which is the largest country in East Africa focuses on wildlife conservation and sustainable tourism, and with approximately 28 per cent of the land put under wildlife protection, it boasts of 15 national parks and 31 game reserves.

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Educational transformation: Heeding the voices of people we serve matters

By Adetola Salau

AS they tell, me time after time, they are the ones in our schools who are undergoing the current educational system, and whatever reforms that need to be carried out should be done with their input immersed within it.

"Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire." - William Butler Yeats

The current craze in the world is - bigger and better, measuring success through vastness; bigger classrooms, lots of resources, superior test scores, better learning environments, etc. Yet, the true essence of education is close to the quote stated above by the acclaimed Irish poet, whose poetry I diligently studied during my college years due to his terrific mind and way with words. "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire."

Which leads to the question: How do we set the hearts and minds of our young people alight? From my experience, doing this requires a preliminary step. Inquiring from them.



During the various STEM bootcamps that we have held in the past couple of years, we have interviewed dozens of students from across Lagos to understand what education means to them.

We asked them what "future readiness" meant to them and it was both encouraging yet sad to hear of the hopes and dreams they had and their despondent views about the education that they were receiving.

They recited issues within the educational system, had strong ideas about what they should be taught to be prepared for the global economy and were saddened that they were given no

say as to how their future should be like.

We carried out surveys to deduce their thoughts: 89 per cent of them desire more of a focus upon skills that would lead them to future readiness. They spoke of wanting more chances to understand prospective career paths and how their present learning should lead to future readiness.

From the results of our survey, 74 per cent of our students would like to improve their school environments. A clear margin (88 per cent) of the students were interested in acquiring 21st century skills such as creativity, commu-

nication, and collaboration, to name a few.

My experience has taught me that we all have a lot to learn from our young people, which has led me to the conclusion that we could all learn from them and their expressions should be given the platform they require.

This has led to change agents pondering how to enable our youth to become heard; how do we make this a reality?

There are organisations springing up that aspire to do this. They provide our youth with platforms to share their opinions and advocate for the presence of students and student voice in decisions made about their learning outcomes. I was involved in an organisation last year that held outreaches that involved direct contact with students and driving the sustainable development goals (SDGs) in Nigeria. They were passionate about education's potential towards changing the mindset of the youth and enabling them to be part of the change they desire in society.

One popular way that they currently do this is by voicing their opinions on issues taking place locally and internationally on Twitter. They state what they don't like about education as it exists for them and compare this with how it is elsewhere in the world.

It would be of great benefit to community leaders, policy makers and other stakeholders in society to take note of their feedback through this medium, and to include it in documentation tallied about them and research papers.

My experience has taught me that we all have a lot to learn from our young people, which has led me to the conclusion that we could all learn from them and their expressions should be given the platform they require.

As they tell, me time after time, they are the ones in our schools who are undergoing the current educational system, and whatever reforms that need to be carried out should be done with their input immersed within it.

That Africa may rise again

By Wole Oloaoye

"THE challenge of Africa is civilisational." So said Emmanuel Macron, President of France.

"With a family that has seven, eight children in Africa, even if you invest billions, nothing will change", said Macron who was reacting to questions from an Ivorian reporter's question on how many G20 countries were willing to put money in an envelope, or a Marshall Plan "to save Africa," and how much France would contribute.

The French President at that time had not had the benefit of watching the video clip of Hon. Alhassan Ado Doguwa who recently showcased his four wives on the floor of the House of Representatives and disclosed that he had 27 children - and still counting! No prizes for what Macron would have said to that disclosure.

I concede that we do have many problems in Africa, especially those that relate to harmful traditional practices. People tend to think that female genital mutilation tops the list of such practices, but the worst that can be said of female circumcision is that it is

primitive, senseless and therefore undesirable.

Hon. Doguwa is absolutely within his rights to decide on the size of his family and no one can take that right away from him. He is also a man of means. My worry is that since the masses of the people tend to take a cue from the lifestyle of the elite, many less educated, less endowed people may think that uncontrolled breeding is something to be proud of, in a country already saddled with 13.2 million out-of-school children.

The Emir of Kano, Alhaji Sanusi Lamido Sanusi warned against that trend last December when he spoke at the 108th edition of Islamic Vocation Course (IVC) organized by the Muslim Students' Society of Nigeria (MSSN) Zone B. The traditional ruler argued that the issue of Almajiri children in the North is not a religious issue, but a social one that needs urgent attention.

"Instead of having many children, why not have the ones you can cater for? These are the fundamental questions we should ask ourselves. Most of these children roaming about the streets will be adult in the next twenty years and they will be the ones recruited as

political thugs by the politicians in the next twenty years, if we don't take good care of them now. This is my own advice that we must look at. These are not religious issues, they are social issues that need to be addressed", he counselled.

I hope we heed the Emir's advice in our collective interest and to put a lie to the pontifications of impetuous leeches like Macron whose ancestors and their successors have stolen so much from Africa to build their own civilisation that France can still not contemplate life without the former colonies. French stranglehold on its former colonies is the economic equivalent of the terror of Boko Haram in Nigeria, as I said in this column on March 26, 2018 - "Franco-Haram, C'est Lesclavage!"

Macron's arrogant posturing feeds on bad news from Africa most of which can be traced to the original sin of the colonisers. This is not to say that as a people we don't realise that many of our leaders are mere dealers whose raison d'être is self aggrandisement, but we are not blind to the fact that these are the preferred kinds of misfits the colonialists help to sustain in power in return for allowing the French cockerel to topple

our basket of corns.

Macron did not get away with his rude comments, though. Prof. Amadou Douno who teaches Sociology at the Ahmadou-Dieng University of Conakry, gave the kind of reply Walter Rodney would have been proud of.

"Africans do not need your debauchery civilisation", Douno thundered.

"Africa is by far the richest continent in the world with its enormous mineral wealth. What is delaying this continent is the large-scale pillage of its resources by the great powers, France in the lead! All the misery of Africa comes from this country that realises its ambitions on the backs of Africans, with the complicity of these traitors who do not hesitate to sacrifice entire generations by delivering their countries to the former colonising power.

"They entrust all the key sectors of their economies to France. In reality, they lead the political strategy or vision desired by the former settler. This contributes to driving their populations into misery and extreme poverty. This is the cause of coups d'état, civil wars, genocides, famines, with despots at the head of these countries that are kept in power by France, because it meets all their requirements!

"France is nothing without Africa! The day the African countries turn their backs on France, this country will plunge into chaos! As long as African countries do not abandon this domination of the former colonial power, by taking charge of their own destiny, as the Asian countries have done, it will be very difficult for them to get out of the abyss. The challenge for Africa is to get rid of France. Because the latter is not the solution to its underdevelopment, it is at the heart of the problem!"

For many African patriots, the time for the African Union to rise up to the challenge of ridding the continent of economic colonisation is now. Flag independence alone will not feed our children nor prosper our continent. We must control every facet of our economy whether the Macrons of this world like it or not.

Is AU up to the task?

Majaliwa lauds TARI for successful research on improved oil palm seedlings

By Correspondent Gerald Kitabu, Kigoma

PRIME Minister of the United Republic of Tanzania Kassim Majaliwa has visited TARI-Kihinga in Kigoma and commended Tanzania Agricultural Research Institute (TARI) for swift implementation of his directive of conducting fruitful research to produce and disseminate improved seedlings of Oil Palm called TENERA variety for the farmers in the country.

Speaking during a tour of TARI-Kihinga in Kigoma region over the weekend where research, production and distribution of improved seedlings are being conducted, the Prime Minister said the agricultural researchers have shown high level of commitment and determination to ensure the nation becomes self sufficient on edible oil.

"I am very happy with the way you have taken very short time to produce and disseminate a total of 1,525,017 improved seedlings of TENERA variety, this is a big achievement and I want to encourage you to keep it up," he said.

You actually deserve congratulations and I think with this pace and commitment, we are all going to end the problem of importing edible oil which cost the nation an estimated USD 300m a year," he added.

He said the aim is to ensure the edible oil is produced locally with surplus for export. "Our farmers have enough potential land, they are committed and have passion. We want local market to be fed by locally produced edible oil," he stressed.

To ensure close supervision of the crop, the Prime Minister directed dis-



Prime Minister Kassim Majaliwa listens to TARI director Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo on the research, production and dissemination of improved seedlings of Oil Palm called TENERA variety at TARI-Kihinga in Kigoma. Photo by Gerald Kitabu

trict commissioners, district executive directors and district agricultural, irrigation and cooperative officers to make sure they identify farmers in need of the Oil Palm improved seedlings and collect them from the research centre and disseminate to the farmers on time.

"We decided to take district agricultural, irrigation and cooperative officers and extension officers down to the lower levels of wards and villages so that they can support and work hand in hand with farmers to ensure they plant the oil palm properly and with good agricultural practices to enhance productivity," he said.

"Earlier on, briefing the Prime Minister on research progress, TARI director general Dr. Geoffrey Mkamilo said that unlike in the past, where the farmers depended on local variety Dura which produces as low as 1.6 tons per hectare, the new TENERA variety produces 5 times higher palm oil compared to Dura.

Most farmers in Tanzania grow exclu-

sively Dura type with low yielding potential in old farms which have been established in 1920s and have never been replanted ever since saying this is one of the main causes for low oil palm yield in Tanzania.

"Hon. Prime Minister before this improved TENERA variety, Dura was the widely grown variety in Tanzania.

The variety is characterized by thin mesocarp, thick shell and low yield potential. Dura constitutes about 90 percent of all oil palm trees grown in Tanzania. Currently we have TENERA hybrid which the farmers can rely on," he said.

TENERA is a popular commercial variety in large oil palm producing countries characterized by thick mesocarp and thin shell with high yielding potential.

Extension of the crop to other

parts of the country

Commenting on extension of the crop to other parts of the country, Dr. Mkamilo said that to boost oil palm production in Tanzania for increasing palm oil availability, among others, several important interventions have been done. The first intervention is the production of improved commercial oil palm variety (Tenera) and supply to farmers.

The second intervention is to deploy all the potential area for palm oil production in Tanzania by planting Tenera variety. "Besides Kigoma, we have launched the unit at TARI-Ilonga for the Eastern zone, we have also launched another unit at TARI-Naliendele for the Southern Zone and launched the unit at Kyela for the Southern highland regions," he said.

The third intervention is to replant the old oil palm trees existing in Tanzania with Tenera variety.

TARI Kihinga has a priority to produce improved oil palm variety (Tenera) and supply to oil palm growers at the same time sensitizing oil palm growers on the importance of replanting their old oil palm trees with Tenera variety. Given the availability of improved oil palm variety, Tanzania has a potential to be a big producer of palm oil because there is ample land suitable for oil palm production.

For instance, in Kigoma region 114,000 ha are suitable for oil palm production but only 23,000 ha are planted.

"If you go through Dar-Mtwara road you will see old palm trees along the road, a sign that the

coastal regions have ample land suitable for oil palm production," he said.

Commenting on the challenges, Dr. Mkamilo explained that there are still shortages of improved seedlings of Oil Palm called TENERA variety for the farmers in the country.

Uvinza district executive director Weja Lutebela said TARI has produced and disseminated more than 10,000 improved seedlings of Oil Palm called TENERA variety for the farmers in the district.

"TARI is doing a great job. We are working with this research institution very closely and so far the Oil Palm farmers have received more than 10,000 improved seedlings of Oil Palm called TENERA variety," he said.

He named other challenges as poor processing of the edible oil and lack of education, which he said, TARI will continue creating awareness and training them.

"TARI Kihinga was established in July 2018. The Prime Minister provided 540.24 acres of land to produce and develop Oil Palm crop and the efforts to get title deeds are going on," he said.

The Ministry of agriculture through TARI has set aside TZS 2.9 billion for improvement of the research centre's infrastructures such as the office, laboratories and production of improved seedlings of TENERA variety.

"TARI has given education to the district councils, trained MATI Mubondo students, researchers, extension officers and investors. TARI has also provided education on Oil Palm through mainstream media and social media," he explained.

"I thank public and private or-

ganizations and institutions for according TARI support for successful production and dissemination of improved seedlings of Oil Palm called TENERA variety for the farmers in the country.

In Tanzania, palm oil is the most consumed oil due to its widespread availability and, at a relative lower price. In 2016, Tanzania edible oil consumption was estimated to be 570,000 MT, 64 percent of it being palm oil, 30 percent sunflower oil and 2 percent cottonseed oil.

In the same year, Tanzania edible oil production was estimated to be 210,000 MT, 83 percent of it being sunflower oil, 5 percent cotton seed oil and 2 percent palm oil. This indicates that about 99.3 percent of palm oil consumed in Tanzania is imported from other palm oil producing countries. Tanzania spends about 443 billion shillings per year to import edible oil from foreign countries.

Such expenditure stands as one of the stumbling block for the eco-

Locust outbreak threatens food security in East Africa, international response urged

NAIROBI

THE locust outbreak plaguing East Africa calls for a concerted international response as the most dreaded insects devour millions of hectares of vegetation in their cross-border migration, exacerbating the already fragile food security situation in the region.

The desert locust, which can travel 150 km in a single day, is deemed the most devastating of locusts. A small swarm covering one square km can eat the same amount of food as 35,000 people in a day, said the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

"The situation remains extremely alarming in Kenya, Ethiopia and Somalia where widespread desert locust infestations and a new generation of breeding threaten food security and livelihoods in the region," it noted Tuesday.

The locusts most recently invaded South Sudan from Uganda, and the South Sudan government is seeking funds worth 20 million U.S. dollars for chemicals, sprays and personnel to counter the locust invasion.

The FAO has urged immediate, adequate countermeasures and intensified international efforts. The locust outbreak is the worst in 70 years in Kenya, and the worst in 25 years in Somalia and Ethiopia, where the insects bred before spreading to Kenya and other countries.

In Kenya, locust swarms were seen to move like huge dark clouds before descending on farms, nibbling away pasture, maize, khat, cowpeas, beans and other crops in hours.

Areas like Mandera and Isiolo in the north, and Tharaka Nithi in central Kenya, were attacked again after aerial chemical pesticides spraying.

Although the government has sprayed pesticide and other chemicals on a wide range of areas in order to curb the locust outbreak, at least 18 of Kenya's 47 counties were affected.

Kello Harsama, the administrative secretary heading the State Department for Crop Development under Kenya's Ministry of Agriculture, said the government will work with the FAO to train 600 chemical spraying personnel.

"Aerial spraying of the pesticide in the last two months is yet to achieve desired results, thus we need to devise innovative strategies like the use of the trainees, farmers and extension workers to conduct ground spraying starting with northern counties of Isiolo, Marsabit, Turkana and Wajir," he said.

"My crops had done well following the heavy rains and I was looking forward to a bumper harvest but then the locusts



A farmer attempts to scare away desert locusts in Mwingi Town in Kitui County, Kenya. (Xinhua)

came and ate away my hope," Beatrice Ngari, a farmer in Embu, central Kenya, told Xinhua.

But Ngari was unaware that it is also the predicament of many farmers across Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Tanzania, South Sudan and Uganda.

The rains between October and January served to provide a favorable environment for locusts to breed and thrive, including properly moist soils for them to lay eggs in millions before migration and the consequent lush vegetation to eat, according to the FAO.

Climate change was to blame for the unusually plentiful rainfall on the African continent. Keith Cressman, the FAO's senior locust forecasting officer, further identified the recent cyclones as another factor behind the locust crisis, saying the past 10 years saw increased frequency of cyclones in the Indian Ocean.

FAO officials said the locust outbreak has worsened the food insecurity in Af-

rica, citing some 239 million people in sub-Saharan Africa suffering from hunger and malnutrition, and over 20 million having already been in food crisis in Horn of Africa countries.

UN Undersecretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Mark Lowcock, said the current situation "is really, really challenging."

"There are currently over 30 million people in the affected countries, who are severely food insecure now. Ten million of those people are in the places affected by the locusts. Unless we get a grip of this in the next two or three or four weeks, we would have a serious problem," he stressed.

To avoid a famine, University of Nairobi professor Evaristus Irandu said the government may have to use the scarce foreign currency to import food products, adding that

poverty will increase in the country.

"All our investment is going down the drain. The sorghum and millet crops were about to mature and we would have harvested next month," said Nathan Njiru, a farmer in Tharaka Nithi, whose livelihood largely depends on selling sorghum to Nairobi's beer brewers.

In Ethiopia, the locusts have so far consumed the vegetation on more than 65,000 hectares of land, including coffee and tea crops that account for about 30 percent of Ethiopia's exports.

A Moody's Investors Service report issued in early February showed that agriculture contributes about one-third of the gross domestic product in East Africa and more than 65 percent of jobs in all regional countries except for Kenya.

The desert locust swarms have travelled from Africa to Asia. India is suffering the worst hit in 60 years. "Today locust swarms are as big as major cities and it's getting worse by the day," said UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres, urging the international community to take immediate counteractions.

Sacko Josefa, AU Commissioner for Rural Economy and Agriculture, said earlier this month that the 55-member pan-African bloc is working directly with the FAO to make sure that there is no spread to other countries.

Antonio Querido, UN FAO representative in Uganda, said international organizations are providing technical support and mobilizing resources for Uganda as it strives to fight the locusts.

