



Mwangangi, the doctor with a big public voice

Spotlight. The untold story of Dr Mercy Mwangangi, the youthful Chief Administrative Secretary in the Ministry of Health, and a popular face during daily Covid-19 briefings. **Pages 6&7**

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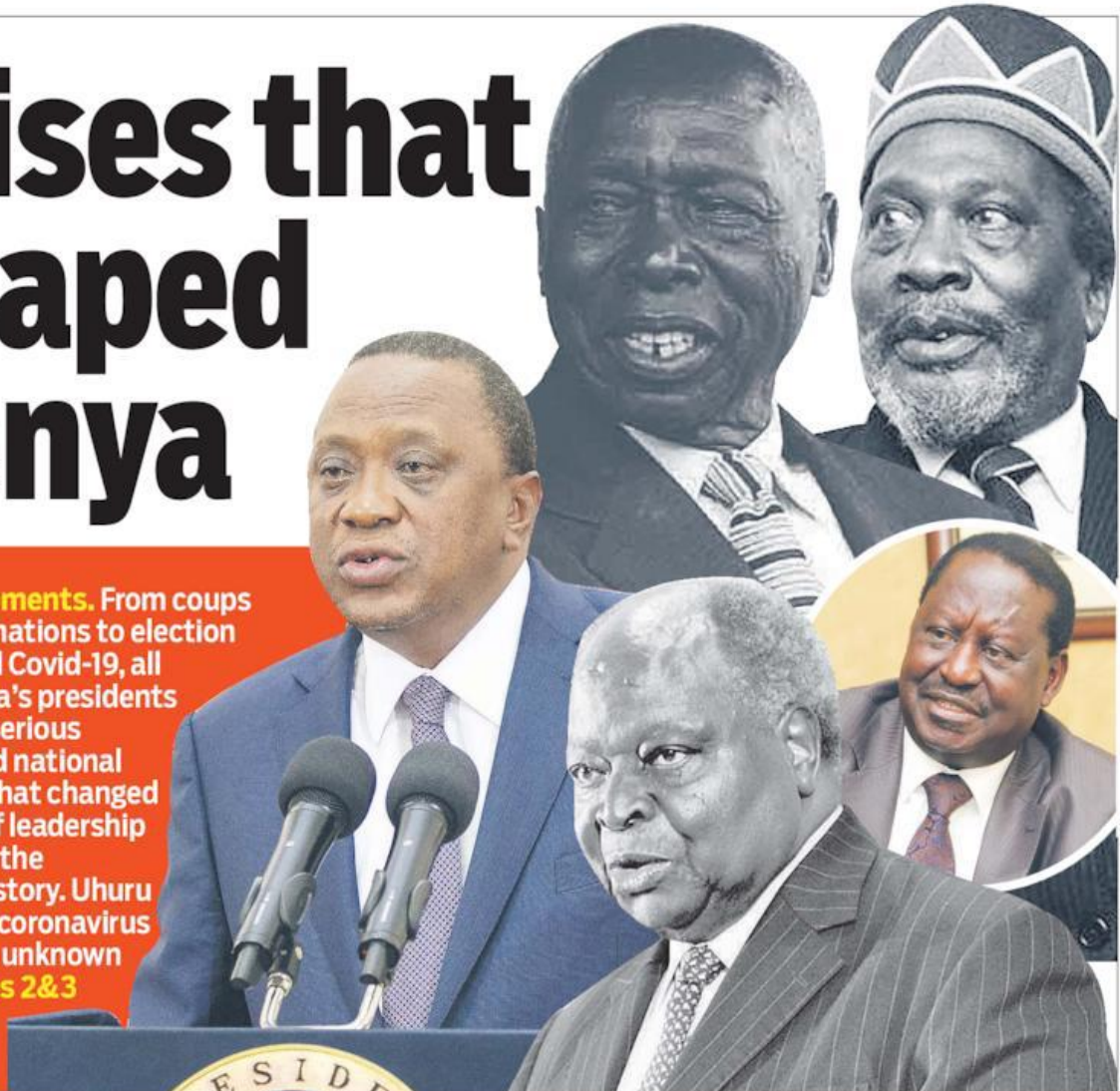
Ruto: Uhuru can't enter coalition without party nod



Feud. Deputy President William Ruto says Jubilee constitution vests power in party organs not personalities.

Crises that shaped Kenya

Defining moments. From coups and assassinations to election violence and Covid-19, all four of Kenya's presidents have faced serious personal and national challenges that changed their style of leadership and defined the country's history. Uhuru is riding the coronavirus tiger into an unknown future. **Pages 2&3**



TRYING TIMES

There are far too many unanswered questions. What will be the sign that Kenya has defeated the virus? And how will the country find its feet again?

From coups and poll clashes to Covid-19:

All four presidents have faced serious personal and national challenges that changed their style and defined their legacy. Now, Uhuru is riding the new coronavirus tiger into an unknown future.

By Special Correspondent
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The coronavirus has come to spoil the party for President Uhuru Kenyatta, if he ever thought he was on a roller coaster. After slowing down his nemesis Raila Odinga with the March 9, 2018 hand-shake, it looked like things were on the roll for Uhuru, barring miscellaneous anxiety from his deputy William Ruto's Tangatanga corner.

Until the outbreak of the dreaded pandemic, the President had ridden the mercurial political tide rather well. Taking on an easy self-assured mien most of the time, he took little notice of detractors within his own Jubilee Party. He gave the impression of a relaxed leader in control of his environment and circumstances. When he wanted important things done, he would point the way forward and detail his faithful lieutenants to do the spadework.

Accordingly, ahead of Covid-19, Uhuru had Parliament and the political Opposition safely under lock and key. There was nothing the President could not get done in Parliament or outside, despite the discordant, but neutered Tangatanga voices. All legislation went his way. Where he did not like a Bill before him for signature, he returned it to Parliament to be tweaked his way.

The Building Bridges Initiative (BBI) tamed ODM and placed its leaders on a short leash in the President's own corner. He could ignore Ruto and his lieutenants. But, occasionally, he read them the riot act. Whenever necessary, he would unleash his dogs of war to snarl and bay at them. Life was just good. His second and last term looked like an assured roller coaster affair, with some of his acolytes — like Cotu Secretary General Francis Atwoli and leading Jubilee political gadfly David Murathe — openly suggesting that the President should not even think of retiring in 2022.

The corona headache

Then coronavirus happened, and things have never been the same. The country is in a bad place. The President, like his counterparts all over the world, is now riding an unpredictable tiger. The cases of Covid-19 infection are rising by the day despite a partial lockdown. There is no clear indication of how they could be arrested, beyond asking people to avoid each other. Moreover, the effects of the partial lockdown on the economy and social life are bad. The business environment is unstable, and tax collection uncertain. With three coastal counties and Nairobi cut off from the rest of the country, commerce and industry are ailing.

The jobless ranks are swollen and seem set to worsen, as broke employers can ill afford their preexisting payrolls. Institutions of learning are in lockdown,

with national examinations hanging in the balance. Nothing looks clear anymore.

The government's definitive strategic objective is not known. Not even the strategic thrust seems clear — possibly even to the President himself. Like other global leaders, Uhuru's government talks of "defeating coronavirus." But what does this mean? Nobody has defined "defeating coronavirus." Does it mean having zero positive cases, or is it bringing the contagion to some manageable levels, which the country could live with? What are those levels? The expression in vogue is "flattening the curve." But what exactly does this mean in the Kenyan context?

There are far too many unanswered questions. What will be the sign that Kenya has now defeated the virus? And after the defeat, how will the country find its feet again? What will happen with national examinations? What about the national economy; how will it be restored? And will the BBI project go on? If it does not, how does the President manage his former hostile competitors and now partners in the BBI?

Uhuru's tough math

Amidst all this, how does Uhuru plan to manage the transition from his reign to the next one? How does he tame the caustic politics that are tearing apart his own party, Jubilee, in this difficult season? How does he steer the ship of State away from the treacherous waters of negative ethnicity? Will he hand over a stable country to the next ruler? These and many more related questions constitute the crisis that confront the President today. They are set to travel with him for quite some distance. But Uhuru is not alone. He is on a well-travelled road, and in good global company, too. Whether you look for power, or power is thrust upon you, you will soon discover that it is not a bed of roses.

Theodore H White, an American journalist and historian, said of his friend and confidant, President John F Kennedy, soon after the latter took the oath of office in 1961: "Exactly what he did want to do with power was not clear

2007-2008

■ Period the country was nearly torn apart by ethnic killings following a disputed presidential election.

immediately — either to the public or to him."

JFK, however, enjoyed the fact that he was in power, at least initially. White, an obvious admirer of the President, said further: "His relish of the power was so apparent that one is tempted to think he used the spectacle to amuse and entertain the suspicious and adoring alike." The honeymoon, however, soon ends and the big challenges begin. The challenges define the leader and the tenure.

Kenya's four presidents have each had a blending of looking for greatness and greatness being thrust upon them. In the same vein, they have had to reckon with character-defining challenges of local and global nature.

Jomo Kenyatta was a front-runner,



Chaotic scenes during the 2007-2008 post-election violence. [File Standard]

right from his years in the United Kingdom and later after detention in Kapenguria. James Gichuru, the official political leader during Kenyatta's absence, would twice step down for him to lead. Jaramogi Oginga Odinga refused to take power in a soon-to-be independent Kenya, explaining the person to take the colony to independence was Kenyatta. Whether they thrust power upon Mzee Kenyatta, or he stepped into office because he was already powerful, the fanfare of power soon gave way to trying moments.

Kenya's new leader would find himself having to employ the iron fist. The Cold War on the international circuit found its way into the heart of the Kenyan government.

It generated caustic ideological conflicts and dramas that split his own Kiku party right in the middle. Radical formations around the Vice President, Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, wanted to slant the country towards socialism and communism. Conservatives around Tom Mboya, Charles Njonjo and Kenyatta himself embraced capitalism.

Jomo's trying moments

The ideological conflicts in the Kenyan government were heightened by suspicions and machinations around his succession.

From the very outset, even his most loyal friends thought that Kenya's founding President would not live long. They schemed and jostled to succeed

him. The intrigues around power would lead to a military mutiny in 1964, a coup plot in 1971 and to assassinations of Pio Gama Pinto, Tom Mboya and JM Kariuki, respectively in the years 1965 to 1975. The mutiny and coup schemes were swiftly stymied. The assassinations, however, shook the Kenyan government and the country quite significantly.

The government's response to public disquiet brought out the character of the President as a leader not averse to draconian methods. In the wake of the Mboya assassination, he banned the opposition KPU party and detained its leaders. This followed a public altercation with Odinga and a shootout in Kisumu in October 1969.

Eleven people — including children — were killed. The JM murder led to a purge in government. Independent thinkers, like Masinde Muliro and Peter Kibisu, were sacked.