In order to get more international help, Somalia on Feb. 2 declared the locust infestation a national emergency. Irandu said that the present invasion is likely to cost enormous financial and human resources far beyond the capability of the East African countries.

Hence there is a need for a concerted effort by regional and other international organizations to offer money, expertise and equipment such as planes. Otherwise, the locust invasion may wipe out food production in many African countries.

The FAO recently launched a 76 million U.S. dollars appeal to control the locusts' spread. Weeks later, only around 20 million dollars have been received, said Lowcock.

Irandu suggested that intensified international efforts should be made to coordinate aerial sprays, share scientific knowledge on breeding and migratory habits of locusts, and raise funds from partners.

In the long run, experts have called for the investment in research to contain the impacts of climate change, including the locusts invasion. "People must be sensitized adequately on their roles in adaptation and mitigation programs to ensure uniformity in progress," said Edward Mungai, chief executive officer of Kenya Climate Innovation Centre. Xinhua



A girl shows the desert locusts in Kitui County, Kenya. (Xinhua)

COVID-19: Protecting human rights matters during epidemics

By Mark Heywood

THE world is out of balance.

Paradoxically, the technological leaps of the last 20 years, when combined with fatal deregulation and disinvestment from public health systems, have created fertile ground for the emergence and rapid diffusion of deadly new pathogens: mass urbanisation, air transport, global heating and ecological degradation constitute a toxic broth for the spread of disease.

It's happened before: The Spanish flu pandemic of 1918, the deadliest in history, infected an estimated 500-million people worldwide - about one-third of the planet's population at the time - and killed an estimated 20- to 50-million people.

Since then, there have been periodic panics about HIV, Zika, Ebola, H5N1, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) and Middle Eastern Respiratory Syndrome (MERS). By comparison with the 1918 flu or HIV, COVID-19 pales into insignificance. It is almost certainly not what respected science journalist and Pulitzer prize winner Laurie Garret called the "coming plague" in her 1994 book of the same name.

Facts not fear

The first cases of disease caused by what was at first called the novel Coronavirus (since renamed by the World Health Organisation SARS-CoV-2, causing COVID-19) were noticed by healthcare workers in the city of Wuhan, China, on 1 December 2020.

Three months later, there seems to be a consensus among scientists that while COVID-19 is highly infectious (it is spread by respiratory droplets), the case fatality rate at 2% is fairly low, less than SARS, or MERS - which, as mentioned, have also caused panics around the globe.

Scientists also agree that those with the greatest vulnerability are the elderly and immunocompromised. The actual threat to mortality, compared even with ordinary flu strains, as reported in an article carried recently in the Daily Maverick, is fairly small.

At the time of writing, an

estimated 2,100 people of approximately 75,000 cases had died because of COVID-19. By contrast, HIV still caused 71,000 deaths in South Africa alone in 2018.

Pointing this out, however, is not to underestimate the seriousness of COVID-19. Under certain circumstances, a high infection rate, with a low case fatality rate, could still cause many deaths... but it is to urge that responses are based on facts not fear, public health not public panic. Scientists are keeping a minute eye on COVID-19 and - in one of the few positives brought about by this epidemic - there is an unprecedented sharing of information and new knowledge.

The Lancet, for example, has set up a free to access on-line COVID-19 resource centre that publishes the latest information: "To assist health workers and researchers working under challenging conditions to bring this outbreak to a close."

Disease and democracy
As far as we know, COVID-19 has not yet arrived in South Africa. So, as we watch the unfolding response in China and other mainly developed countries, we have an opportunity for a serious discussion on how to ensure proportionality, equity, public health and human rights in our response to this and other communicable diseases.

Let's start with human rights.

The violation of human rights has become a thread that runs through the aetiology, determinants of transmission, susceptibility to, prevention and treatment strategies for COVID-19.

Human rights affect viral aetiology because it is the failure of many states to protect the rights to what S24 of our Constitution calls "an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being", and to prevent "pollution and ecological degradation", and is creating the breeding ground for new pathogens.

While researching this article, I heard a number of scientists tacitly praise the boldness of the Chinese response, as if a threat on this scale could only be countered by a massive, invasive response, the type "that only China is



capable of".

For a while, a mildly funny WhatsApp message even did the rounds contrasting how China and South Africa would respond to a threat like this: China would be decisive, South Africa would dither, hold workshops, commissions, consultations, indabas, disputes, and when we eventually tell the world we are ready, the response would be, "what virus? That was dealt with five years ago!"

The subtext was "thank God it started in China".

Yet this reflects a profound misunderstanding among some people about the connection between disease and democracy - as well as about what is happening in China.

The fact that a number of recent viral outbreaks (H5N1 avian influenza and SARS), have started in China is directly related to China's massive urbanisation, environmental destruction and weak, sometimes non-existent, systems of public health, environmental protection, or food regulation.

Their rapid transmission is also directly linked to China being an authoritarian one-party state, with no freedom of speech, media or protest. Those of you who really want to locate the COVID-19 crisis in China's anti-democracy should read this essay by Xu Zhangrun.

And there's a pattern of behaviour here.

As far back as the late 1980s, China tried (to this day) to suppress information about its HIV epidemic and how it initially spread as a result of poor peasants in Henan selling their blood for an income (what was called "the plasma economy"). The best report on this is by Asia Catalyst, an NGO.

Thirty years later, the response to COVID-19 has been hindered from the get-go by similar human rights violations.

For example, in a comprehensive statement issued on 31 January 2020, the Chinese Human Rights Defenders (an organisation based in Hong Kong and a lone voice monitoring human rights abuses in China), pointed out how:

"Lack of transparency in China's authoritarian political system led to a failure in warning the public and implementing a rapid response to a public health crisis of this magnitude. The first case in Wuhan was dated on December 8, tied to the Wuhan Seafood Market, though there are now reports of even earlier cases. Authorities did not close the market until January 1 and didn't disclose that the virus could spread through human-to-human transmission until January 20."

We now know that the doctor who first tried to raise an alarm publicly, Dr Li Wenliang, was punished by authorities. His death because of the virus on 7 February 2020 is reported to have provoked massive sympathy and anger. Since then, however, media reports have further documented state coercion of millions of people in cities like Wuhan.

On that scale, it's hard to hide.

The New York Times, for example, reported how when Vice Premier Sun Chunlan visited Wuhan, she said the city faced "wartime conditions," warning that: "There must be no deserters, or they will be nailed to the pillar of historical shame forever."

This is why, in the words of Xiao Qiang, Founder and Editor-in-Chief of China Digital Times, it is China's "controlocracy" that has "primary responsibility for the coronavirus epidemic that is sweeping across that country and the world".

Let's be clear, saying this is not stigmatising Chinese people, but putting the responsibility on the Chinese government - South Africa's largest trading partner, a friend of the ANC, and a country whose human rights violations we opportunistically choose silence upon.

As an aside, one wonders where we would be if the world had adopted the same approach to apartheid?

Panic and proportionality
In a recent comment in The Lancet, 16 global public health experts called on governments to abide by the legally binding International Health Regulations, which govern how 196 countries and WHO collectively address the global spread of disease and avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic and trade.

They point out how: "Article 43 of this legally binding instrument restricts the measures countries can implement when addressing public health risks to those measures that are supported by science, commensurate with the risks involved, and anchored in human rights."

This was necessary because a response that is marred by disproportionality, panic and human rights

violations has now spread with the virus from China. Governments the world over seem to be forgetting all the lessons of the world's most recent pandemic, HIV, a virus which - according to UNAids - still causes 770,000 deaths a year, currently infects over 37-million people (a number that increases by 1.5-million a year), and continues to have a profound impact on public health systems and economies.

Unfortunately, even the WHO seems to have forgotten the lessons of Aids. Its Situation Report 25, dated 14 February 2020, lists the WHO's six "strategic objectives for this response" - the protection of human rights is not among them. Similarly, a 2019 report from the Global Preparedness Monitoring Board, a body co-convened by the WHO and the World Bank, did not mention human rights in its seven actions for leaders to take.

If only these leaders would do their homework and learn their lessons.

Let us, therefore, recall that what activists taught governments and the WHO about HIV is that respecting human rights is necessary not only to protect individuals who are infected, but also to maintain a climate that will encourage people at risk to seek diagnosis and care, rather than avoid health services because they are afraid of stigma and punishment.

As a result of the activism and outrage against human rights violations against people living with HIV, UNAids pioneered a human rights approach to HIV prevention and treatment, that has saved tens of millions of lives.

Today, theoretically, HIV transmission could be eliminated and nobody needs to die of Aids-related illnesses. The only reason this isn't happening is because of a lack of political will and declining funding - ironic given the resources suddenly being released for COVID-19.

Of course, the human rights approach to HIV needs to be tailored to different disease threats. But its fundamental principles must remain the starting point for any public health emergency. In the blunt words of Professor Larry Gostin, interviewed in this valuable report by Al Jazeera Plus: "You can't wall off a germ."

COVID-19 is a very different genus of virus to HIV. The latter is mainly sexually transmitted, making it more difficult to acquire, but also more complex to prevent. Because it can be spread so easily, COVID-19 justifies proportionate degrees of quarantine and isolation. Yet many of the responses we are now witnessing are disproportionate - they violate a range of human rights (dignity, autonomy, freedom of movement), and may ultimately make COVID-19 even more difficult to contain.

UN accused of hypocrisy launching Equal Pay Day while condoning wage discrimination

UNITED NATIONS

THE United Nations, which has long preached the irrefutable concept of income equality to the outside world, is now accused of condoning wage discrimination in its own backyard.

The message from the UN Staff Coordinating Council in Geneva was brutally frank - "protesting the UN's hypocrisy" for launching "International Equal Pay Day" while failing to reverse an illegal pay cut that has left 3,000 staff being paid 5 per cent less than colleagues on the same grades.

Ian Richards, President of the 60,000-strong Coordinating Committee of International Staff Unions and Associations (CCISUA), told IPS the UN's International Civil Service Commission (ICSC), using questionable statistics, recommended cutting pay by 5 percent for all staff in Geneva.

But the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILOAT), another Geneva-based UN agency, ruled the pay cut illegal and staff in specialized agencies had their pay restored.

However, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres in New York decided not to go along with the ILOAT judgement in restoring pay, and has asked the UN Dispute Tribunal (UNDT) to rule on this, he said.

"The problem is that the UNDT is so short of judges that two years on



from the pay cut they are unable to provide a timeline for any decision," declared Richards.

Currently, the UN is also critical of unequal pay between men and women worldwide - both in public and private sectors - singling out the widely-prevalent practice as wage discrimination against women.

Asked if there are there any charges of unequal pay between men and women staffers in the UN system,

Richards said male and female staff, working on staff contracts, get the same pay.

However, in some UN departments, he pointed out, consultants and contractors hired by the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS) make up two-thirds of personnel.

"For these colleagues we suspect there is a massive gender gap as they must individually

negotiate their pay. We have asked UN management to conduct a gender pay audit, but so far, they haven't done anything," said Richards.

Further, many of these "Uber-style contracts" don't provide for social security, health insurance nor maternity leave.

"Given how many staff start out as consultants, it is no surprise that women might be at

a disadvantage. And the more the UN moves towards flexibilization, the worse this will get. If the UN really cares about the gender pay gap, they should stop the Uberization of their personnel," he noted.

In a statement released February 20, the Staff Coordinating Council said that UN Staff in Geneva occupied the staff canteen holding banners with the slogans:

- "Equal Pay for UN Staff"
- "Two years and still waiting/ Deux ans et toujours en attente"
- "Equal Pay Now/Salaire Egal Maintenant."

A 5.2% pay cut was imposed in February 2018 on all UN Staff and employees at specialized agencies such as the World Health Organization and the International Labour Organization.

This pay cut, said the Union, was declared illegal in July 2019 by the Administrative Tribunal of the International Labour Organization (ILOAT) which only has jurisdiction over the specialised agencies.

Crucially, staff directly employed by the UN were not covered by the ruling. This means they are now paid 5.2% less than agency colleagues on the same grades - a total loss of more than \$20 million over the last two years.

Prisca Chaoui, Executive Sec-

retary of the UNOG Staff Coordinating Council, said: "What makes this situation even harder for UN staff is the gaping chasm between the words and actions of the UN on the issue of Equal Pay".

In December, the General Assembly adopted resolution 74/142 to establish International Equal Pay Day, calling on the world to support equal pay for work of equal value.

"The UN stands accused of hypocrisy for failing to ensure equal pay for its own staff," Chaoui said.

In the statement, Richards said: "The astonishing admission from the UNDT that, right now, they don't have the judges to hear our case means there is no end in sight to the UN's equal pay scandal. Staff will take action and keep escalating action until we get justice on equal pay."

The campaign for equal pay is being led by the United Nations Office at Geneva Staff Coordinating Council, supported by other local staff associations such as UNICEF, UNEP, UNDP and UNHCR.

Tatiana Valovaya, Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, attended the protest and heard the staff calls for equal pay justice.

Agencies

UN deputy chief witnesses toll of climate change on Zimbabwe's natural habitat

By Daniel Getachew

AS global temperatures continue to rise and the world seeks solutions to stem the tide, the deputy UN chief visited Hwange National Park, which, at 14,651 square kilometres, is almost half the size of Belgium.

"We have seen what climate change is doing to our environment and livelihoods", she said. "We saw how the park is hounded by climate change; the way in which Hwange is hot, the water, and even animal migration and people".

With unreliable weather patterns resulting in less rainfall, Hillary Madhiri of the national parks and wildlife office said that more than 400 bird and 150 mammal species - 45,000 of them elephants - are suffering.

Key issues include conflict between humans and wildlife, lack of water, loss of habitat, limited resources, population management and community partnerships to preserve the park.

"It's quiet complex," the deputy UN chief observed. Madhiri maintained that of all the problems "climate change is our biggest challenge". He said that in spite of the park's use of green technologies and sinking over 100 boreholes to save the animals from literally dying of thirst in the dry season, more still needs to be done.

Mohammed commended the park's efforts to buffer nature against climate change.

The Deputy Secretary-General is in Zimbabwe to attend the 6th Africa Regional Forum on sustainable development, which begins on Monday and runs in Victoria Falls until Thursday.

Mohammed said she would

participate in the discussion on the Regional Coordination Mechanism between the UN and the African Union.

The focus will be on the elements needed to accelerate action on the ground for nations to achieve the goals of Agenda 2063 - Africa's master plan to transform the continent into a global power-

house - and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development - the blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet.

"What a better place than Zimbabwe to show the kind of leadership that we would like to see in transforming Africa through the Agendas 2063 and 2030," the UN deputy chief said.

IEA appoints Africa programme manager to boost engagement on energy issues across the continent

PARIS

THE International Energy Agency (IEA) has hired Maximilian Jarrett as its first Africa Programme Manager to help expand the Agency's reach and coordinate its work as it deepens its engagement across the continent.

Jarrett brings 30 years of experience in the fields of international economic affairs, media production and strategic communications. He most recently served as the Director-in-Charge of the Geneva-based Africa Progress Panel, which was chaired by the late Kofi Annan, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and former UN Secretary General.

The IEA has long focused on Africa's energy sector, including work on the continent's energy access issues since 2002. This work has since expanded significantly and will continue to do so in the coming years.

Last year, Dr Kandeh Yumkella, a former United Nations Under-Secretary-General, became an advisor to the IEA on Africa and energy access issues.

In October, the IEA published Africa Energy Outlook 2019 its most comprehensive and in-depth work to date about the continent, with a particular emphasis on sub-Saharan Africa. The special report, part of the IEA's flagship World Energy Outlook, highlighted Africa's increasing role in global energy affairs and included detailed energy profiles of 11 countries that represent three-

quarters of the region's gross domestic product and energy demand, including Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia, Kenya and Ghana.

The IEA is also strengthening its relationships with African energy decision-makers. South Africa and Morocco are part of the IEA family as Association countries.

In May 2019, the IEA and the African Union Commission co-hosted their first joint ministerial summit at which the two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding to guide future collaboration. A second ministerial forum will be held in 2020, with South Africa offering to host the event in line with its 2020 presidency of the African Union.

Prior to his role with the Africa Progress Panel, Mr Jarrett spent over a decade working with the United Nations in Africa. He had started his career in 1990 as a programme presenter and senior producer with the BBC World Service. He worked on Focus on Africa and Network Africa, the BBC's daily current affairs programmes for its audience in Africa.

IEA is the global energy authority, was founded in 1974 to help its member countries co-ordinate a collective response to major oil supply disruptions. Its mission has evolved and rests today on three main pillars: working to ensure global energy security; expanding energy cooperation and dialogue around the world; and promoting an environmentally sustainable energy future.



UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammed during a visit to Zimbabwe's Hwange National Park to learn first hand the impact of climate change on the habitat, wildlife and people.

Bank vows to achieve growth strategies and improve its business

By Guardian Reporter

BANK of Africa Tanzania has assured customers and stakeholders that it is fully on course in implementing strategies to make it more agile and efficient to offer superior and excellent customer experience.

"We thank our esteemed customers and the Tanzania Government in general for the strong partnerships established for the past 13 years that Bank of Africa Tanzania has been in operation," acknowledged bank's managing director Joseph Iha.