Kibisu was later jailed on spurious grounds, as was Nakuru Town MP Mark Mwachaga. Kenyatta's government had numerous ugly run-ins with University of Nairobi students, who protested the extremes of some of his interventions.

President Moi inherited from Kenyatta the culture of detention without trial during political crises. Once again the ideological divide, between the Western Capitalists and Eastern communists, provided the springboard. Independent minded leaders and academicians were called out, as the ene-

mies of the State. They would be dealt with deftly through the detention avenue. Others would be jailed through rushed one-evening hearings.

Coup attempt against Moi

Mercifully for President Moi, he had the support of the West at this time. Western leaders easily turned a blind eye, provided that their interests in the country were safe. The most critical concern for Western regimes remained the ideological slant and their strategic military and commercial interests in the country and the region. The lowest moment for the Moi regime was August 1, 1982, when elements of the military attempted to take over power through the barrel of the gun. Moi survived the coup attempt, but now ruled with suspicion and an undisguised iron fist.

The fall of communism in Eastern Europe generated new crises for Moi. Suddenly, Western countries were demanding good governance in Kenya and elsewhere in the Third World. They tied foreign aid to transparent and accountable government. Human rights, previously ignored with impunity, were now a cardinal principal for donor money. Kenya went through very difficult patches with the World Bank Group and with other multilateral foreign donors. The economy teetered on the edges of collapse in the period 1990-1999. Progressive, although reluctant financial, legal and political reforms, however restored better relations.

What will happen with national examinations?

The crises that shaped Kenya



Moi and Kenyatta governments faced serious food crises due to climatic extremes and poor planning for food security. They also had to reckon with the Shifita menace in the North Eastern, and with deteriorated relations in the East African Community. An ideologically angry Tanzania closed the border with Kenya. In Uganda, anarchy reigned under Presidents Milton Obote and Idi Amin, and a succession of others. The East African Community collapsed in the hands of President Kenyatta in 1977. The fallout was left to Moi to sort out after the death of Kenyatta in 1978. Earlier, the Kilo famine ravaged the country in 1970 and 1971. Imported yellow maize saved the situation, under Mzee Kenyatta. Moi would experience the same several times, and especially in 1980 to 1981 and in 1984 to 1985.

The people charged with food security never quite learned to get it right. Put together with a heavy dose of corruption and selfish interests in the corridors of power, food would remain a crisis for government, right across each of the four regimes in Kenya since independence.

Cholera epidemic

The Kenyatta regime also wrestled with the cholera epidemic of 1971 and 1972 in several parts of the country. Cholera would strike again and repeatedly in Kisumu, across the Kenyatta and Moi regimes. The two regimes also contended with global energy crises and recession. In spite of this, the country made significant development across a wide range of sectors. The first

16 years of independence saw advancement in textile industries, motor vehicle assembly and in transport and communication.

Mombasa was on the growth path, and opening up the rest of the country and the region. Indeed, international maritime authorities ranked the port of Mombasa as the most efficient between the Middle East and South Africa in the 1970s and 1980s. Road construction went on in diverse parts of the country, with aid from Japan and the World Bank. Hydroelectric and geothermal plants were set up as a response to the oil shocks of the 1970s and early 1980s. The Kisumu molasses project was launched in the same era. It never got to maturity, however, mainly as a factor of corrupt conflict of interest.

Agriculture stabilised under Kenyatta and for a while boomed under Moi, to become the backbone of the national economy. Coffee became the king of cash crops. Pyrethrum went through a boom season before bursting. Tea production expanded to just under 100,000 tonnes per annum. Sugar production in the Lake Basin grew apace, placing money into many local pockets. About 100,000 smallholders in Nyanza and Western produced about half of the country's cotton, which fed the growing textile industry. Elsewhere, tourism also boomed, with Kenya becoming the place to go.

Kibaki's short honeymoon

The post-Cold War democratisation process, donor fatigue and poor governance, however, turned the fortunes

of all of these sectors for the worse. President Mwai Kibaki would take over an economically ailing nation in 2002, rejected and abandoned by the international community.

Economic stimulation became his foremost focus. How do we grow the economy? This was Kibaki's main focus. President Kibaki had an initial honeymoon with Western donors, who funded reconstruction of old roads and construction of many new ones. He instituted several economic stimuli packages that would leave the economy growing at the rate of about 6 per cent per annum, at his retirement in 2013.

Yet, Kibaki's biggest challenge was in democratisation. A president who arrived in power flying on the wings of democratic slogans went on to stifle democracy.

First was the exclusivist nature of opening up participation in economic opportunities. Kibaki did poorly in the inclusion of Kenyans in opportunities offered by his government. In appointments and in award of State-based business and growth opportunities, his home region of Central Kenya dominated everything, almost exclusively.

Towards the end of President Kibaki's first tenure, the rest of the country outside Central Kenya was openly voicing concern over exclusion. The louder the complaints became, the more Kibaki dug in. In the end, ethnicity became the central campaign issue in the 2007 general and presidential elections in which the incumbent faced off with ODM's Raila Odinga. The country was palpably badly polarised, with the

emergence of such toxic campaign slogans as "Forty-one tribes against one."

Negative ethnicity and abuse of democracy gave Kibaki his biggest crisis, in the name of the post-election violence of 2008. About 1,300 Kenyans were killed.

2007-2008 poll mayhem

Subsequent reports by various authorities, such as the Waki Commission Report, Truth Justice and Reconciliation Report and the report of the Kenya National Human Rights Commission tell of arson, forced migrations, cold-blooded murder and rape. The country found itself before the International Criminal Court (ICC), with prominent politicians and other leaders answering to the charge of crimes against humanity.

Kenya survived the crises, but to be ruled by a grand government of national unity in which Raila was named Prime Minister, and to place the ICC behind it - at least for the time being. It gave itself a new constitution and fresh opportunities, mostly through devolution and independent State institutions.

A future government could still, however, open up the ICC cases against Uhuru and his deputy Ruto, as the closure of these cases was never definitive. For now, Uhuru is riding the new coronavirus tiger into an unknown future. He will need to work with very fine and reflective minds. He will also need to muster personal patience and exercise an acute sense of judgement to navigate the country through this uncertain period.

Measures

Relief for workers as Uhuru assents to tax law

President Uhuru Kenyatta has assented to the new tax law to cushion the public and the economy from effects of Covid-19.

Two days after members of the National Assembly extended their sitting past 6.30pm to conclude the business of the day, the President assented to the Tax Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020.

The Bill, which was published on March 30, has amended the Income Tax Act (CAP 470), the Value Added Tax Act of 2013, the Excise Duty Act (2015), the Tax Procedures Act (2015), Miscellaneous Levies and Fees Act (2016) and the Retirement Benefits Act (1987).

The law provides for a 100 per cent Pay As You Earn (PAYE) tax relief for employees earning less than Sh24,000 per month.

Those earning more than Sh24,000 will benefit from PAYE tax reduction of 5 per cent, translating to 25 per cent from 30 per cent.

"I expect these measures to complement other measures the government has taken to minimise the negative impact of the coronavirus on the economy and on the welfare of the mwanauchi," he said.

He added: "Thanks to our legislators, we will now ensure that employees have more of their earnings available to them to spend and reduce the corporate tax burden as an incentive to the business enterprises."

With the new law, employers who had rushed to close their payroll will be required to review the PAYE percentage as implementation of the new tax law is effective April 1.

Revise payroll

"There is no law which states the closure of payroll on 15th of every month. Once the law is in place, the employers must revise their payroll," said Public Accounts Committee chairman and Ugunja MP Opiyo Wanyai.

The Kenya Revenue Authority had posted on its website on Wednesday: "Please note the PAYE rate is now a Bill that is yet to be assented to. Use the old rates until such a time when Parliament will pass the Bill into law."

A section of Tax law reads: "Reforms have been introduced in the Pay As You Earn. The personal relief has been enhanced by around Sh992 per month, from the current Sh1,408 to Sh2,400."

The law also raises the threshold for turnover tax to between Sh1 million and Sh50 million so as to exclude small-scale traders from the presumptive tax. The Bill was presented to the President for assent by National Assembly Speaker Justin Muturi. [Roselyne Obala]

POLITICS President may initiate co-operation with other parties

Ruto says NEC and not Uhuru has ultimate say in Jubilee over alliances

President's allies say constitution allows the party leader to sidestep the hostile wing of the outfit linked to the DP if he opts to enter a pact with other parties.

By Moses Nyamori
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Deputy President William Ruto has dismissed claims President Uhuru Kenyatta has powers to enter into a coalition unilaterally.

Dr Ruto said decisions by the ruling Jubilee Party are not anchored on the whims of an individual, but party organs and members.

"Jubilee fraternity should ignore propaganda peddled by desperados seeking dubious ethnic coalitions. Our progressive constitution vests power in party organs, not personalities," said the DP.

"Jubilee as the governing party has no room for selfish evil experiments meant to benefit brokers and their ilk." Ruto made the remarks in response to suggestions by Uhuru allies, who cited a clause in the party constitution, which they say essentially allows the party leader to sidestep the hostile wing of the outfit allied to the DP if he opts to enter a pact with other parties.

Uhuru allies had cited Article 9 of the Jubilee constitution, which states that the party leader has the ultimate powers over the running of the party and can choose to enter political co-operation with another coalition.

"The party leader shall promote political consultation, engagement and co-operation with other political parties and coalitions," reads Article 9(8).

But yesterday, Ruto's allies cited article 32 of the party constitution that makes reference to the National Executive Committee (NEC) as the organ to make such a resolution.

"The National Executive Committee may pass a resolution to enter into a pre-election coalition with any political party or parties," it states.

"The instrument of pre-election coalition shall bear the signature of the National Chairperson and the Secretary General and shall be sealed accordingly," it says.

Baringo North MP and Justice and Legal Affairs Commit-



President Uhuru Kenyatta, his deputy William Ruto and ODM leader Raila Odinga during the launch of Building Bridges Initiative report at Bomas of Kenya in November 2019. [Photo/Stafford Ondegga Standard]

tee (JLAIC) chair William Cheptum described coalition making as a rigorous process that requires approvals by various party organs.

Alternative clause

"You cannot read Article 9 in isolation. You have to read it together with other relevant articles like the role of NEC and other party organs," said Cheptum.

"Forming a coalition is not a simple matter and our party constitution provides for the avenue that includes NEC making a resolution. The party leader can initiate such a process but he will be guided by the party constitution," he explained.

He cited the recent objection of proposed changes to the National Management Committee (NMC) as a sign that Jubilee is a democratic party, which allows members to participate in every decision it makes.

His Kimilili counterpart Didmus Barasa shared similar views, saying the clause only gives the party leader powers to initiate such a process, which has to be approved by various party organs.