Iha further explained that "Bank of Africa Tanzania is adequately capitalized, well above the minimum regulatory levels. As at 31 December 2019, Bank of Africa Tanzania Limited closed

the year with a Total Capital Adequacy Ratio of 17% against the required regulatory threshold of 14.5%. In September 2019 the Bank's shareholders injected additional capital of 22.9bn/- for the purpose of enhancing the bank's lending capacity and ensuring continued solvency of the bank. The bank also maintains a strong Liquid Asset Ratio (LAR) of 33% against the regulatory minimum of 20%".

The bank's total assets grew by 23.3% in 2019, closing the year at 564bn/- driven by robust growth in customer deposits and loans and advances. Loans and advances grew by 4.4% to close the year at 277bn/-. Most loan disbursements for the year were mainly focused towards growth and expansion of Small and Medium Enterprises

(SMEs) businesses thus supporting and contributing towards the overall economic development. Customer deposits grew by 17.5% to close at 390bn/- and shareholders' funds, increased from 63bn/- to 74bn/- in 2019.

After acquiring EURAFRICAN Bank in 2007 (Eurafrican Bank started operations in Tanzania in 1994), the investments BANK OF AFRICA has put in Tanzania have proven successful with wide acceptance of its products and services across the whole country. The success story is witnessed in the bank maintaining a steady balance sheet that promises growth and sustainability. This has provided a stable funding base on investments in loans and advances at an average balance of 294bn/- with a healthy loans to

deposits ratio of 76% leaving an ample liquidity to invest in government securities and lending to other banks through placements in interbank markets.

As at end of 2019, a significant reduction on the bank's non-performing loans was witnessed, the NPL portfolio went down by 12bn/- with a non-performing loan (NPL) of 9.2%, lower than the NPL rate of 16% the bank had at the end of 2018 and which was also much lower than the prevailing industry average of 10%. The NPL provision coverage as at end of the year was over 90%.

The bank has been recording good profits after tax consistently for the past years. The cumulative profits after tax amounted to 12bn/- for three years from 2015 to 2017, mainly driven by annual

growth in operating income by an average of 9% or 47bn/-. In 2018 and 2019, the bank undertook significant loan loss provisions in order to clean up its legacy loan portfolio and the same impacted profitability for the period the said periods.

In understanding the importance of financial inclusion, Bank of Africa Tanzania Limited last year also made significant investments of over one million United States dollars in its Information Technology (IT) infrastructures making its product and services easily accessible. The bank deployed a state-of-the-art new ATM switch all over its branch networks; a new internet-banking model was also adopted, new IT platforms including a primary and secondary data centers in Tanzania, upgrades of

the core banking platforms and digital banking solutions.

Bank of Africa Tanzania Limited, a subsidiary of Bank of Africa Group; a Pan African commercial bank with presence in 18 African countries, will continue to offer its products and services to Corporate, SME and retail segments throughout its 25 branches in 11 regions in Tanzania. Bank of Africa Group has been in business developing meaningful partnerships in Africa since 1985, and Bank of Africa Tanzania will maintain the same focus as stated in the bank's three years strategic development plan for 2019-2021.

The Managing Director upholds that "The bank stands tall with a strong Group network optimizing its trade corridors from BMCE BANK OF AFRICA, which is pre-

sent in 18 African countries. The Bank of Africa Group has been operational for 36 years now with over 560 branches and a total Group asset base of Euros 76 Billion Euros that keeps growing year on year.

The Bank of Africa Group keeps a constant support of its 18 strategic business operations including Tanzania. The BOA Group's injection of additional capital in BOA Tanzania in September 2019 shows its commitment to enhance capacity for continuous adoption of its strategy. The Group has always put focus on its mission and vision of ensuring development of its stakeholders, drive growth of economies where the bank operates, improve customer experience and become a preferred bank in these markets".

New research reveals how agroforestry may improve human and planet's health

By Guardian Reporter

A NEW study reports that agroforestry—a method integrating trees with crops and livestock—is linked with more benefits for human and planetary health than previously thought.

The study, conducted by a team of 21 researchers from World Agroforestry (ICRAF) and London's School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, reveals agroforestry's impacts on food and nutrition security in sub-Saharan Africa.

The findings also highlight the impacts of growing trees along with crops on migration, non-communicable diseases, and infectious diseases.

The lead researcher from the study, Todd Rosenstock, tells Food Tank how agroforestry provides stability in food production.

Specifically, it increases the availability of micronutrient-rich fruits, seeds, and nuts during lean growing periods.

Agroforestry influences "the growth and production of companion crops and animals...affect[ing] food security by generating cash from sales of tree products that enable the purchase of other products," says Rosenstock. Tree products make up 6 to 17 percent of annual incomes in Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria, Tanza-

nia, and Uganda. Although enhanced nutrition and financial security may help trigger migration to urban areas, improved soil health and household resilience may create the opposite effect and help keep young people in rural areas.

According to the study, agroforestry's effects on disease vary. Findings show that effects on non-communicable diseases are advantageous, while effects on infectious diseases are both beneficial and harmful.

The diversity of fruit and nut-bearing trees helps to improve diets and mitigate chronic diseases, which are reportedly on the rise in sub-Saharan Africa—where 237 million people were food insecure in 2017, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.

The study reports that agroforestry provides an opportunity to combat disease, due to the antioxidant-rich, disease-fighting benefits of fruits—70 percent of which come from trees. Added benefits include prevention of both air pollution and heat exposure for farmworkers, and regulation of solar radiation and wind.

Studies also report considerable improvements in water permeating through soil by up to 81 percent; an increase in crop and livestock production 68 percent of the time; and



a reduction of air temperatures by up to six degrees.

Despite some increased risks of infectious disease with agroforestry—due to tree-induced changes in habitats and disease transmission—the researchers predict the benefits to outweigh

the risks. Rosenstock informs Food Tank that "this will depend on the location, goals and health risks of those using agroforestry, and trees species and management."

The study's focus on sub-Saharan Africa allowed the researchers to examine agroforestry's

effects and mechanisms on one, diverse region.

According to Rosenstock, sub-Saharan Africa offered diverse agroclimatic zones and stakeholders' high reported interest in agroforestry. Agroforestry is embraced most widely in Africa, where 71 percent of African countries pledged to use agroforestry as a climate change adaptation technique.

But the societal and environmental preconditions for adopting agroforestry, in any region, depend on political, economic, cultural and institutional barriers. While agroforestry is widely promoted, the effects of climate change and urbanization on its future applicability may alter its degree of impact on food security, migration, and disease.

"Climate change will change the suitability of environments for growing various species. In some cases, the ranges of trees will expand and in other cases, they will contract.

This is particularly problematic because trees are long-lived and non-mobile organisms, leaving them vulnerable to future changes," Rosenstock tells Food Tank. Rosenstock explains that the team of researchers aims to transform their findings into real-world applications. They hope to influence government leaders and sustainable agriculture advocates to help improve programmatic and policy discussions.

"The changes in the environment that agroforestry drives have cascading impacts on human health...and there are many more opportunities to use agroforestry as a nature-based solution for improving human health," Rosenstock tells Food Tank.



CURRENT NEWS
Huawei releases new 5G products and solutions

Page 14



BUSINESS NEWS
Zanzibar govt officials tip CRDB to finance key development projects

Page 15



OUTLOOK & ANALYSIS
Mara, Simiyu farmers reap millions of shillings from tomato farming

Page 15

Biovision Africa's grant benefiting thousands of farmers, pastoralists



Frank Marwa (2nd -R), program manager with Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania, briefs journalists during a field visit to the institute's Mvomero District headquarters last week. Right is Janet Maro, Founder and CEO of SAT. Photo: Francis Kajubi

By Francis Kajubi, Morogoro

OVER 2,000 smallholder farmers and pastoralists in Morogoro region have benefited from Biovision Africa's US\$799,000 (over 1.8bn/-) funded Farmers and Pastoralists Collaboration which has ended regular clashes between the two groups.

Implemented by Sustainable Agriculture Tanzania (SAT), an organic agriculture research institute, the FPC project which started in 2017 and ended last year reached more than 2,000 farmers and pastoralists in Mvomero and Kilosa districts of Morogoro region.

SAT founder and CEO, Jane Maro said last week that the project's main goal was to enhance sustainable agriculture in the two districts and improve livelihoods of farmers and pastoralists through practicing of organic agriculture plus adoption of

agro-ecological practices.

To achieve the goal, Maro said, the project targeted at improving livestock feedings for high production of milk and steering improvements in quality and value of livestock and agriculture produce.

Pastoralists were trained on how to cultivate fodder known as African Fox Tail that is suitable in facilitating high milk production in cows. "As we come to the end of the project, pastoralists have produced over 90 metric tons of such fodder grass," said Maro who pointed out that the hybrid grass takes three months to mature and be suitable to feed cows.

She told journalists who visited her institute which is based in Mvomero that farmers and pastoralists in the district have adapted organic agriculture a move that has contributed to resolving land conflicts that prevailed since 2016.

Through the project, pastoralists in

the respective wards were provided with 28 Mpwapwa locally bred hybrid bulls to improve tradition cows' milk production hence raising their owners' income.

Numerically, the SAT CEO said the program benefited directly 961 farmers and 236 pastoralists from the two districts whereby 510 famers and 347 pastoralists were organized and trained.

Mvomero and Kilosa are have huge herds of livestock as Maasai and Sukuma pastoralists who seek better fodder and water for their animals live in the agro-rich region described as one of the bread baskets of the country.

She asserted that beneficiaries of the project were categorized into dry land small scale farmers, pastoralists and certified organic vegetable and fruits producers.

Both groups were trained on how they can add value to agro and live-

stock products, the essence of organic farming agriculture in growing animal fodder so that they can have plenty of animal feed hence avoid land conflicts between the groups.

"Before the project kicked off farmers used to accumulate an average annual income of 633,696/- but at the end of the program last December farmers were earning an average income of 848,700/-," she noted.

Production of crops increased by 34 percent after the project which assured food security for families which experienced food shortage during the low season.

Percentage-wise, meals taken by a household increased from an overall average of 2.1 percent to 2.4 percent. As the project came to its end, farmers and pastoralists were well trained on four basic methods of organic agriculture, namely; preparation of composite manure, organic methods for growing big quantities of livestock

feeds, control of pests and diseases and agroforestry.

In addition, during its implementation period, 439 farmers had received loans worth 101.7m/- while 195 pastoralists received loans worth 43.7m/-.

On his part, Frank Marwa who is Program Manager at SAT, said the institute's demonstration farm covers an area of 600 acres with 25 permanent workers and 50 casual workers.

"The farm is also being used by graduates of the Sokoine University of Agriculture for research purposes and as I speak two doctorate students are doing their research on how Information and Communication Technology can help advancement of organic agriculture through data collection," Marwa said.

The research institute was established in 2016 with its headquarters at Vianzi village in Mvomero district and has since conducted 168 agro-ecology studies to date.



Saudi Finance minister Mohammad Al Jadaan.

G-20 finance chiefs on alert with global growth at risk

RIYADH

Finance chiefs and central bankers from the world's largest economies say they see downside risks to global growth persisting as the coronavirus raises uncertainty and disrupts supply chains.

While delegates at the Group of 20 meeting in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, spent much of their time talking about a response to the outbreak that originated in China, their final communique only mentioned the epidemic once, saying they'd enhance risk monitoring. And although it said the participants agreed on a "menu of policy options" to counter the emergency, the statement included few details on a coordinated response.

The coronavirus has so far killed more than 2,300 people and infected about 80,000. Countries such as Japan, and institutions including the OECD, have been pushing for nations with surpluses to spend more to help avert a deeper economic slump.

The G-20 countries "agreed to be ready to intervene with the necessary policies related to these risks," Saudi Finance Minister Mohammad Al Jadaan said Sunday in remarks concluding the meetings at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in the Saudi capital.

"Global economic growth is continuing but remains slow and downside risk persists, including those arising from geopolitical, remaining trade tensions, as well as policy uncertainty."

China's representatives were absent from the G-20 gathering as authorities there focus on countering the fallout. The world's second-largest economy is likely to pick up quickly after the coronavirus is contained and stage a "V-shaped" recovery, according to Chen Yulu, a deputy governor at the People's Bank of China.

International Monetary Fund Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva said Saturday the outbreak had led the lender to cut its forecast for Chinese growth to 5.6% from 6% and to trim 0.1 percentage points from its global growth forecast, but that it's also looking at more "dire" scenarios.

"We do not know what will be the next steps, indeed if the epidemic will turn to pandemic or not," French Finance Minister Bruno Le Maire told Bloomberg TV in Riyadh. "But we have to be prepared and that is exactly what we decided today among the G-20 members."

Budget appeals

Germany was the primary target of the calls for more spending. So far, the export-driven country has showed little interest in significantly boosting expenditures, arguing fiscal stimulus can't bolster foreign demand.

"Fiscal policy should be flexible and growth-friendly while ensuring debt as a share of GDP is on a sustainable path," the communique said. "Monetary policy should continue to support economic activity and ensure price stability, consistent with central banks' mandates."

Competition watchdog probes mobile phone loan charges

NAIROBI

The competition watchdog has opened investigations into the exorbitant monthly interest rates charged by digital mobile lenders who also push third parties to recover amounts owed from defaulters.

The Competition Authority of Kenya (CAK) announced on Friday it was investigating both regulated and unregulated digital lenders whose steep lending rates have plunged many borrowers into a debt trap.

Tens of unregulated microlenders have invested in Kenya's credit market in response to the growth in demand for quick loans. Their proliferation has saddled borrowers with high interest rates, which rise up to 520 percent when annualised, leading to mounting defaults and an ever ballooning number of defaulters who have been adversely listed with credit reference bureaus (CRBs).

The CAK investigations come amid complaints that digital lenders do not provide full information to borrowers on pricing, punishment for defaults and recovery of unpaid loans. Digital lenders have also been accused of abusing personal information collected from defaulters' mobile phone contacts list to

bombard relatives and friends with messages regarding the default and asking third parties to enforce repayment.

CAK Director-General Wang'ombe Kariuki said the investigations will seek to uncover consumer protection breaches. "Increase transparency and comprehensiveness of product information and terms and conditions," Mr Kariuki said through the latest Kenya Gazette notice on the brief of the inquiry.

"Increase consumer control over personal information to expand choice and competition... Identify potential consumer protection risks," he added. Most of the mobile loan takers are oblivious to the conditions that include lifetime of SMS notifications, full surrenders of their personal data to third parties and waiver of their right to dignity.

In recent months, for instance, consumers of mobile app Okash who delayed or defaulted on their loan repayments have had the unpleasant experience of having the service provider reach out people in their contacts list in a bid to recover the funds.

"Hello, kindly inform XX to pay the Okash loan of Sh2,560 TODAY before we proceed and take legal ac-



CBK Deputy Governor Sheila M'Mbijewe.

tion to retrieve the debt," says a sample text message the service provider sends to people in one's contact list.

"We have tried calling in vain. This is the last reminder. Many thanks, Okash team." The law empowers the competition watchdog to reverse borrowing terms based on misleading representations on loans issued to their customers.

The Act empowers the regulator to impose a financial penalty of up to 10 percent of the value of sales of the goods or services under investigation. Last year, CAK fined Harambee Sacco, one of the biggest co-operative societies in

Kenya by client deposits, and Faulu Microfinance Bank for making partial disclosure on loans.

In the two cases, the complainants were restituted through reversal of the effects of the infringements effected by Faulu and Harambee Sacco. Further, the parties committed to cease engaging in any conduct that contravenes the Competition Act.

CBK

The Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) and the Treasury are also preparing a proposed law that will for the first time cover digital mobile lenders in fresh efforts to curb their exorbitant monthly interest rates and predatory lending. The push to control the activities of digital lenders comes two months after Kenya removed the cap on commercial lending rates.

The cap, which was introduced in September 2016, reduced private sector credit growth as commercial banks turned their backs on millions of low-income customers as well as small and medium-sized businesses deemed as too risky to lend to.

The following credit crunch triggered an appetite for digital loans, leading tens of unregulated microlenders to invade Kenya's credit market in response to the growth in demand for quick loans. The law on

the cap was removed last November.

Market leader M-Shwari, Kenya's first savings and loans product introduced by Safaricom and Commercial Bank of Africa in 2012, charges a "facilitation fee" of 7.5 percent on credit regardless of its duration, pushing its annualised loan rate to 395 percent. Tala and Branch, other top players in the mobile digital lending market, offer annualised interest rates of 152.4 percent and 132 percent respectively.

CBK Deputy Governor Sheila M'Mbijewe said a recent suicide incident reported to the regulator had highlighted the threat posed by the digital lenders and increased the need for their regulation. "In November last year we had a lady come to the Central Bank to explain to us how her husband had committed suicide following his getting involved with one of these lenders," she said yesterday.

She added the alleged predatory lending was linked to the death of the borrower following default. "What this lender chose to do when her husband was unable to pay the debt was that they extracted the contacts list on his phone and started sending messages to all his contacts, including his mother, grandmother and aunt," she said.

Indian firms General Crop, Royal Crop seek Tanzanian agro-chemical partners



Some of the agro-chemicals manufactured by Indian companies General Crop Science Pvt and Royal Crop Science.

By Beatrice Philemon

INDIAN companies General Crop Science Pvt and Royal Crop Science Limited (RCS) are looking for local companies that they can partner to import and distribute their agro-chemicals to tame insects, fungi and pests attacks on plants.