"Any initiative by any member of the party has to be tabled for deliberations by various party organs. Those trying to justify the purported powers of the party leader are people keen to turn political parties into private entities,"

said Barasa.

Uhuru allies, however, insisted the party leader still has the powers so long as NEC members remain his picks.

Nyeri Town MP Ngunjiri Wumbugu and Jubilee National Advisory Council (NAC) Secretary Hassan Osman said so long as Uhuru still has the powers to determine who sits in NEC, he retains the ultimate powers over the running of the party.

"NEC is and will continue to be made up of people who are primarily loyal to the party leader. This means that should he be interested in a particular coalition NEC would most certainly have it done," said Ngunjiri.

He said the recent fight in

the party over proposed changes in NMC was part of Tangatanga scheme to try take control of the supreme organ.

"They want NEC to be loyal to the deputy party leader and against the party leader. This is what the fight is about. Tangatanga would want to have a NEC that's not loyal to the party leader so that in case he wants to build a coalition, they can stop him. Unless it's in the interests of the deputy party leader," he added.

"However the JP constitution foresaw this and gave the party leader powers to appoint most of the NEC officials so that he's able to lead without internal attempted coups."

Majority Leader Aden Duale, Benjamin Washali (Majority Whip), Senate Majority Leader Kipchumba Murkomen and Senate Majority Whip Susan Kihika are all members of NEC owing to posts they hold in Parliament.

They are Ruto allies and are targeted for ouster by Uhuru's wing in a double-pronged strategy aimed at handing the president control of NEC, the party as well as control of government business in Parliament.

Lockdown

President restricts movement, extends curfew by 21 days

President Uhuru Kenyatta has extended the order on restriction of movement in and out of Nairobi Metropolitan area and three other counties at the Coast for a further 21 days.

Moreover, the nationwide dusk-to-dawn curfew from 7pm to 5am that ended yesterday has also been extended by a similar number of days.

The initial order on cessation of movement, which affected Nairobi, Mombasa, Kilifi and Kwale counties, was issued on April 6 while that on curfew was made on March 25.

In his address to the nation on the current status of Covid-19, the president while expressing optimism that these measures have yielded significant results, insisted that the only way they will be lifted was on advice from health experts.

The president, however, revealed that the government will allow some eateries and restaurants to reopen for business, but with clear and strict rules.

Uhuru said while such adjustments are being made, the government will not in any way hesitate from tightening the current measures and even add more if the situation worsens.

"I want to be categorical and restate that I and the government will not delay escalating or deescalating the measures the moment our experts advise us because it is they we should trust to inform us if the risk has reduced," he said.

However, the president noted, some counties, namely Mombasa, Mandera, Kilifi and Kwale have registered a sharp rise in Covid-19 cases, and more measures over and above what is already in place may be added.

"If this trend is not reversed, more stringent measures will be taken in consultation with respective county governments," he said.

On Wednesday, the government issued a cessation of movement order in and out of Mandera County for 21 days

due to its high risk factor and adjacent border to Somalia.

The county has eight cases.

Mombasa Governor Ali Joho, who was part of the address, said the situation in his county was worrying.

"From what we have seen, there may be need to tighten the measures, but if we do that, the common mwananchi is the one who will suffer, and again the same mwananchi is the solution to the problem. You can avoid going to hospital and be put on ventilator by following what the government is saying," said Joho.

President Kenyatta said if these measures were not taken by his administration, Kenya would have seen the worse of the pandemic as witnessed in other countries, and large numbers of Kenyans would have died.

He said as a result of the measures, which have been followed by many law-abiding citizens, the country has so far confirmed 343 cases, with seven new cases yesterday while only 14 deaths have been reported. Some 98 people have also recovered from the virus.

The Ministry of Health had postulated that by end of this month, the number of cases would be 10,000.

"It is this attitude by law-abiding Kenyans that has saved thousands of families from grieving for those who would otherwise have been lost due to coronavirus," he said.

The president said even as the government keeps putting in place measures and observing their impact on the spread of the virus, plans were in place to slowly and strategically reopen the country for business. A few eateries and restaurants in selected counties will be reopened if they put in place plans to test all employees and additional measures to ensure they minimise the risk of the virus to spread.

"The Health CS will in due course announce these protocols, which we expect these facilities to abide by. But if these are not followed by the establishments, it will lead to instant closure and prosecution," he said.

The National Hygiene Programme, to be launched this Wednesday, is part of the government's plan to offer opportunities to vulnerable persons. The programme will employ 26,148 youth in 23 informal settlements in seven counties. Later it will be expanded to have over 100,000 people. [Graham Kajjiwa]



Contentious issues

- Constitution allows Party Leader to sidestep hostile wing of the outfit allied to the DP if he opts to enter a pact with another parties.
- DP allies cited article 32 of the party constitution that makes reference to the NEC as the organ to make such a resolution.
- Uhuru still has the powers to determine who sits in NEC and retains the ultimate powers over the running of the party.

GRAFT When the government came close to buying its own land

How evicted firm almost conned State of Sh432m

AG sued company in Rual land saga to recover Sh100 million paid upfront, but no one knows if the full amount was refunded.

By Moses Michira
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Renton Company, the firm evicted from the sewerage land in Rual, had attempted to fraudulently sell the 1,600-acre parcel to the government for Sh432 million.

The Standard has obtained documents that provide a rare peak into a deal that would have robbed the country of land and cash.

Deputy President William Ruto's business associate, Patrick Osero, has since come out to say the DP has a claim on the property.

There is, however, no reference to Dr Ruto, who served as Eldoret North MP in the period of the botched land sale.

As Kenyans were fixated on campaigns leading up to 2002 elections, Renton Company was quietly plotting the multi-million-shilling scam.

The property in question had been allocated under questionable circumstances in 1996, and the faceless beneficiaries were looking to cash out.

Settlement Fund Trustees, an agency within the Ministry of Lands mandated to help squatters own property, had been approached to acquire the vast land.

Already, squatters had moved in and settled on the property, which was mistakenly thought to be part of the Embakasi Ranching Scheme, itself at the centre of numerous ownership battles.

"On the 28th of November 2002, Settlement Fund Trustees entered into an agreement with Renton Company for the sale to the former of the above land," reads a 2006 letter by the then Lands Permanent Secretary Erastus Mwangera.

In the letter, the PS advised the then Attorney General Amos Wako to institute a legal process to recover a Sh100 million deposit paid four years earlier to Renton Company.

Breach of agreement

Mr Mwangera cited a breach of conditions in the sale agreement, including the delivery of the undisputed property.

"Settlement Fund Trustees later discovered that the land which Renton Company Limited purported to sell to them was actually reserved for sewerage treatment by the City Council," his letter further reads.

In an interview with The Sunday Standard yesterday, Mwangera confirmed the cancellation of the sale deal, and the circumstances that informed his decision.

He said any property set aside for public use could never be allocated for any other purpose, regardless of who the allocating authority is.

"It is a very elaborate process to reverse any land set

aside for public utilities, which would entail major public participation to hand it to a private entity," said the career civil servant.

After the agreement with the Settlement Fund, Renton Company was paid Sh100 million while the balance of Sh332 million was to be paid upon the handing over of the property.

Evicting the squatters already residing on the land would have been among the things that Renton had to do to ensure the sale conditions were met.

The years that followed witnessed a change of guard in many public offices, a fact that might have complicated prospects for Renton.

Within three years of the sale and with the downpayment paid, the trustees of the Settlement Fund changed their mind about the acquisition of the property.

Renton was required to refund the money, which it claimed it did not have and proposed to stagger the repayments.

On December 8, 2004, Renton, through its lawyers, repaid Sh20 million in the first instalment, while the balance was to be spread over three other instalments.

But Mwangera was growing impatient with the reluctance by the company's directors to repay the balance of Sh80 million, plus the accrued interest of Sh15.6 million.

AG Wako moved to court on behalf of the Settlement Fund, successfully arguing that the



A group of men carry the gate to Easton Police Station after it was demolished on Wednesday following the State's repossession of public land in Rual. [David Njaga, Standard]

sale was fraudulent and that Renton took advantage of the trustees' ignorance to sell them land that was meant for a public utility.

"The plaintiff avers that as per the law society conditions of sale and the agreement of sale conditions, the defendant had a duty to disclose to the plaintiff the existence of all rights, privileges, latent easement or other liabilities that affect the suit property," argued the AG.

Renton Company lost the suit and was directed to repay the balance in full to the Settlement Fund.

To date it is not clear if the money was paid.

That would mark the culmination of the first episode of the long-running drama surrounding the public land that was taken

back by the State last week.

It is still too early to tell if the fresh repossession will mark the end of the saga, given the determination of the company to hold on to the property despite all the challenges.

By the time excavators roared to the site, a wall running around the entire 1,600 acres had been erected and a police station with at least 20 officers put up.

Medicine

India sends anti-malarial drug to Kenya in virus war

India will dispatch a consignment to Kenya of an anti-malarial drug reported to have the potential to help treat Covid-19.

A consignment of hydroxy-chloroquine will be shipped in a few weeks following a deal that was reached between the two governments.

Sources privy to the deal that saw India relax restrictions to export the drug to any country said Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government allowed only 379,000 tablets to be shipped to

Kenya as a special gesture.

"It is true that the drug manufactured by Ipca Laboratories, an international company based in Mumbai, is to be exported to Kenya through a pharmaceutical company in Nairobi to help Covid-19 patients," said the source.

India banned exports of the drug on March 25, a decision that saw US President Donald Trump warn of retaliation against the Asian nation.

The drug termed by Mr Trump a possible "game changer" when

combined with an antibiotic in treating symptoms is to arrive in the country just days after the US' National Institutes of Health told doctors not to use the drug in combination with azithromycin as a Covid-19 treatment.

The US panel comprising 50 doctors, pharmacy experts and state officials said the drug could lead to heart complications. The Food and Drug Administration also warned against using the drug without medical supervision. [Everlyne Kwamboka]

GIVING TUESDAY

May 5, 2020

Making an impact on vulnerable families affected by COVID-19

Special Feature

Giving Tuesday is a global day of giving and unity that will take place on May 5, 2020, as an emergency response to the unprecedented need caused by COVID-19. This special feature will look at the impact this day of action has around the world while also identifying organizations that are demonstrating the power of kindness and generosity.

Find out the individuals, Corporates and Organizations hitting the mark in this special feature on GIVING TUESDAY in the Standard Newspaper on 5th May 2020.

The project coordinator **Stanley Musembi** will contact you for further information and booking of space.

Reach him on **0720 355 091**

or through **smusembi@standardmedia.co.ke**

The Standard

PROFILE. The rise and rise of Kenya's Health chief administrative secretary

Mwangangi, the doctor with a big public voice

Dr Mercy Mwangangi is easily the most visible face in coronavirus briefings held outside Afya House.