GCS's Managing Director, Ashish Chugh who was in the country last week to attend an India-Tanzania buyer-seller meeting said that his company and RCS have quality products which are ISO certified hence guarantee consumers better results for using them.

"We are in Tanzania to find business partners, explore business opportunities available here and meet Tanzanian businessmen so that we can promote bilateral trade between our two countries," said Chugh who said in future the

two companies consider investing in the country by starting a factory.

The two companies manufacture a wide range of agro-chemicals like herbicides, insecticides, fungicides, herbicides in various forms such as liquid, dust, powder, granules and plant growth regulators to help farmers tame destructive invaders on farms.

"Farmers and agro chemical dealers willing to access our products can get in touch with High Commission of India in Dar es Salaam to get our detailed contact information," he said noting that Tanzania represents one of the most important markets in East Africa.

Chugh named some of the brand names which the two companies manufacture as Glyphosate, Paraquat, Chlorpyrifos, Temephos, Cypermethrin, Permethrin, Hexaconazol, Emamectin

benzoate with all possible formulations including plant growth regulators. According to him, the company caters for both domestic and international markets.

"As company we target primarily farmers who cultivate all forms of crops which need inputs in order to give high quality and yield," the GCS managing director noted. He pointed out that their products have already benefited millions of farmers in India and other developing countries.

Chugh further noted that annually the companies invest heavily in research and innovation hence come up with quality products with is factory's capacity of 12 metric tons of powder, 100 tons of granular and many more liquid agro-chemicals.

"We have a well equipped plant to produced a wide range of formulations such as liquid emulsif-

able concentrate, wettable powders, dusting powders, suspension concentrates, capsulated suspensions and dry flowable and water dispersible granules," he added noting that their customers consistently receive high quality products and services.

"By implementing an effective and robust ISO 9001 Quality Management System, it helps us focus on the important areas of our business and improve efficiency," he pointed out saying management processes that are established throughout the value chain provide a sound foundation, leading to increased productivity and profits for the farmers. "We are continuously working towards bringing revolutionary solutions for crop protection to make a lasting change in the global food system," the GCS chief stressed.

Mboweni's budget unlikely to stop SA's march to junk, say economists

JOHANNESBURG

Finance Minister Tito Mboweni's Budget this week is unlikely to convince Moody's Investors Service that he has a credible plan to rein in government debt.

Of 19 economists surveyed by Bloomberg this month, 14 expect Moody's to downgrade the country to junk this year and nine of those say it'll happen in the first half. That's after the ratings company in November cut the outlook on the nation's assessment to negative and said it would look to the February 26 budget for a feasible strategy to contain rising debt.

Bailouts for state-owned companies including Eskom and South African Airways have pushed up government debt in an economy that's growing at less than 1% a year and not collecting enough revenue.

Pledges by Mboweni to lower spending will be difficult to push through, even after President Cyril Ramaphosa said in his state-of-the-nation address the minister will outline measures to reduce expenditure and improve its composition. Labour costs make up 35% of spending and trade unions have ruled out a review of an existing three-year wage agreement that expires in 2021, saying they won't accept pay cuts in the next deal.

Nothing will be done to limit the growth in the wage bill, according to Johann Els, chief economist at Old Mutual Investment Group in Cape Town. "While I expect Treasury to make an attempt to get the deficit under control and to try and stabilize the debt ratio, I think it is unlikely that they will be able to do enough to prevent a Moody's ratings downgrade," he said.

The income side of the budget also

won't solve the problem. Revenue collection is forecast to undershoot for the sixth straight year and the minister's scope to plug the gap by raising taxes is limited by slow economic growth and an unemployment rate near 30%. Only five of the economists surveyed said they expect an increase in the value-added tax rate.

After leaving personal income-tax brackets unchanged and not adjusting them for inflation in the last budget, Mboweni's remaining options to increase revenue include adjusting capital-gains tax, levies on fuel and luxury goods, excise duties and charges on sugar-sweetened beverages.

"Increasing the tax burden on the economy, as well as cutting government expenditure at the same time, will have a very negative bearing on economic growth," said Danelee Masia, a senior economist at Deutsche Bank. "Relying mainly on tax measures to narrow the deficit, as has been done in the past, has become counterproductive."

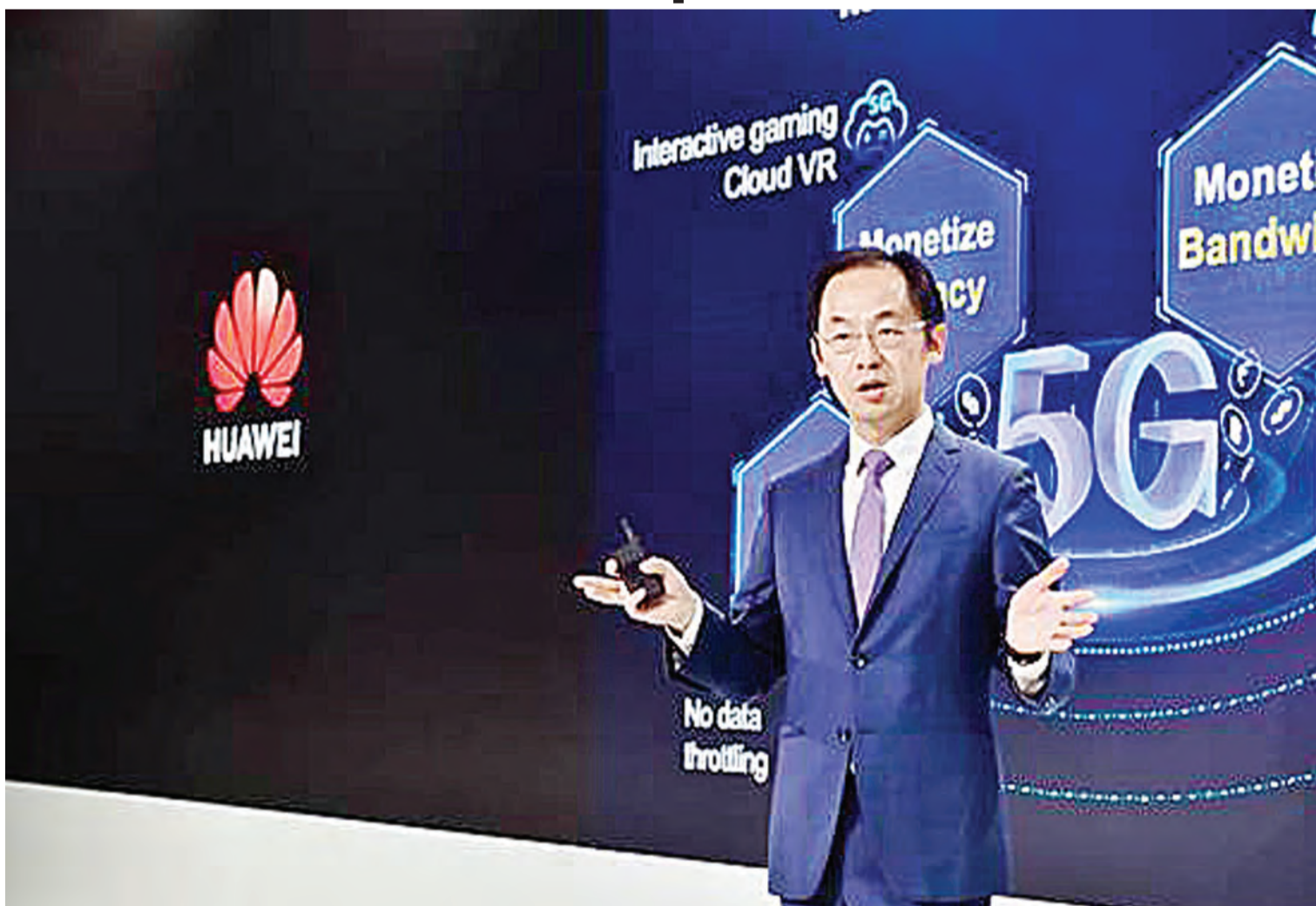
"That all means the budget deficit could be even wider in the year through March 31 than Mboweni projected in October. According to the median estimate of 24 economist surveyed by Bloomberg, the shortfall for this year will be a decade-high 6.3% of gross domestic product and will widen to 6.4% in 2020-21.

Moody's is scheduled to announce its assessment of South Africa on March 27. A downgrade would leave the country without an investment-grade ranking for the first time in 25 years. That would cause it to fall out of the FTSE World Government Bond Index, which could prompt a debt selloff and outflows of as much as \$15 billion, according to Bank of New York Mellon Corp.



SA Finance minister Tito Mboweni.

Huawei releases new 5G products and solutions



Ryan Ding delivers keynote address in London.

LONDON

At the Huawei product and solution launch in London, Ryan Ding, Executive Director of the Board and President of Huawei's Carrier BG, delivered a keynote titled "5G, Bring New Value." Ding released Huawei's new 5G products and solutions and launched the 5G Partner Innovation Program. These efforts aim to build a thriving 5G ecosystem and make 5G a commercial success.

"5G has developed beyond imagination in terms of deployment, ecosystem, and experience," says Ding. "And networks are the foundation for the 5G business." So far, Huawei has been awarded 91 commercial 5G contracts and shipped over 600,000 5G Massive MIMO Active Antenna Units (AAUs). As a leading global 5G supplier, Huawei is committed to developing the best end-to-end 5G solutions. These will include the industry's

highest-performance 5G base station that supports all scenarios and the Blade AAU with the industry's highest level of integration. The Blade AAU can work under all sub-6 GHz frequency bands and support 2G, 3G, 4G, and 5G networks. This addresses the issue of limited space for antenna installation, and reduces the total cost of ownership (TCO) by over 30% when compared to existing solutions. Huawei is also the first vendor in the industry to provide

industrial 5G modules for vertical applications.

With 4G, people can share their videos and voices. However, with the ultra-high bandwidth offered by 5G, people will be able to enjoy immersive AR and VR experiences, allowing them to convey their thoughts and feelings like never before. These amazing experiences will create incredible new value. As 5G enhanced mobile broadband (eMBB) matures, high-definition

CURRENT NEWS

Insurance group Sanlam Kenya swings to full-year pretax profit

NAIROBI

Sanlam Kenya on Friday reported a full-year pretax profit of 550 million shillings (\$5.44 million), swinging from a loss of 2.1 billion shillings in the prior period, the insurance company said.

Sanlam Kenya, part of South African insurer Sanlam Group, attributed the return to profit to a 50% growth in revenue from gross premiums and investments. Its life insurance business also returned to profit during the year.

Patrick Tumbo, Sanlam Kenya's CEO, said the company expected further improvement this year, citing a drive to cut costs and boost revenue including through alliances with unspecified

partners. Its life insurance business made a profit of 964 million shillings, versus a loss of 853 million shillings in 2018.

Sanlam's life business is ranked seventh largest in Kenya, out of a total of 25 insurers, while its general insurance business is ranked number 18 out of 37 companies, data from the insurance regulator showed.

Kenya, like many other African countries, has a very low insurance penetration rate, estimated at below 10% of the population. The figures have attracted international firms like Prudential and Swiss Re, which have entered the market in recent years.

video services will drive the massive growth of 5G B2C services. 5G B2B services have also shown huge potential.

Huawei and some operators have jointly released 5G white papers and explored B2B applications in order to drive 5G application in numerous industries. At the launch event, Ryan Ding showed the audience Huawei's recently-released live broadcast backpack. This backpack, embedded with a 5G module, makes live broadcasting far easier.

Ding emphasized that in the 4G era, "Virtually all operators provided the same network experience. However, in the 5G era, operators can provide differentiated experiences and charge users based on more metrics, including data volume, latency, bandwidth, and number of devices connected. This makes it possible to monetize 5G. It is critical that operators redefine their 5G business models now."

Huawei and its global partners have worked

together on multiple 5G projects, covering many domains including new media, campus, healthcare, and education. At the event, Ding launched the 5G Partner Innovation Program, witnessed by many of Huawei's industry partners. Through this program, Huawei plans to invest US\$20 million into innovative 5G applications over the next 5 years, contributing to a thriving 5G ecosystem and accelerating the commercial success of 5G.

Zanzibar govt officials tip CRDB to fund vital development projects



Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein listens to CRDB Plc board chairman Ally Laay (L) as the bank's managing director, Abdumajid Nsekela looks on at Zanzibar State House last month. File photo.

By Smart Money Reporter, Zanzibar

TANZANIA financial institutions such as CRDB Bank Plc have the capacity to finance some development projects, and Zanzibar government needs to rethink borrowing from international lenders, many of which dandle stringent conditions.

In his inaugural address of a CRDB and top Zanzibar government officials and members of the House of Representatives, Speaker of the House, Zuberi Ali Maulid said the Isles government is ready to work with the Dar es Salaam base lender in boosting state revenue but also finance major infrastructure projects such as construction of a new international airport at Nungwi, expansion of Zanzibar port and other similar projects.

"Instead of looking outside for financing of such projects, let's use local banks like CRDB which are in fact our own banks because Zanzibar Social Security Fund is a shareholder of this bank," Maulid said while pointing out that, "The Isles government is ready to do business with banks like CRDB."

Seconding Maulid's Health Minister Hamad Rashid Mohamed and Deputy Industry and Trade Minister, Hassan Khamis Hafidh said that time has come to look for funding from inside.

"Our governments have always borrowed from international lenders because the argument was that local banks have no financial muscles to meet huge bills associated with major infrastructure projects, but that's no longer the case because recent experience from the Mainland has shown that banks like CRDB are capable of lending us to implement development projects," Mohamed said.

The Isles Health Minister who is also a banker by profession, pointed out that huge local banks should now be a solution to Zanzibar government's develop-

ment projects financing needs because apart from offering better terms, they can also expedite processing of loans.

"These banks will assist us a lot to finance development projects which have been stalled for many years because our government relies on cash budget which is often insufficient. Some of the development projects have the potential to repay loans in time instead of being stalled for long periods while awaiting availability of funds as the cash budget entails," Mohamed added while stressing that the issue of interest rates will be discussed with respective banks to make them affordable.

The Spice Islands Health Minister's remarks were backed by Hafidh who pointed out that, in fact, the issue is long overdue. "Mr MD you are a young-man who is heading an institution which has huge financial prowess that is capable of helping Zanzibar unleash its massive potential in agriculture, fisheries and tourism, come on let's work together through PPP," Hafidh said after CRDB's Managing Director, Abdumajid Nsekela made a presentation which indicated that the bank has, as of December 2019, net assets value of over 6.6trn/-, over 5.0trn/- in deposits and made a net profit of over 120bn/-. Public Private Partnership is a development projects financing model where public and private institutions team up to implement and share proceeds according to their investment.

"We don't need foreign investors to come and tap our huge agriculture and fisheries potential here. Zanzibar is an island surrounded by water and almost all species of fish but we don't have a single fish factory, ironically we import fish!" He charged while daring Nsekela and his team to engage the Isles government in a serious partnership saying in Pemba, a seaweed processing factory project is stalled because of financing.

Responding to the numerous of observations made by the participants who included bureaucrats and House of Representative members, Nsekela pledged to appoint a head of government business in Zanzibar this week while a modern multi-purpose office will be established before end of this year.

"We are here today because we want to seriously take our business with Zanzibar government to the next level, I know that we have been here for sometime but on limited terms," he promised saying CRDB has capacity to finance projects of up to 150bn/- alone but much higher with partners.

He said the bank which recently was accredited as Green Climate Fund affiliate, can outsource up to US\$250 million (over 600bn/-) to finance climate change related projects in the Isles which is threatened by global warming.

"But as a bank, we also work with IFC (International Finance Corporation) the World Bank's commercial lending arm and other international financial institution because CRDB is rated B+ by global raking agency, Moody's," Nsekela added.

The CRDB chief who met with Zanzibar President Dr Ali Mohamed Shein earlier this month, pledged to help bridge the financing gap for construction of a new international airport, expansion of the port and construction of world class hotels to spur tourism growth in the Spice Islands.

Among other mega projects in which CRDB has provided guarantee and bridge financing include: the ongoing Standard Gauge Railway project, Rufiji Hydro Power Project renamed Nyerere HEP Project and construction of newly opened Julius Nyerere International Airport's Terminal III.



Celebrating the launch of Absa Kenya's new ticker on the Nairobi Stock Exchange on Wednesday - (from left): Peter Matlare, Daniel Mminele, Absa Bank Kenya chair Charles Muchene, and Jeremy Awori.

Absa sees future for Kenyan banking app elsewhere in Africa

NAIROBI

Timiza, Absa Kenya's virtual banking platform, will be rolled out to other African countries after having a successful run since its launch in 2018.

The Absa Group has declared its ambition to grow its footprint and take advantage of the opportunities on the continent, as part of its new strategy prompted by Barclays Bank plc's move to reduce its 63% stake in its Africa operations to 15%.

The past two weeks have seen Absa finalise one of the key milestones in the transition - unveiling its newly rebranded (former Barclays) subsidiaries in seven African countries in a series of events and celebrations across the continent.

The last of the celebrations took place in Nairobi in Kenya on Wednesday. It saw the 100-year-old Barclays blue brand making way for Absa's red, and included the launch of the bank's new stock symbol on the Nairobi Stock Exchange.