By Mercy Korir
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The night before Mercy Mukui Mwangangi was appointed chief administrative secretary in the Health ministry, she was weighing her options on three lucrative health economist job offers.

The following morning, as she was rushing to attend a meeting, Dr Mwangangi, ran the three offers over in her mind.

Which one would she pick?

But then minutes later, her world changed after President Uhuru Kenyatta named the chief administrative secretary for health.

"It was surreal. At some point I thought it was a prank," she says of the announcement.

It caught her by surprise, as it did everyone else who wondered, who is Mercy Mwangangi?

Press briefings

Today, everyone who watches daily press briefings on the Covid-19 pandemic in Kenya knows Mwangangi as the soft-spoken yet firm young doctor who, in the absence of Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe, steps in to give Kenyans, and the world, updates on the virus' spread.

She is the CS' right hand woman - the two work side by side.

Born in Machakos in 1986, Mwangangi went to Pangani Girls, Nairobi, for her high school education, and then went on to graduate from the University of Nairobi in 2009 with a bachelor of medicine and bachelor of surgery.

She joined the Machakos Level 5 Hospital for a one-year internship. There were five intern doctors at the hospital, and Mwangangi spent her time there by patients' bedsides or in the theatre, only dashing to intern quarters to catch a breath and change before doing everything all over again.

Her first posting was in Meru South, and it was not exactly what she had expected. Mwangangi had expected to

continue working with patients. Instead, she found herself in the public health department.

Her father, who she describes as her greatest cheerleader, encouraged her to take up the posting.

It was at Meru South - currently Tharaka-Nithi County - where the young doctor began her career in the public health sector. Her first order of business was a meeting with the District Health Management Team (DHMT).

Not easily intimidated

Then in her 20s, no one in the meeting was as young.

Still, nothing intimidates Mwangangi, who says she thrives in situations where somebody is needed to step up, organise and get things going with a certain goal in mind.

"I learnt to take my seat at the table and make my voice heard, because for your voice to be heard you have to speak out loud," she says.

During her school days, Mwangangi was a team leader in her class; a convener in both class and extracurricular activities.

Later, a master's degree in health economics and policy from the University of Adelaide in Australia gave her a wider lens with which she viewed Kenya's health sector.

Mwangangi credits her two years in Australia with laying the foundation of who she has become. There, she says, she observed a different culture doing things that taught her the value of integrity.

"Back in Kenya, I always worked to make sure that every penny counted," she says.

Mwangangi's journey to the top has been anything but easy. She first volunteered to work unpaid for 18 months in the Health ministry while devolution was taking shape, before she was posted to the ministry's monitoring and evaluation department.

Here, the young doctor got a good view of the entire health sector by interacting with all spheres in the ministry.

Soon, she was part of the team evaluating performance contracts and appraisals for the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF).

After five months of working on reports and presenting them to senior managers, at 29, Mwangangi was promoted to head the health financing division, which at the time was struggling to craft operational strategies.

In no time, the division was on its feet.

"This is the time we put together the Linda Mama programme for free maternity services, the health insurance strategy for the poor and many other initiatives, including the conditional grant framework for county governments," she recounts.

Mwangangi served in the position for a year and a half before being moved to support the crafting of the Universal Healthcare (UHC) agenda into an actionable plan, together with four other officers.

During one of her presentations in Washington DC, the then Health CS Sicily

Kariuki noticed the talented young doctor who was working in her ministry, albeit in obscurity.

Before long, Mwangangi, who would rather keep to herself working on figures to make sense of a certain health intervention, found herself serving as a technical advisor to the CS. Her biggest task was piloting UHC.

Prior to the coronavirus pandemic, Mwangangi was synonymous with UHC. If anyone needed to know how a certain population should be included in the plan, she was the person to ask. If one needed to know how much money would be needed and how to finance UHC, she was the person to ask. To date, she says UHC remains close to her heart.

As the chief administrative secretary, the introvert was suddenly thrown into the limelight. She would no longer be the advisor to the Health ministry's leadership, but be a leader herself.

And just when one would think that she has it all, that she has reached the pinnacle of her career, the soft-spoken doctor pulls another surprise: she still wants to become an orthopaedic surgeon.

After moving from a general practitioner to working in the public health sector and becoming a health economist, Mwangangi sees her current position as the second-and-a-half phase of her life.

"I learnt to take my seat at the table and make my voice heard, because for your voice to be heard you have to speak out loud."

Dr Mercy Mwangangi

"I believe in five iterations in one's career. By the time you die, you should have five versions or five different spaces in which you have served," she says.

She picked the mantra from Julie Bishop, one of her mentors, during her studies in Australia who took her through a leadership programme.

Although the position she holds has traditionally been clouded by politics, there is no strand of political ambition inside Mwangangi.

She says politics is not a priority at the moment, not with her hands full, learning how to translate the needs of communities into actionable plans and effect change, and dealing with the demands of the coronavirus pandemic and the UHC agenda.

"My mother says I'm married to my work," she says.

Her mother could be right. The first-born of two children, with a 10-year age gap between her and her younger brother, seems to be in no hurry to settle down.

Although she now sits in a bigger office, Mwangangi says she misses running up and down the wards at her first posting as a general practitioner in Meru. It kept her physically fit, she says.

"I've added weight from sitting in the office with no time to work out," she quips.



Q&A: A view of Covid-19 from the top

Pandemic gives us lessons on how to change healthcare

"I do not see us going back to our previous ways of doing things."

By Mercy Korir
mkorir@standardmedia.co.ke

Do you think Covid-19 might be a blessing for African countries in the long term, medically speaking?