Timiza is a "fully fledged" virtual banking platform that offers various services such as 30-day micro loans, insurance and savings, and works as a bank account. Absa has partnered with Safaricom's mobile money transfer service M-Pesa, using the platform's transaction data to determine the loan a customer qualifies for.

"It is run completely apart from our bank," said Jeremy Awori, Absa Kenya MD. Awori explained that the app is largely targeted at sole proprietor "hustler" entrepreneurs because

they have high-velocity payments and transactions.

In the two years since it was launched, Timiza has gone from processing 5 000 loans a month to 5 000 loans a day. It has just under five million users. "We have built and developed the app in Kenya with a local provider [and] due to that success and experience, we are looking at rolling it out to other markets," said Awori.

In 2019 Kenya was rated the second leading innovation hub in sub-Saharan Africa by the World Intellectual Property Organisation. The country, with three million salaried people versus over ten million entrepreneurs, has democratised access to financial services through fintech.

Today, market leader M-Pesa processes half of Kenya's GDP through the mobile money transactions made by its over 20 million active users. The focus on being digitally led for banks has been a no-brainer in a country where transactions between vendors and consumers happen on virtual platforms.

Banks like Absa, which is the third largest bank in Kenya, and competitors such as Equity Group, NCBA Group and KCB, have all created mobile banking apps in partnership with M-Pesa to get a share of the traffic from the telecom provider's platform while offering more services that would only be available at a bank.

Innovation Kenya's innovation has placed it at the centre of Absa Group's growth strategy. "Kenya plays a

pivotal role in the Absa strategy across the continent - it's our second-largest market across the continent but certainly one of the most innovative markets that we have," said Peter Matlare, Absa Group deputy CEO and chief executive of the bank's regional operations.

Despite significant downside risks to the country's economy - such as the locust outbreak currently threatening the agriculture industry in East Africa, fiscal debt that is now 62% of GDP, and increasing political tensions - Kenya is still poised to produce strong economic growth of over 5% in 2020.

This is against a backdrop of weak economic growth that is not projected to be above 1% in Absa's home market. Absa Group CEO David Mminele described the macro environment in South Africa as "difficult and delicate." "But this is also a good time to position the business and refine where you need to make sure that when the economy eventually recovers, you are well-positioned to benefit," he added.

Perhaps more optimistically, Mminele said the outlook for the continent is more encouraging and while all its operations are important, the contributions from Kenya, Ghana, Mauritius and Botswana "stand out."

"We intend to continue to grow our African footprint to become a fully-fledged independent financial services group and that entails by definition that we must continue to invest in these operations," said Mminele.

VIEW FROM THE TOP

Mara, Simiyu farmers reap millions of shillings from tomato farming

By Smart Money Reporter

AS consumer feign over the hiked prices of tomatoes, farmers in Mara and Simiyu are smiling all the way to the bank to cash in on the rising demand for the commodity which is one of the most consumed vegetable in the market.

The smallholder farmers from Bunda and Busega districts in Mara and Simiyu regions respectively, have become the millionaires in shillings thanks to the red hot tomato vegetable. Both in their raw or processed forms, tomatoes are central to most local dishes and remain a regular ingredient in many soups, stews, sauces and dishes.

With 100 kilograms of the commodity currently going at 100,000/- farm gate price, farmers from many villages in Bunda and Busega districts are basking in the sun for their new found fortune.

One such group of farmers are those at Bulamba village in Bunda district that grew tomatoes in an acre plot of farm which has earned them 4.5m/- from proceeds of their plot at farm gate price.

The cluster's chairman, Abiud Masige



Tomato growers at Bulamba in Bunda District brandish their proceeds after a bumper harvest and higher market prices for the crop during a farmers' field day last week. Photo courtesy of TAHA.

said they expect to harvest somewhere around 500 crates of 100kgs each this crop season and thus implying that the

group which has eight members will make a cool 50m/- if the current market price prevails.

"Honestly, its miracle for us to make 50m/- for selling tomatoes from a one acre farm. We cannot even figure out if this is real happening, we thank God," Masige said during a farmers' field day held at Bulamba village last week.

The group used to grow the same crop traditionally and harvest around 64 crates, earning the farmers on average 1.3m/- per season, owing to the low productivity, poor technology and lack of the reliable markets.

This season's yields and profits are a record, far beyond their imaginations and it is poised to be an economic game changer for 48 people from the eight households forming the group. Masige said that with the windfall profits, the cluster also plans to purchase more land and grow tomatoes commercially for increased income in future.

"We plan to take tomato farming to the next level by becoming large commercial producers of the commodity within the next few years," Masige bragged as the improved productivity attracts nearly 20 nearby farmers who have shown interest to join the Bulamba group.

At Lukungu village in Busega district,

there is also another tomato millionaires group with a mission. The Wajasiyamali Farmers Group with one acre under tomatoes cultivation is also anticipating to raise glasses and toast for a remarkable season. "We are expecting to harvest over 500 crates of tomatoes which at the prevailing farm gate price of 100,000/- per crate, it translates to 50m/- earning at the end of the season," said group chairman, Masunga Nshashi.

Nevertheless, some nearby farmers are counting losses for harvesting poor quality tomatoes after having invested millions of shillings in production costs. Ismail Mohamed who grows tomatoes by tradition methods on his two acres plot harvested a mere 100 crates worth 8m/- from an investment of almost 4.2m/- used to purchase inputs, irrigating the plants, purchasing pesticides and fertilizers.

"It's very strange that my neighbours are harvesting good quality tomatoes that attract high price. On my side apart from poor quality, I sell 80,000/- per crate at farm gate price, if luck comes my way. The worst part is that I'm throwing away about 50 percent of tomatoes through post harvest loss," Mo-

hamed explained.

Why others are successful? Kitale Mathias, one of Wajasiyamali group members said that his cluster and others owe their achievement to United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) funded Connecting Youth and Women to Sustainable Agriculture project implemented by Tanzania Horticultural Association (TAHA).

"TAHA's good agricultural practices, techniques and climate smart technologies transfer drive as well as market access are the factors behind our success," said Mathias. "We've plenty of land and water, but we didn't have the knowledge and technology to produce high value crops on a commercial scale. We are inspired and we will replicate this model in our own farms," he noted.

Commenting on the success, TAHA's Chief Development Manager, Anthony Chamanga said the high yield high quality tomatoes are a result of farmers embracing climate smart technologies which includes drip irrigation, pests' biological control machinery, among others that enabled them to produce commercially.

WORLD

Xi stresses unremitting efforts in COVID-19 control, coordination on economic and social development

BEIJING

Chinese President Xi Jinping on Sunday stressed unremitting efforts in the prevention and control of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) epidemic and coordination in advancing economic and social development.

Xi, also general secretary of the Communist Party of China (CPC) Central Committee and chairman of the Central Military Commission, made the remarks when delivering an important speech at a meeting in Beijing to advance the work on coordinating the prevention and control of the COVID-19 and economic and social development.

The Chinese nation has experienced many ordeals in its history, but it has never been overwhelmed. Instead, it has become more and more courageous, growing up and rising up from the hardships, Xi said.

The epidemic situation remains grim and complex and it is now a most crucial moment to curb the spread, he noted.

Xi asked Party committees and governments at all levels to continue to make unremitting efforts in various prevention and control work and resume

work and production in an orderly manner.

Efforts should be made to fully unleash the huge potential and powerful driving force of China's development and strive to achieve the goals and tasks for economic and social development this year, Xi said.

On behalf of the CPC Central Committee, Xi extended sincere greetings to Party members, officials and the general public throughout the country, especially those in Hubei Province and its capital city Wuhan, and expressed respect to the medical workers, officers and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army and comrades from various sectors who have been fighting on the front line of epidemic prevention and control.

He also expressed his sincere gratitude to compatriots in Hong Kong, Macao and Taiwan, overseas Chinese, as well as to countries, international organizations and friendly people that have provided various support to the epidemic prevention and control.

Xi also expressed deep condolences to compatriots and medical personnel who lost their lives in the fight against the epidemic, and sincere sympathy to



Chinese President Xi Jinping

patients and their families who are struggling with the disease, as well as to the families of those who died on duty and the deceased patients.

Sunday's meeting was presided over by Li Keqiang and attended by Li Zhanshu, Wang Yang, Wang Huning, Zhao Leji and Han Zheng.

SOLID, METICULOUS EFFORTS REQUIRED

Xi called for firm, solid and meticulous efforts in the epidemic prevention and control, urging Party committees and governments at all levels to remain vigilant and make unremitting efforts in the epidemic prevention and control work.

No victory should be lightly announced until there is a complete win, Xi said, making the following demands:

- Hubei Province, as well as its capital city Wuhan, should be safeguarded with resolute efforts, with focal attention paid to containing the spread at communities and treating the patients;
- The epidemic prevention and control work in Beijing should be carried out with all-out efforts. Both imported cases and spread within the city should be prevented;
- Medical resources and key supplies should be allocated in a scientific manner, providing more protection for the medical workers;
- Scientific research should be accelerated in terms of drug and vaccine development. Effective diagnosis and treatment plans should be summarized and promoted in time;
- International and regional cooperation should be expanded. Good communication with the World Health Organization and experience sharing with relevant countries should be continued;
- Public communication through news media should be more effective. Release of epidemic information should be improved;
- Social stability should be well safeguarded. Illegal activities disturbing medical treatment, epidemic prevention, and market and social order should be severely punished.

Xi said since the start of the outbreak the CPC Central Committee has attached great importance to the issue, made swift deployment, strengthened the centralized, unified leadership of the Party, requiring Party committees and governments at all levels to put people's lives and health as the top priority and adopt effective measures to curb the spread of the virus.

The CPC Central Committee has made it a prominent task to improve the admission and cure rates and reduce the infection and mortality rates, Xi said, noting that Wuhan and Hubei have been taken as the country's main battlefield against the epidemic.

Efforts have also been made to strengthen the emergency supply of medical materials and daily necessities, safeguard social stability and win the support of the international community, he added.

The COVID-19 outbreak is a major public health emergency that has spread in the fastest speed,

caused the most extensive infection and is the most difficult to contain in the country since the founding of the People's Republic of China, said Xi.

"This is both a crisis and a big test for us," Xi said, adding that after arduous work, the positive trend in the prevention and control work is now expanding.

"It has been proven that the CPC Central Committee's judgment on the situation of the epidemic is accurate, all work arrangements are timely, and the measures taken are effective," said Xi.

"The results of the prevention and control work have once again demonstrated the notable advantages of the leadership of the CPC and the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics," he added.

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Russian army wiped out well-equipped terrorist groups in Syria, says Putin

MOSCOW

THE Russian military group has rooted out well-equipped terrorist groups in Syria and prevented major threats to Russia on its outer boundaries, President Vladimir Putin said on Sunday.



"Nowadays, Russia's security is in reliable hands, since our officers and soldiers persistently and consistently study their military techniques at a new level, building up their combat skills with the help of strategic exercises, drills and forced marches," Putin (pictured) said speaking at a gala concert on Defender of the Fatherland Day.

They unhesitatingly showed their high professionalism and combat capabilities, their moral fiber and best features during the operation in the Syrian Arab Republic, Putin stressed.

"They have wiped out large, well-equipped terrorist groups, prevented major threats to our Motherland on distant frontiers and helped the people of Syria preserve the country's sovereignty," the Russian president said thanking all troops who fought in Syria for their service.

Defender of the Fatherland Day marked in Russia on February 23 was introduced in 1922 as an anniversary of the Red Army's establishment and until 1993 was called Day of the Soviet Army and Navy.

Agencies

Israel's longest-serving PM struggles for political future

JERUSALEM

ISRAEL'S longest-serving Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is facing the battle of his life, with crucial national elections to take place on March 2 and a corruption trial to be opened only two weeks later.



Last July, Netanyahu (pictured) became the longest-serving prime minister in Israel's history, surpassing David Ben-Gurion, Israel's founding father.

His election campaign focuses on how his legacy will be remembered: as a great statesman and popular leader, known by his supporters as "King Bibi," as Bibi is Netanyahu's often-used nickname, or as a hedonistic leader involved in corruption.

On March 17, his trial is scheduled to be opened at the Jerusalem District Court, marking the first time that an incumbent prime minister in Israel stands trial.

General-Attorney Avichai Mandelblit indicted him with bribery, fraud, and breach of trust in three separate corruption cases.

In two cases, Netanyahu is suspected of providing regulatory and financial benefits to business owners of large media and telecom corporations in return for favorable media coverage. In the other case, he allegedly received expensive cigars, champagne, and jewelry worth about 1 million new shekels (293,000 U.S. dollars) from Israeli tycoon and Hollywood producer Arnon Milchan.

Netanyahu's father, Benzion, was a Polish-born historian and a member of the nationalistic Revisionist Zionism faction. In 1956, the Netanyahu family moved to the United States, where he spent his teenage years and attended high school.

Xinhua

Kremlin urges not to make negative predictions about Russian-Turkish ties

MOSCOW

NO negative predictions should be made about the development of Russian-Turkish relations amid a recent escalation in the Syrian region of Idlib, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov said in a televised interview with Moscow. The Kremlin. Putin program on Rossiya 1 channel on Sunday.

When asked whether the Russian-Turkish relationship could worsen due to the situation in Syria, Peskov said, "Certainly, we would not like to plunge into this gloomy mood and in fact to make extremely negative scenarios, but the week has really happened to be absolutely restless." Peskov pointed out that the situation in Idlib is still tense.

"You know that this week the president [Russian President Vladimir Putin - TASS] has been focusing his attention on the situation in Syria and, in particular, on the Idlib crisis," the Kremlin spokesman added.

The situation in Idlib deteriorated dramatically in early February after Russian and Turkish militaries' another attempt to enforce a ceasefire was met by terrorists stepping up their attacks. As a result, military specialists from Russia and Turkey were killed.

Agencies

S. Africa has enough resources for universal healthcare - president

CAPE TOWN

SOUTH Africa has enough resources to enable every man, woman and child to receive appropriate standardized quality healthcare, President Cyril Ramaphosa said yesterday.

The introduction of National Health Insurance (NHI) will be among the most far-reaching acts of social transformation this country has experienced since 1994 when apartheid was brought to an end, Ramaphosa (pictured) said in

his weekly address to the nation.

He was speaking as country-wide public hearings on the NHI Bill being deliberated by Parliament are soon to wrap up. These hearings, held in a number of places around the country, have shown that there is broad support for fundamental change in the country's healthcare system.

Participants have made a number of proposals and have spoken about their views on the NHI Bill, personal experiences of illness, trauma, disability and suffering --



and the difficulties they have had in accessing healthcare when they need it, according to Ramaphosa.

It is these experiences that inform South Africa's support for the global goal of universal health coverage, the president said.

This goal has become a major aim for health reform in many countries and a priority objective of World Health Organization (WHO).

"It is one of the greatest travesties of our time that access to decent and quality health care services is determined by one's ability to pay," Ramaphosa said.

South Africa has two parallel healthcare systems. Around 250 billion rand (about 16.5 billion U.S. dollars) is spent annually on less than 20 percent of the population.

This is the section of the population that has access to private medical insurance. On the other hand, the country spends 220 billion rand on rest of the population.

This flies in the face of the constitutional right of access to healthcare for all citizens regardless of their socioeconomic circumstances, Ramaphosa said.

"It is a situation that cannot continue. It is inefficient and unsustainable. It is unfair and unjust," he said.

Xinhua

Malaysian PM Mahathir submits resignation letter to king

KUALA LUMPUR

MALAYSIAN Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad has submitted his resignation, his office said yesterday.

"Mahathir Mohamad (pictured) had sent a letter of resignation as Prime Minister of Malaysia today," the Prime Minister's Office said in a brief statement, adding that the letter had been submitted to Malaysia's king around noon.

Mahathir, 94, assumed office in May 2018 for his second stint as prime minister after the Pakatan Harapan, or the Alliance of Hope coalition, won the general election that month. He is also the chairman of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (PPBM), one of the four component parties of the Pakatan Harapan coalition.

The development comes after Mahathir and his anointed successor Anwar Ibrahim met Monday,

and a day after surprise weekend talks between Mahathir's party and other groups on forming a new government that would exclude Anwar.

Just before the release of Mahathir's resignation statement, PPBM President Muhyiddin Yassin announced that the party has quit the Pakatan Harapan coalition, adding that the party's supreme council had made the decision after a meeting on Feb 23.

"All members of the House of Representatives of the party are also out of Pakatan Harapan. All of them have signed the oath to continue to support and trust Mahathir Mohamad as Prime Minister of Malaysia," Muhyiddin said.

"This decision is made taking into account the current and future political developments of the country," he said.

The tussle between old rivals Mahathir and Anwar, 72, has shaped



Malaysian politics for decades and tension has persisted, despite their alliance to win 2018 elections based on a promise that Mahathir would one day cede power to Anwar.

"I am impressed with his position...to not bow to groups that want to seize power without an agenda for change," Anwar told reporters outside Mahathir's residence after the two met, but without saying what they had agreed.

Anwar added, "I am satisfied

with his position, that it is the principle that we need to uphold. The reform agenda must be continued." He described the meeting as having been "very good".

Anwar also said that Mahathir has no plans to join hands with anyone from the previous ruling coalition he defeated to try to form a new government.

"Those within my party and outside using his name," Anwar replied when asked if Mahathir was responsible for the current political turmoil.

"And he reiterated what he had said to me earlier, he played no part in it. He made it very clear, that in no way would he work with those associated with the previous regime."

Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng, who is also the secretary-general of the Democratic Action Party, said the party would stand by Mahathir, and that the 94-year-old had re-

signed due to his principles, refusing to work with the United Malays National Organisation (UMNO) or form a "back-door" government through undemocratic means.

The Democratic Action Party is part of the Pakatan Harapan coalition. The turmoil, amid growing fears about a spreading virus, had spooked investors, driving Kuala Lumpur's benchmark to a 10-year low, while the ringgit currency slid 0.7 percent to an almost six-month low, its sharpest drop in over three years.

The yield on 10-year Malaysia government bonds leapt six basis points, the steepest jump since last October.

On Sunday, Anwar accused Mahathir's party and "traitors" in his own party of plotting to form a new government with UMNO, the former ruling party ousted in 2018 amid widespread corruption accusations.

Agencies

International society offers strong support for China to fight epidemic

AS China's efforts to combat the novel coronavirus are receiving wide praise from the international society, foreign governments, organizations and enterprises are joining forces with the country to fight the epidemic, offering material and medical assistance to the front line.

By noon of Feb. 5, 21 foreign governments and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) had donated epidemic prevention and control materials to China, according to China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

On Feb. 5, a 7-member Russian delegation arrived in Beijing to offer assistance for China to fight the epidemic and develop vaccines. The delegation was fol-

lowed by a batch of medical supplies donated by the Russian government that arrived in Wuhan, the epicenter last Sunday. The supplies contained a large number of protective materials, including 2 million pieces of masks.

The Pakistani government also tried its best to help China. It collected 300,000 pieces of masks, 800 protective suits, and 6,800 pairs of gloves from public hospitals across the country and immediately transported the supplies to China.

On Feb.10, Pakistani Senate unanimously passed a resolution to support China in fighting the novel coronavirus epidemic. Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan, said the country is willing to

mobilize all supplies available to assist China.

A friend in need is a friend indeed, said Toshihiro Nikai, secretary-general of Japan's ruling Liberal Democratic Party, adding that Japan will spare no effort to provide all possible assistance for China and work with China to combat the epidemic.

Nikai said he believes that as long as Japan and China work together with the spirit of solidarity and cooperation, there will be nothing they can't accomplish. "We will definitely achieve victory in the epidemic."

The secretary-general introduced that Japan has raised 120,000 protective suits and will send them to medical

institutions in China's Hubei, Zhejiang, and Guangdong as soon as possible.

According to Yonhap News Agency, official news agency of South Korea, Seoul Metropolitan Government said it has sent 600 million won (about \$507,200) worth of materials to 12 Chinese cities Tuesday, including Beijing and Chongqing municipalities.

Since Feb.4, Canada has transported about 16 tons of masks, goggles, gloves and protective masks to China, said Canadian newspaper The Globe and Mail.

Craig Allen, president of U.S.-China Business Council (USCBC) said joining hands to contain the novel coronavirus outbreak conforms to the common interests of China and the U.S.

A part of the member enterprises of the Council which represents 200 U.S. enterprises operating in China, have donated antiviral drugs, medical apparatus and instruments, money, and other forms of assistance to relevant institutions in China.

More supplies for epidemic prevention and control are being transported to China from around the world.

Statistics indicated that by Feb. 10, a total of more than 1.69 billion yuan (about \$242.19 million) has been donated to China by 297 foreign-funded enterprises.

In the nationwide efforts to combat the epidemic, Chinese researchers responded quickly and made major

breakthroughs, providing solid foundation for global scientists to study the new virus.

China has received wide recognition from scientists across the world for its transparent and efficient sharing of information, strict and comprehensive measures, as well as its scientific spirit of opening and cooperation.

"I am in awe of the thousands of health workers in China, especially in Hubei, who are caring for patients and gathering data on 2019-nCoV for scientific analysis, while under immense pressure," Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the World Health Organization (WHO), said on social media.

People's Daily



Medical staff record information of a patient at "fangcang" hospital in a cultural building complex dubbed "Wuhan Livingroom", Feb. 9. (Photo by Li Han, People's Daily)

Wuhan steps up efforts to treat all novel coronavirus patients

WUHAN, capital of central China's Hubei province and epicenter of the novel coronavirus epidemic, is making all efforts to leave no patient unattended.

Since Feb. 9, the city started all-out efforts to locate "four categories of people" -- patients confirmed or suspected to be infected with the virus, their close contacts and patients with fever. Once identified, these people must be timely treated or placed in quarantine.

To guarantee strict prevention and control of the epidemic and cut the source of infection, Wuhan carried out a large-scale health examination for its citizens based on the principle of early discovery, diagnosis, quarantine and treatment.

As of Feb. 9, authorities have visited 10.59 million people from 4.21 million households in 3,371 communities and villages, or about 99% of the city's population and 98.6% of all households.

By the noon of Monday, February 10, Wuhan authorities have discovered 1,499 patients in critical conditions through door-to-door health checks and sent them to hospital.

Hu Mingrong, chief of the Jiangxiyuan community in Wuhan's Hanyang district has made around 400 phone calls to screen the residents on Feb. 9 alone. The 59-year-old woman who's responsible for serving all 9,800 residents in the community, said the community discovered 15 confirmed cases and 26 patients with fever that day. The total number of the people falling into the "four categories" stood at 73, she added.

"We had screened all the people by the last afternoon, and we are doing a double-check today," Hu noted.

Wuhan has also stepped up efforts to test all suspect cases. By 24:00 Feb. 9, there were 10,372 patients of the novel coronavirus receiving treatment at hospitals, including 3,082 in critical conditions and 838 in need of intensive care.

According to Hu Yabo, member of the standing Committee of the Wuhan Municipal Committee of the Communist Party of China and deputy mayor of Wuhan, the city now has over 8,800 beds in all of its 28 designated hospitals, and 2,600 beds in the Huoshenshan and Leishenshan Hospitals specially for those in critical conditions.

There would be some additional 9,600 beds for patients with mild

symptoms to be made available in the three already operational "fangcang" hospitals and other medical facilities renovated from schools.

By the night of Feb. 9, the three "fangcang" hospitals have received a total of 2,865 patients with mild symptoms, including 1,400 at the Wuhan International Exhibition and Convention Center in Jiangnan district, 1,000 at Hongshan Gymnasium in Wuchang district and 465 at a cultural building complex dubbed "Wuhan Livingroom".

The "fangcang" hospitals generally comprise of medically functional units, ward units and technical guarantee units, and have multi-functions such as emergency aid, surgery treatment and clinic diagnosis.

Wang Chen, vice president of the Chinese Academy of Engineering and president of the Chinese Academy of Medical Sciences noted that compared with small and closed quarantine wards, the "fangcang" hospitals are able to receive more patients, and the open wards can also improve the efficiency of caring, which allows doctors and nurses to take care of more patients. As the hospitals only receive diagnosed cases, cross-infection will not be a problem, Wang added.

Over 700 medical staff across the country went to Wuhan to assist the "fangcang" hospitals in recent days, most of whom are nurses.

After receiving training from Gao Yongzhe, associate chief physician of the department of neurology at Zhongnan Hospital of Wuhan University and Zhou Junhui, head nurse of the hospital, they started working in groups to guarantee smooth operation of the "fangcang" hospitals.

Every bed of the hospitals is equipped with power supply, an electric blanket, and a long coat to meet the basic demand of the patient. Besides, there are also books and TVs at the hospitals for publicity and psychological counselling.

"We keep close monitoring of every patient and offer psychological support through communication, so as to help them build confidence," said Zhou.

Though many of the medical staff are working day and night, and even don't have the time for a cup of water, they never complain about it, and their only wish is to cure the patients as early as possible.

People's Daily

Lesotho PM appears in court to hear charges of murdering wife

MASERU

LESOTHO'S Prime Minister Thomas Thabane appeared in court yesterday to hear charges of murdering his estranged wife, a Reuters witness saw.

Thabane, 80, is suspected of involvement in the murder of his then wife Lipolelo, who was shot dead in June 2017, two days before he took office for a second stint as premier -- and two months before he married his current wife Maesaiah.

Maesaiah Thabane, 42, has also



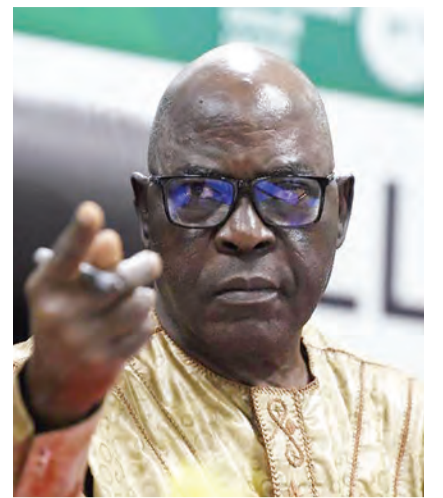
been charged with the murder, and police suspect her of ordering assassins to do the job. Both deny any involvement.

Thabane had initially been scheduled to hear the charges on Friday, but left to South Africa, which surrounds this mountainous kingdom on all sides, for

what aides said was a medical appointment.

He has said he will resign at the end of July, and several members of his own All Basotho Convention (ABC) party have been pressuring him to go sooner to avert a political crisis.

Lesotho, a tiny mountain territory of 2 million people, has a history of coups and political instability. Many fear a power vacuum unless the ABC can agree on a successor, and analysts expect a general election will have to be called soon.



Togo President Gnassingbe wins re-election in landslide

LOME

TOGO'S President Faure Gnassingbe declared an electoral victory yesterday and called on his rivals to drop a competing claim, with official preliminary results showing him re-elected in a landslide.

The win, if confirmed, will give Gnassingbe (pictured) a fourth five-year term and extend a family dynasty that began when his father took power in a 1967 coup. But some Togolese worry that a contested outcome could lead to political violence.

Preliminary figures released by the electoral commission showed Gnassingbe winning with 72 percent of the vote, with his main opponent, former Prime Minister Gabriel Messan Agbeyome Kodjo, at 18 percent. Longtime opposition leader Jean-Pierre Fabre received just 4 percent. Final results are expected in the coming days.

Kodjo said before the results were announced that his camp's tallies showed him winning around 60 percent of the vote. The president dismissed any such claim as fiction and told his rivals to accept the official result.

"To my unlucky adversaries, I would like to tell them, this is the game of democracy," Gnassingbe told supporters in the early hours yesterday morning. "Let's stop improvising, stop inventing imaginary numbers and submit to the judgment of the Togolese people."

Togo has seen protests in the past by demonstrators who say the president has illegally outstayed his welcome. When Gnassingbe came to power in 2005 after his father's death, mass protests against the family's rule were met with a violent police crackdown during which at least 500 people were killed.

The streets of the oceanside capital Lome were calm early yesterday morning.

Another five-year term for Gnassingbe would be a blow to Togo's fractured opposition, which is desperate for change but has been unable to launch a concerted political campaign against the president. In response to political pressure, Gnassingbe enacted a law last year limiting presidents to two five-year terms. It does not account for the three terms he has already served, allowing him to stay in power until 2030.

Togo is the 10th poorest country in the world, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Gnassingbe has long promised to boost economic development and the country has seen annual economic growth of around 5 percent in recent years driven by investment in energy and transport, but grinding poverty and labour strikes are reminders of challenges.

Agencies

Assange appears in British court to fight US extradition bid



Supporters gather in Parliament Square to listen to speeches after a march in support of WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in London on Saturday, as he fights extradition to the United States. (AFP)

LONDON

JULIAN Assange appeared before a British court yesterday to fight an extradition request from the United States which wants to put the 48-year-old on trial for hacking government computers and violating an espionage law.

A hero to admirers who say he has exposed abuses of power, Assange is cast by critics as a dangerous enemy of the state who has undermined Western security. He says the extradition is politically motivated by those embarrassed by his revelations.

Almost a decade since his WikiLeaks website enraged Washington by leaking secret U.S. documents, he is wanted by the United States on 18 criminal counts of conspiring to hack government computers and violating an espionage law and could spend decades in prison if convicted.

Now, some 10 months after he was dragged from the Ecuadorian embassy where he had been holed up for seven years, Judge Vanessa Baraitser will hear arguments as to why he should or should not be sent to the United States.

Wearing a blue-grey suit and cleanly shaven, Assange confirmed his name and age. Judge Baraitser told the court that any disturbances would see people removed from the building.

Jennifer Robinson, Assange's

lawyer, says his case could lead to criminalising activities crucial to investigative journalists and his work has shed an unprecedented light on how the United States conducted its wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We are talking about collateral murder, evidence of war crimes," she said. "They are a remarkable resource for those of us seeking to hold governments to account for abuses."

WikiLeaks angered Washington by publishing hundreds of thousands of secret U.S. diplomatic cables that laid bare critical U.S. appraisals of world leaders, from Russian President Vladimir Putin to members of the Saudi royal family.

Assange made international headlines in 2010 when WikiLeaks published a classified U.S. military video showing a 2007 attack by Apache helicopters in Baghdad that killed a dozen people, including two Reuters news staff.

PARDON DEAL?

The hearing at London's Woolwich Crown Court will not decide if Assange is guilty of any wrongdoing, but whether the extradition request meets the requirements set out under a 2003 UK-U.S. treaty, which critics say is stacked in favor of the United States.

Baraitser has agreed that the case will get under way before being postponed until May 18, when it will resume again for a further three

weeks to allow both sides more time to gather evidence.

Assange's lawyers have said in preliminary hearings that they would argue he was being sought for political offences and that the treaty banned extradition on those grounds.

Other arguments would feature medical evidence, public denunciations by leading U.S. political figures and details from the case of Chelsea Manning, an ex-intelligence analyst who was convicted by a U.S. Army court-martial in 2013 of espionage and other offences for leaking secret cables to WikiLeaks.

In 2012, Assange took refuge in Ecuador's London embassy to avoid extradition to Sweden where he was accused of sex crimes, which he denied and which were later dropped, saying he feared he would ultimately be sent on to the United States.

After seven years, he was dragged from the embassy in 2019 and then jailed for 50 weeks for skipping bail. He has remained in prison ever since, after the United States launched its extradition request.

If the judge decides Assange should be extradited, the decision needs to be rubber-stamped by Home Secretary (interior minister) Priti Patel. He would also have the right to appeal to London's High Court and then possibly to the Supreme Court, Britain's top judicial body.

Agencies

New technologies help China fight novel coronavirus epidemic

NEW technologies have significantly helped China's nationwide efforts to fight pneumonia caused by the novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV).

Thanks to new technologies, citizens in home quarantine can check dynamic situation of the epidemic and the distribution density in a heat map at any time, which has been a great help for reducing travel and anxiety of people in quarantine.

Chinese Internet giant Tencent's information stream service platform has rolled out a function that enables people to search information about communities with cases of novel coronavirus infection.

Covering more than 130 cities, including Beijing, and Shenzhen and Guangzhou in south

China's Guangdong province, the function shows people the number of confirmed cases of novel coronavirus infection and the location of the patients on a map.

"This is a drone equipped with an infrared thermal imaging lens, which helps to observe visible light and infrared light," said Yi Jinyu, a community worker who was taking residents' body temperatures with a drone in Yiyang new area of Yichun, east China's Jiangxi province.

"Within the effective range of three meters, it can measure body temperature with an average error of around 5 percent. The error can be reduced to one percent if the measuring distance is within one meter," Yi disclosed.

The drone helps workers avoid infection when they measure and register people's body temperatures from door to door.

Besides online information services for citizens in home quarantine, smart products are of great help to people fighting the epidemic in the front line of the battle.

On Feb. 6, a driverless white vehicle running on Jilin street, Qingshan district of Wuhan, capital of central China's Hubei province, took an express parcel to the gate of Wuhan Ninth Hospital after passing several crossings.

Then, the owner of the parcel claimed package by simply clicking on the screen of the vehicle.

It was the first express parcel

delivered since the epidemic outbreak. The vehicle was developed by smart delivery robot developed by JD Logistics, the supply chain arm under Chinese online retailer JD.com.

"The smart robot can not only deliver the supplies in shortage to us, but also minimize the possibility of infection by contact. It is such a big help for us," said the staff member of the hospital who received the parcel.

With drone technology becomes increasingly mature, drones have witnessed more and more extensive application in work of the police.

With wide observation range and broad vision, drones are helpful for reducing the work intensity and risk of infection in the work of the police, said Wen Saiwu, deputy director of

the public security bureau of Ruichang, Jiangxi province.

Drones have also helped improve the efficiency of the police's efforts to carry out epidemic prevention and quarantine inspection, Wen added.

More advanced medical technologies are indispensable to China's battle against the epidemic and its race against time.

On Feb. 5, a new virus detection lab named "Huoyan" (Fire Eye) was officially put into trial operation in Wuhan. The lab can test as many as 10,000 samples per day, and get the nucleic acid test results in an average of four to six hours.

Huoyan has greatly enhanced the capacity of Wuhan and surrounding cities for detection of the virus since it was put into service.

More high and new technologies are expected to provide all-round assistance for fighting the epidemic in the Huoshenshan Hospital and Leishenshan Hospital, two makeshift hospitals built in Wuhan for treating patients infected by the novel coronavirus.

China's three major telecommunications operators - China Telecom, China Mobile and China Unicom, have cooperated with multiple manufacturers to complete the construction of a 5G network covering the whole area of Huoshenshan Hospital and a teleconsultation system for Huoshenshan Hospital and the Chinese People's Liberation Army General Hospital within 36 hours.

China's tech giant Lenovo offered over 2,000 sets of computers to Huoshenshan Hospital, and sent a professional information technology team to build information system for the hospital.

In addition, Beijing Orion Star Technology Co., Ltd. donated tasks including delivering laboratory test reports and drugs.

Moreover, such new-tech products as medical apparatus and instruments, as well as air conditioners, thermal image chips, ultraviolet lamps, and dedicated air purifiers for intensive care unit (ICU) wards and operating rooms, have played important roles in fighting the epidemic in a scientific and accurate manner.

People's Daily

LeBron's clutch jumper sends Lakers past Celtics 114-112

LOS ANGELES

ALTHOUGH LeBron James is still relatively new to the Los Angeles Lakers' rivalry with the Boston Celtics, he relishes the chance to participate in the history and passion behind this series.

When James had the chance Sunday to make another significant mark in this chapter of NBA history, he stepped back and did it with pleasure.

James scored 29 points and put the Lakers ahead on a fallaway jumper with 30 seconds to play, and Los Angeles split its season series with Boston in a 114-112 victory.

James also had nine assists and eight rebounds in another superb all-around game. He missed a tying free throw moments before he coolly nailed the turnaround shot over Jayson Tatum to put the Lakers ahead to stay in their fifth straight win overall.

"I had been setting him up all night with the back-down to the drop step to the baseline," James said. "I figured he would sit on it, thinking I would try it again, so I just went to my back-down, gave a little Dream Shake to the baseline and was able to open up the middle and get my fadeaway."

When Tatum was called for an offensive foul in the final second, the Lakers could celebrate another memorable meeting between two clubs with 33 NBA titles between them.

James put up a triple-double when the Lakers won in Boston last season in his first taste of the rivalry, but LA had lost his ensuing two meetings with the Celtics.

"It's just special to be part of this rivalry," James said. "We understand that this has been going on since the '50s, '60s, '70s, '80s, '90s, all the way through. So to be a part of a rivalry, to be a part of a historical two-franchise group, this is special. ... (We love) to represent this rivalry with the utmost respect and play this game the right way, as all the former players have done in the past."

James was thinking of Celtics great Bill Russell, who watched the game at courtside while wearing Kobe Bryant's jersey. He was also thinking of Tatum, who matched his career high with 41 points while wearing a purple wristband in memory of Bryant, a mentor and teacher to the Celtics star.

"That's a great atmosphere," said Boston's Jaylen Brown, who scored 20 points. "It don't get too much better than that. To be honest, I had a great time. Even though we lost, it was fun being out there competing at the highest level, and it makes you thirsty for the post-season."

Anthony Davis had 32 points and 13 rebounds for the Lakers, who took a 32-point blowout loss in Boston last month. The Celtics had won 12 of 14 starting with that dominant win.

Davis hit two free throws with 12.3 seconds left in the rematch and added one more with 6.7 seconds to play. But Tatum was called for a push-off foul as he attempted to create space for one last shot against Kentavious Caldwell-Pope.

Tatum scored just six points in the final 18 minutes, with Caldwell-Pope doing much of the defensive work.

"It was a step in the right direction," Tatum said of his performance against James and Davis. "I definitely looked up to those guys and know how great they are individually, so just trying to earn the respect of the guys I look up to."

With the Lakers' immediate return to excellence since beating out Boston to acquire Davis last summer, these longtime rivals are

both playoff-bound championship contenders yet again.

Los Angeles is comfortably atop the Western Conference standings, while the Celtics sit third in the East. Both teams have a decent shot of meeting in the NBA Finals for the 13th time if they continue to grow from big games like this thriller.

The Celtics played without star Kemba Walker, who missed his second straight game with left knee soreness.

"It was about who wanted it more," Davis said. "With or without Kemba, they're a tough team. They've proven they can win without him. To play a team like that in a playoff atmosphere is something you want. We just stayed with it. We know how big this rivalry is."

Meanwhile, in Portland, Oregon, with All-Star guard Damian Lillard nursing a groin strain, the Portland Trail Blazers got big games from CJ McCollum and Carmelo Anthony.

McCollum had 41 points, a career-high 12 assists and nine rebounds, Anthony scored a season-high 32 points and the Portland Trail Blazers rallied to beat the Detroit Pistons 107-104 on Sunday night.

"He led us tonight," Anthony said of McCollum. "He came up big when we needed it, made the right plays, the shot was falling. He put us on his back tonight."

It was the first time Anthony scored over 30 points since Feb. 25, 2017, when he was with the New York Knicks. He made a jumper with Portland protecting a two-point lead with 21 seconds left.

Anthony remained focused on the playoff fight his Blazers are in. With Portland four back in the loss column of eighth-place Memphis, Anthony knew it was up to he and McCollum to make sure the Blazers didn't take a costly loss to the lowly Pistons.

"We don't have a choice," Anthony said. "We've got to go out there and do what we do to win games or put ourselves in position to win a basketball game. At the end of the day it's going to come down to us too and saying this is what we got to do. This is the last quarter of the season and we in a dog fight trying to get that spot."

Of the 27 points Portland scored in the fourth quarter, 21 came from Anthony and McCollum, who worked well together down the stretch.

"I'm very comfortable with that. I like low pick-and-rolls, side pick-and-rolls. Melo is good in isolation, he likes 15-foot jumpers," McCollum said. "I know if I can turn the corner, then his man is going to be more hesitant to help. So it's either I'm going to be finishing and he's going to have opportunities to score. I think we played pretty well together and figure out ways to put the defense at a disadvantage."

Reserve big man Christian Wood had 26 points and nine rebounds for Detroit. The Pistons' bench accounted for 70 points.

"He's growing right before our eyes," Pistons coach Dwane Casey said of Wood. "I love where he is, I love his progression but he's not a finished product yet. Christian's got to get stronger. This summer he's got to get in the weight room and get stronger in his core together so he can take some bumps and hits and still score."

McCollum scored or assisted on 14 consecutive Portland points in the first quarter and finished with 15 points and five assists in the period. The Blazers led 40-24, with Anthony adding 12 points.

AP



Washington Wizards' Bradley Beal (3) drives against Chicago Bulls' Ryan Arcidiacono (51) during the first half of an NBA basketball game Sunday, Feb. 23, 2020, in Chicago. Chicago won 126-117. (AP Photo)

Analysis: Sing a song for Fury, the new heavyweight champion

LAS VEGAS

THE world has never seen a heavyweight champion quite like Tyson Fury, the British behemoth who gave Deontay Wilder a beat down to win the heavyweight title and then celebrated by leading his fans in a chorus of "American Pie" from the ring at the MGM Grand hotel.

He can fight, he can sing and he can talk. Oh, can he talk.

Before the fight Fury talked nonstop about how he was going to switch from boxer to puncher to take the heavyweight title from Wilder. After the fight he talked about how he did just that – and will only get better as his career goes on.

"Not bad for a fat guy who can't punch," the 6-foot-9 Fury crowed after handing Wilder his first defeat in a fight so one-sided that Wilder's corner finally threw in the towel at 1:39 of the seventh round of their heavyweight showdown Saturday night. "I had a dream of coming to Las Vegas and taking over. Now here I am."

It wasn't supposed to play out like this. Not against an unbeaten heavyweight champion so feared he had knocked out 41 of 43 men put in the ring against him.

Not after Fury plunged into the depths of despair a few years back when his life was spiraling out of control and cocaine and alcohol had made his weight balloon 37 pounds.

But now the Gypsy King has the heavyweight title once again, five years after first winning it from Wladimir Klitschko.

And, no matter what his fellow Brit Anthony Joshua might say, he should be hailed by all in boxing as the best heavyweight in the world.

"Everybody knows I'm a master boxer," Fury said. "But that didn't work the last time. I got a draw and a draw is a failure to me. The only way I could guarantee I was going to get a win was a knockout."

The path to greatness in Sin City was a troubled one. Fury had to



Tyson Fury, of England, celebrates after defeating Deontay Wilder during a WBC heavyweight championship boxing match Saturday, Feb. 22, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo)

beat his demons before he could beat the best heavyweights, and then had to beat the skeptics to be considered the best of the best.

Against Wilder he proved he was just that in a fight most never saw coming. Most, that is, who thought Fury was bluffing when he said he would go after Wilder from the opening bell in the rematch of their draw from 14 months earlier.

He put on a show in a theatrical entrance, wearing a crown and carried aloft on a throne. Then he put a show on in the ring, knocking Wilder down in the third round with a right hand to the head and again in the fifth with a left to the body.

By the time Wilder's corner threw in the towel, the outcome of the fight had long since been decided. Wilder was taking punches to the head without landing any of his own, and any thought that he might suddenly unleash a right hand to change things was long gone.

And the singing afterward? Well, Fury might not want to

quit his night job – one that made him \$30-40 million for the signature win of his career.

"Were you not entertained?" Fury asked afterward. "I've now finished off my collection. I've won every belt in boxing."

Unfortunately for Fury, he doesn't hold every belt in boxing, even after putting on a spectacular show in the biggest heavyweight fight in the U.S. since Lennox Lewis beat Mike Tyson 18 years ago in Memphis. The others belong to Joshua, who won them back in Saudi Arabia in December after being stopped by Andy Ruiz Jr. in their first fight.

But Fury has never lost and he beat a man who had made 10 title defenses and also entered the ring unbeaten. He did it in a way that not only thrilled his fans but backed up the case that he is the best heavyweight around.

If any more evidence was needed, oddsmakers at the Westgate Superbook opened betting on a possible Joshua-Fury matchup with Fury a big minus-260 favorite.

First, there might be some more business with Wilder, who has a contractual right for a third fight that he must exercise within 30 days. But after the one-sided beating he took from Fury there would seem little appetite for a rematch, at least immediately.

A Fury-Joshua fight, of course, would be massive in Britain and massively profitable to both fighters. But for now Fury is on top of the heavyweight division and the decisions are all his.

"We've never seen a guy of this size with this ability," promoter Bob Arum said. "This guy is monstrous at 6-9 and he showed tonight he can punch as well as he can box."

Indeed he did, in a fight that drew a record heavyweight title gate of \$16.9 million and likely did well in pay-per-view sales. On this night Fury's talents were on full display as he took his place on top of a heavyweight division that is suddenly hot once again.

And that's something to sing about.

AP



CRDB Bank plc Managing Director, Abdulmajid Nsekela, executes jump shot to inaugurate a sports bonanza involving CRDB employees and Members of Zanzibar's House of Representatives, which took place at Mao Zedong grounds in the Isles over the weekend. Participating teams in the event featured in netball and basketball. PHOTO:CORRESPONDENT

Mercedes suspect Ferrari are playing down their true pace

LONDON

CHAMPIONS Mercedes suspect Ferrari are considerably faster than the Italian team let on in Formula One's first pre-season test in Spain, with the gap between the top three and the rest closing.

Teams have six days of testing before the season-opener in Australia on March 15 and the engineers have plenty of data to crunch at the halfway stage.

On paper, Mercedes were more than a second quicker than the next team at the Circuit de Catalunya and also covered the most distance.

Ferrari boss Mattia Binotto told reporters he was less optimistic than last year, when his team's pace was evident to see.

"The others are faster than us at the mo-

ment, I believe," he said.

Mercedes, who are chasing an unprecedented seventh successive title double this year with Lewis Hamilton also out to equal Michael Schumacher's record seven crowns, were not about to crow.

"No-one wants the egg on their face of claiming that they are faster than another team, because they can never know for certain what was hidden or what is coming next," the team observed in an assessment on their website <http://www.mercedesamgf1.com>.

"Will Red Bull bring a significant upgrade package to the second test? Why have Ferrari spent this test running their PU (power unit) consistently at much lower levels than their partner teams?"

"What we can say is that we predict the

battle in Melbourne at the front is going to be tight. We can also see that the midfield have closed on the front and that there is some considerable midfield swing compared to last year's competitive order."

Valteri Bottas's fastest lap on Friday was one minute 15.732 seconds, compared to Sebastian Vettel's best for Ferrari of 1:18.154 on Thursday.

Advertisement
Ferrari were only eighth fastest of the 10 teams.

However the quickest time by a Ferrari-powered car was Kimi Raikkonen's 1:17.091 for Alfa Romeo, on the same C5 tyre as Bottas, when the 2007 champion was top on day two.

REUTERS

Mueller ready to show Chelsea what Germany is missing

BERLIN

A YEAR after being dumped by Germany head coach Joachim Loew, Thomas Mueller is set to showcase why he is so important for Bayern Munich - and Robert Lewandowski - at Chelsea in the Champions League.

Alongside Erling Braut Haaland, Bayern's star striker Lewandowski is joint top-scorer in the Champions League with 10 goals going into the last 16, first-leg clash on Tuesday.

In order to keep him fresh, Mueller was a second-half replacement in Friday's 3-2 league win over bottom side Paderborn when Lewandowski netted twice.

The Poland striker is on a career-high 38 goals after 32 games in all competitions and is happiest with Mueller alongside him.

"It's easier with Thomas next to me, he helps me out a lot," Lewandowski has said of Mueller.

"We always have one player more in the penalty area when he plays, I have more space and not always two or three opponents against me."

It's no coincidence that Lewandowski is enjoying his highest goal tally just when Mueller's 14 assists in Germany's top flight also puts him near his personal best.

- Flourishing under Flick -

The 30-year-old is back to his best after significant setbacks for club and country in 2019.

Alongside fellow 2014 World Cup winners Mats Hummels and Jerome Boateng, Mueller was told last March he was no longer needed by Germany as Joachim Loew rebuilt his squad following the 2018 World Cup debacle.

Then last autumn, Mueller found himself repeatedly benched by Bayern to make room for Philippe Coutinho, who is on loan from Barcelona.

When Niko Kovac was sacked in November, caretaker coach Hansi Flick restored Mueller to the starting line-up, often at Coutinho's expense, and he has flourished.

Mueller was superb in their recent 4-1 win at Cologne, drawing defenders to create goals for Kingsley Coman and Lewandowski as Bayern raced into a 3-0 lead after 12 minutes.

AFP

Arteta hails Aubameyang as Arsenal captain downs Everton

LONDON

MIKEL Arteta admitted Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang has erased any doubts about his commitment after Arsenal's captain led by example with a double in their 3-2 win against Everton on Sunday.

For much of a troubled season Arsenal have been written off as also-rans in the battle to qualify for the Champions League.

But, recovering from the wreckage of the Unai Emery era, their revival under Arteta is gathering pace.

Rocked by Dominic Calvert-Lewin's first-minute goal at the Emirates Stadium, Arsenal equalised through Eddie Nketiah and took the lead thanks to Aubameyang.

Richarlison levelled for Everton to cap a dramatic first half, but Gabon striker Aubameyang had the final two seconds after the break.

Gunners boss Arteta revealed he was not convinced about Aubameyang's mentality before he took charge, but watching his skipper tracking back to help defend in the closing stages won over the Spaniard.

"Before I took over I had my questions about him but he showed his commitment. I wanted him to show if he wanted to do it and do it physically," Arteta said.

"I'm so happy with him. He is scoring important goals and as a captain he is giving a great example to everyone else with the way he is working defensively."

Arsenal climbed above Everton into ninth place and sit four points behind fifth-placed Manchester United.

With second-placed Manchester City banned from European competitions for the next two years, as

AFP

Flick is probably wise to pick Mueller, who joined Bayern as a schoolboy in 2000 and made his first-team debut in 2009 just before his 19th birthday.

Such lengthy service means he has the ear of the club's senior bosses and an unhappy Mueller is never good for a Bayern coach in the long run.

His relationship with Pep Guardiola became strained after Mueller was benched for the 2016 Champions League semi-final, first-leg defeat at Atletico Madrid.

Mueller was part of a disgruntled group of senior players whose complaints contributed to the sacking of Guardiola's successor Carlo Ancelotti in 2017 after poor results.

Mueller then became so frustrated under Kovac that his wife Lisa criticised the coach in a social media post just before he was replaced by Flick.

- Space invader -

What makes Mueller unique is that he is neither a striker, nor an attacking midfielder, but describes himself as a 'Raumdeuter' - an interpreter of space.

He is at his deadliest with perfectly-timed runs and quick passes so that his presence in the penalty area creates space for Lewandowski.

"I like to be active in the space in behind the opposition's midfield," Mueller has said on his favourite position.

"That's where I can hurt the opponent most. I'm a mix between a striker and a midfielder - I'm a 'Raumdeuter'."

His success speaks for itself.

A key member of the 2013 team which won the treble of Bundesliga, German Cup and Champions League titles, Mueller has won the domestic league eight times, lifting the cup in Berlin on five occasions.

He has scored 38 goals - 10 of those at World Cup finals with five each at South Africa 2010 and Brazil 2014 -- in 100 appearances for Germany.

His current form means he could yet play for Germany at a major international tournament this summer having been named in the preliminary German squad for the Tokyo Olympics.

Defiant Messi gives troubled Barca hope of Champions League glory

MADRID

LIONEL Messi has said Barcelona are not playing well enough to win this season's Champions League but his four goals against Eibar on Saturday were a reminder that with him there will always be hope.

Barca play Napoli in the first leg of the last 16 on Tuesday and will be expected to go through, even if their opponents are on a strong run, having won six out of their last seven matches, including victories over Juventus and Inter Milan.

Yet despite a whirlwind couple of months of political wrangling, remarkably Barcelona approach this tie sitting top of La Liga and with a spring in their step, in large part due to Messi.

His quadruple in the 5-0 rout at Camp Nou on Saturday was cathartic and not only because Real Madrid, whom Barca face in the Clasico on Sunday, failed to regain first place after losing to Levante a few hours later.

"It was a win we needed," said coach Quique Setien.

Messi has scored seven quadruples in his career but none executed amid such an intense time of pressure, with the spotlight on the Argentine.

While other players might have sulked or crumbled, Messi delivered with another breathtaking performance that underlined his ability to drag this troubled team through even the most turbulent of periods.

"He's been in this form for 14 or 15 years and he keeps performing like this," said Setien.

"He's a guarantee for any club and for any coach and that's what makes him the best player in the world. He can do things that others can only dream about."

Messi could have had many reasons to feel upset but he hasn't let them affect his performances.

Barcelona's board sacked Ernesto Valverde last month, despite Messi's public backing three days before, and failed to sign a striker in the transfer window with Luis Suarez and Ousmane Dembele both out injured.



Lionel Messi

- No margin for error -

The club's technical secretary Eric Abidal then said the squad were the main reason for Valverde's departure while the president, Josep Maria Bartomeu, has been accused of hiring a PR company that criticised key players, including Messi, in a bid to improve his image online.

Barcelona have denied the allegations but when asked in an interview with Mundo Deportivo last week if he was convinced, Messi said he would wait to see if they were true.

He also admitted, "the way we are at the moment, I don't think it's enough to win the Champions League" and identified Real Madrid, Juventus, Paris Saint-Germain and Liverpool as greater threats.

Setien was more optimistic on

Friday. "There are things that I agree with and others evidently... I have seen every year how Champions Leagues are won and I think we could have the same chance as other teams," he said.

"It is true that there is no margin for error and there are things we have to try to improve and do better. We are not happy with everything but I think we are growing little by little and we are reaching levels that will allow us to challenge."

Yet if Messi were to win the Champions League this season, it would surely represent one of his most impressive achievements.

With the likes of Frenkie de Jong and Arthur Melo in midfield and the excellent Marc-Andre ter Stegen in goal, they do not lack for talent but

weaknesses in defence remain, not to mention a fragility against the counter-attack.

And by appointing Setien, a coach devoted to a very particular style, Barcelona are having to change mid-season, with Setien admitting this month that it would take time for the players to understand his methods.

"It's not easy," said Messi. "We come from playing under Valverde to playing differently now and being asked to do something else. The truth is we are learning and we still have a lot to learn."

But with in-form Napoli fast-approaching and then Madrid to come at the Santiago Bernabeu, time is not on Barcelona's side. For now, they will look to Messi.

AFP

Three decisions for Lampard as Chelsea face Bayern clash

LONDON

CHELSEA manager Frank Lampard faces some big decisions ahead of Bayern Munich's visit to Stamford Bridge in the Champions League last 16 first leg on Tuesday.

AFP Sport looks at three major calls Lampard must get right if Chelsea are to take a step towards the quarter-finals:

Keep faith with Giroud?

Having spent much of the season in exile, Olivier Giroud was back with a bang as he scored the opening goal against Tottenham on Saturday in his first Premier League start since November.

The France striker had been reduced to fringe status by Lampard's decision to give talented youngster Tammy Abraham his opportunity, but an injury to the England international and the ineffective form of Michy Batshuayi gave Giroud a second chance.

He made the most of it with a lethal first half finish in the vital 2-1 win over Tottenham, producing a combative performance that might have given Lampard food for thought.

Giroud's second club goal of the season and his first in the Premier League since April underlined the threat posed by the 33-year-old's physical style and clever movement.

Now Lampard must decide if Giroud, whose lack of match action meant he could only last 70 minutes against Tottenham, is capable of repeating that display against Bayern.

Chelsea, who have struggled to find a cutting edge for much of the season in home games, certainly looked more dynamic with Giroud leading the line en route to their first win in five league matches.

And in the back of his mind, Lampard will know Abraham, who came off the bench to replace Giroud, might be running out of steam with only one goal in 2020 and has just two in his last



Frank Lampard

10 games.

Retain defensive system?

Jose Mourinho's cheeky pre-match claim that Lampard would return to the five-man defence he had employed against Tottenham earlier this season proved correct on Saturday.

Now the Chelsea boss must be tempted to deploy the same system against Bayern.

Despite his knowledge that Lam-

pard would use Cesar Azpilicueta, Andreas Christensen and Antonio Rudiger as his centre-backs, with Reece James and Marcos Alonso bombing forward as wing-backs, Mourinho had no answer to the effective formation.

The tactics gave Chelsea a more solid look at the back and freed James and Alonso to join the attack, allowing them to overload their opponents in wide areas, a scheme perfectly illustrated when the ball

was worked from right to left for Alonso to fire home from 20 yards.

It was the Spanish left-back's first start since December after he spending much of the season behind Emerson and even Azpilicueta, usually a right-back or centre-back, in Lampard's pecking order.

Lampard has twice out-witted Mourinho with the formation this season and, given Chelsea have often looked creaky at the back this season, it would be no surprise if he relied on that security blanket again to subdue the German champions.

Let Barkley run wild?

Like Giroud and Alonso, Ross Barkley had endured a frustrating campaign that suddenly offers hope of a rewarding finale after his influential display against Tottenham.

Liverpool-born Barkley has never looked comfortable among Chelsea's cosmopolitan squad since arriving from Everton in January 2018 and a series of diffident performances had raised questions about the midfielder's long-term future with the club.

The promise shown by Barkley as a youngster at Everton seemed a lifetime ago as he laboured to make an impact in west London, but Lampard might have found a way to unlock his potential at last.

Using the 26-year-old on the left side of Chelsea's attack on Saturday unchained Barkley from any defensive responsibility, giving him freedom to roam and take up positions that could hurt Tottenham.

He did just that with the assist for Alonso's goal by moving into a central position that took him away from any potential markers.

With Brazilian winger Willian rested after being used as substitute against Tottenham, Lampard will have to decide whether Barkley, who has raised eyebrows with some off-field antics since joining Chelsea, can be trusted to repeat that kind of mature show against Bayern.

AFP

SPORT

Defiant Messi gives troubled Barca hope of Champions League glory

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT, PAGE 19

TONIGHT @ 9:00

NIRVANA

Nirvana explores the hottest trends in fashion, beauty, art and lifestyle as well as interviews with notable people from the entertainment, art and fashion industries.

EATV TUESDAY

11:00 DADAZ LIVE
12:00 MPYA
12:30 Msosi Kilaani (r)
13:00 Wanawake Live (r)
13:30 Kati Za Wana
14:00 DK 10 za Msaungamizi
14:30 Bball Kings Highlights (r)
15:00 Funguka
15:30 SSPORTS (r)
16:30 #HASHITAG
17:00 SSELEKT
17:55 Kurosa
18:00 eNewz
18:30 Music/Soap
19:00 EATV SAA 1
19:45 MJADALA
20:00 DADAZ (r)

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

Haynes, Lanning see Australia through after early scare

PERTH

AUSTRALIA are not playing well at all. Australia are still in the T20 World Cup. These two truths were undeniable at the end of a white-knuckle encounter with Sri Lanka at the WACA Ground, which on several occasions looked like being the day in which Meg Lanning's No. 1-ranked side were eliminated at the first available opportunity.

Sri Lanka, having also lost their opening fixture, had never beaten Australia in a T20I but got closer than most anybody expected. Putting up a sound total and defending it desperately has been a more than useful strategy so far in this tournament, and at 3 for 10, the hosts were in all sorts of trouble thanks to the swing of HYPERLINK "http://www.espnricinfo.com/srilanka/content/player/335236.html" Udeshika Prabodhani.

Lanning and HYPERLINK "http://www.espnricinfo.com/australia/content/player/268889.html" Rachael Haynes put together a partnership, however, and they were given what turned out to be much-needed assistance by both the umpires - not ruling Lanning caught behind when she was on 15 - and the Sri Lankans, who dropped both Australia's captain and deputy when the game could easily have swung back their way. In the end Australia scrambled to victory with three balls to spare. They are still in the tournament, but they have plenty of improving to do.

Atapattu brings the class

Having never lost to Sri Lanka in 16 matches across formats, Australia had to be wary of HYPERLINK "http://www.espnricinfo.com/srilanka/content/player/318853.html" Chamari Atapattu after her glorious 103 in an HYPERLINK "https://www.espnricinfo.com/series/8674/scorecard/1183515/australia-women-vs-sri-lanka-women-3rd-odi-icc-womens-championship-2017-18-2021" \t "https://www.espnricinfo.com/series/8674/report/1173052/_blank" ODI in Brisbane in October. Megan Schutt broke through early, having found some of her trademark new-ball swing away from the left-hand opener Hasini Perera, but otherwise Lanning's team could not find a way to confound Atapattu before she had given Sri Lanka a serviceable start in conditions that, in considerable breeze and on a fresh, fastish pitch, had plenty to offer the bowlers.

Critically, Atapattu gained some handy support from Nos. 3, 4 and 5 as Umesha Thimashini, Anushka Sanjeevani and Nilakshi de Silva all contributed. Their innings were at varying degrees of fluency, Thimashini most striking in her cover drives off Ellyse Perry, but they ensured that once Atapattu departed, caught at extra cover the ball after she was very nearly run out, the Sri Lankan effort was not to peter out entirely.

Strano's costly 19th over

Retained in the team after being a surprise choice for the opener against India, Molly Strano did not share the new ball this time but still had a key role bowling in the middle of the innings and then returning at the death. Her dismissals of Sanjeevani and Ama Kanchana in the same over were moments in which it felt as though Australia were taking control of proceedings, but in her final over of the innings, Strano erred full and then short. **AGENCIES**

Annadil Burhani hammer K&P team in Paul Manyanda Memorial cricket tourney



Annadil Burhani Cricket Club. PHOTO; COURTESY OF NIKHIL PUJARA

By Guardian Reporter

ANNADIL Burhani cricketers have kept on putting pressure on Paul Manyanda Memorial (PMM) competition's Division B leaders, Union Sports Club, given the former cruised to 14-run win over K&P Constructions team in a clash, which took place in Dar es Salaam last weekend.

Annadil Burhani went on to notch 88 runs, losing four wickets in 10 overs once they won the toss and elected to bat.

Abbas Adamjee, who opened the team's innings, put stellar showing with

the bat, scoring 49 runs which consisted of eight fours.

The team's efforts to record an imposing total were later pegged back by quick dismissal of experienced batsmen, Adnan Zariwala, Khuzeima Janooowala and Mufaddal Seifuddin, with the three failing to offer

meaningful contribution.

The outfit's veteran batsman Abdulkadir Dosajee put solid knocks to score 17 runs, which helped his squad end the scheduled 10 overs with respectable total.

K&P Constructions team's bowler, Lakshmikhant Sukavasi,

took two wickets, leaking 14 runs in two overs during the team's turn with the ball.

Much as K&P Constructions team chased their opponents' total zealously, they in the end posted 74 runs, losing three wickets in 10 overs to concede defeat.

Jaya Chandra scored 30 runs, which included five fours, opening batsman Naga Gurijala and Sukavasi recorded 18 runs apiece in the fruitless chase.

Adamjee was, ultimately, voted as man of the match, thanks to his batting exploits, which were crucial to Burhani's win.

Annadil Burhani are placed second with four victories in five outings, suffering loss in one game.

Winning percentage separates Annadil Burhani with the division leaders, Union Sports Club.

Burhani have winning percentage of 80.00 whereas Union Sports Club's winning percentage is 100.00.

Union Sports Club lead the rest of the pack with four victories in as many matches.

The last weekend loss has left K&P Constructions team still glued to the bottom of the division's standing with no win in four games.

The day's other match had Saint Gobain Strikers posting eight-wicket drubbing of Estim.

Estim had the chance to bat first, posting 85 runs and losing six wickets in 10 overs.

In response, Strikers mounted a successful chase, scoring 89 runs and losing two wickets in 10 overs.

The competition has been organized by Dar es Salaam Cricket (DC) in memory of Paul Manyanda, a veteran cricket coach and umpire, who passed away in the city recently.

AT selects six relay race athletes for national squad

By Correspondent Joseph Mchekadona

SIX athletes have been earmarked for the relay national team, Athletics Tanzania (AT) announced yesterday.

Tullo Chambo, AT information officer, said the six have been earmarked for national squad after their impressive performance at the just ended National Relay Championships which took place in Dar es Salaam, with athletes from 11 regions battling it out in it.

The event which was held at the National Stadium was held after regions had conducted trials.

The championships served as platform for selecting athletes set to form relay national team for 100X4m and 400X4m events.

He said AT had set qualifying time for men in 100m race at 10.2 seconds to 10.6 seconds while women were required to register 11.4 seconds to 12.5 seconds in the race.

In 400m for the men's category, athletes were to post 46.5 seconds to 47.4 seconds whereas female athletes were required to record 52.00 seconds to 58.6 seconds.

He said unfortunately very few men managed to reach to within qualifying time, whilst female athletes performed badly.

Tullo said AT through the association's vice-chairman (technical), Hamad Ndee, suggested that the best performing athletes should be considered for the national team.

The AT information officer said there were three heats for men in 100m race.

The first heat saw Dar es Salaam-based athletes put impressive showing with Joseph William finishing as the winner with 11.66 seconds, Amos Safari was runner-up with 11.96 seconds,



A section of domestic athletes participate in training session in Dar es Salaam last week to shape up for the national relay championships, which took place in the city over weekend. PHOTO; CORRESPONDENT JUMANNE JUMA

Lazaro Charles took the third spot with 11.97 seconds.

Samwel Msila ended fourth with 12.13 seconds and Hussein Hamisi recorded 12.55 seconds to finish fifth.

Chambo said in the second heat, Zanzibar athletes held sway, with Ali Hamis Gulam emerging as the winner as he clocked 10.40 seconds.

The heat's second position went to Hassan Hamis with 10.90 seconds, Binamungu Katunzi from Dodoma clocked 10.91 seconds to end third.

The fourth spot was won by place Jeremiah Baruti from Dar es Salaam who clocked 11.70 seconds, the fifth position went to Boaz Benesta from Simiyu who clocked 12.08 seconds.

Mwanza-based Jacob Lugaila finished sixth, posting 12.22 seconds, the seventh position went to Fande Juma from Singida who recorded 12.38 seconds.

Chambo said in the third heat, Dar es Salaam's athlete Elias Sylvester beat others to the top spot, clocking 10.66 seconds, Abdallah Issa from Zanzibar took the second position, registering 10.72 seconds.

Ismail Hussein from Dodoma took the third position, posting 10.91 seconds. The heat's fourth position went to Dar es Salaam's Selemani Kengwa who recorded 11.10 seconds.

Daniel Mussa from Mara finished fifth, clocking 11.53 seconds, fellow Mara athlete Japhet Kitugo took sixth position with 12.05 seconds, Ramachani Omari from Singida came seventh, registering 12.21 seconds.

Chambo said there were only one heat in 400m for both male and female athletes.

In women category, Dar es Salaam's Jane Maiga ended first, recording 59.37 seconds, Theresia Bernard from Simiyu, who

clocked 01:00.41, came second.

Dar es Salaam's Shuwena Mhamed finished fourth, posting of 01:04.69 while Iringa's Veronica Mlonge clocked 01:05.62 to take fifth spot, Halima Hamza, also from Iringa, took sixth position, clocking 01:10.92.

In men's 400m race, Mohamed Ally clocked 50.91 seconds to take first spot, fellow Isles athlete Simai Kombo Haji clocked 51.41 seconds to take runner-up spot.

The third place was won by Dar es Salaam's Twahil Haji Amer who posted 51.50 seconds.

The fourth spot was won by Dar es Salaam's Jeremiah Baruti who posted 51.72, fellow athlete John Silima recorded 51.88 to end fifth.

Simiyu's Boaz Benesta took sixth position, recording 52.16, the seventh spot was won by Matondo Magembe, also from Simiyu who clocked 52.38.

Chambo mentioned relay races' athletes earmarked for the national

team as Hamis Gulam and Hassan Hamisi both from Zanzibar who posted 10.40 seconds and 10.90 seconds respectively.

Binamungu Katunzi from Dodoma (10.91 seconds), and Dar es Salaam's Jeremiah Baruti (10.70 seconds) and Elias Silvester (10.66 seconds) are also in the list.

Robert Kalyahe, AT Technical Committee member, said the Relay Championships was organized following the directives issued by the association's chairman Anthony Mtaka.

He said time has now come for AT to focus on relay events unlike in the past when more emphasis was put on road races.

"The competition was very good, but unfortunately no one met the set time," he disclosed.

"AT, nevertheless, has earmarked six athletes so that we can train them for future events, the six were those who were about to reach the set time," he said.