Every dark cloud has a silver lining. Covid-19 has shed a light on how we programme our public health interventions and investments in public health security. I would not say it is a blessing, but rather a much needed lesson and push for us to be able to reprogramme the way we do things and pay attention.

There have been debates that we are giving Covid-19 underserved focus in Africa and straying away from other equally important health concerns in the continent. Are we?

There is need for a fine balance; coronavirus is not waiting for other diseases, and neither has it put a pause on them.

There is still a lot of background work going on in the other disease programmes even as we focus on the Covid-19 response. The fear is that our country might fall into the situation like the one facing developed countries, so Covid-19 has become a priority.

There are some who accuse the ministry of lacking strategy. What is your take?

We have a well thought-out contingency and response plan that was reviewed by several stakeholders including the World Health Organisation and Africa Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. It is the blueprint that we are using.

It looks at what three months, six months or even the post-coronavirus health sector interventions would look like.

There is suspicion that the Health ministry is managing the public by deliberately understating the number of positive cases. Is this true?

The numbers that we capture are highly dependent on the numbers that we test. If we doubled the numbers we test by increasing our capacity, we would capture more.

We are also looking at our surveillance data in terms of the pneumonia cases in our health facilities to determine the true load of coronavirus. We are trying to review all the patients

with a history of fever or any respiratory illness in our sentinel surveillance sites.

What is the actual daily testing capacity?

Our capacity is 30,000 tests per day, but right now we are at an average of 1,000 tests per day.

What is the status of full Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for front line workers in the country? Do we have enough?

A full PPE kit is dependent on the area where the healthcare worker is. If in isolation or quarantine site with confirmed or suspected cases, they must have face shields or goggles to protect their eyes, the right face mask, a full gown or suit, and appropriate type of gloves and gumboots.

For healthcare workers in isolation units, we are prepared. I would not allow any healthcare worker to get into those spaces without the right protective gear.

Since patients are still coming into health facilities, another group of healthcare workers in outpatients or casualty units are at risk. For this group, we have the N95 masks and appropriate gloves.

Some 4,500 full kits and 200,000 components such as gloves and N95 masks have been distributed throughout the country. High burden counties of Mombasa, Nairobi and Siaya have each received more full kits. The counties have also supplemented this, and we are not receiving any complaints from them.

Are all these PPEs from donors?

Ninety per cent have been financed through government resources, but we also have donations from the business community.

There have been reports of fake PPEs in the US. Have you encountered any in Kenya? What controls are in place?

It is important that PPEs offer protection. As a ministry, we ensure that accreditation mechanisms are more robust. We are working with other regulatory authorities to ensure that they are of good quality.

The Cabinet Secretary has also made sure that the kits are acceptable by healthcare workers by involving them in the design process for their comfort and protection.

What is your target and protocol for mass testing? What would mass testing look like?

Ideally it would involve testing the susceptible population in the country, which should be everyone, but we have to rationalise our testing. We are beginning with targeted testing. We will start with a cohort of 20,000 tests for our healthcare workers for their own protection and any Kenyan interacting with them.

The police and other security personnel will be next. We have identified areas and groups in different parts of the country.

Community screening through community health volunteers to pick out fevers of unknown origin through temperature screening is another area we are exploring, in addition to rapid testing and antibody surveillance testing.

There is a shortage of testing kits globally. How many kits do we have? How are the kits distributed nationally?

We have 10 active testing sites in the country, but we are looking at accrediting more and activating 193 GeneXpert machines so that every county has capacity to test.

Chinese billionaire Jack Ma donated about 20,000 kits, but a kit alone is not sufficient without the swabs to collect samples and other components to make a successful test run. Our biggest limitation to testing is not the kits, but the components to run the tests.

How much has been spent so far from the Covid-19 kitty?

Sh1 billion has been expended, but we are in negotiations with the World Bank for Sh5 billion more.

Will some of the money cater for the cost of isolation for Kenyans who are in mandatory quarantine and isolation?

It's clear that there are vulnerable groups that require this. We are doing a billing study in the ministry to look into this. Some people have incurred between 250,000 to Sh1 million for ICU care. With the various health committees in parliament, we are looking at how to cushion Kenyans from these costs that would be prohibitive for the common mwananchi.

When can Kenyans expect home-based quarantine and isolation?

Home-based care is an intervention that we are considering



Chief Administrative Secretary in the Ministry of Health Dr Mercy Mwangangi. [Edward Kipimo, Standard]

through a team that is looking at case management to weigh the ideal situations in which it can be rolled out.

Our situation might be protracted and it might be unsustainable to run the current interventions as they are. Home-based care will offer a much needed relief to the health system but it requires discipline from Kenyans. They have to put in place measures at home to make sure that other family members do not contract the virus. There is a fine balance in executing home-based care and making sure that the implementation is done right.

Can our front-line medical personnel expect new allowances?

We have proposed a comprehensive care package for our

front-line workers. Different healthcare workers have different packages. Life insurance covers are also on the table should they be affected. Others are allowances in terms of risk and exposure and a package for psycho-social support. The Cabinet is currently deliberating on this and once done, through the Public Service Commission and the Ministry of Health, we shall unveil it.

When do you expect to flatten the Covid-19 curve and relax the stringent containment measures? What would be the criteria?

Non-pharmaceutical interventions from every individual is key. Our people are the 'social vaccine' for Covid-19.

So far we are not doing very well. For example, we still see

some individuals crowding in spaces and not observing physical distancing.

Countries that strictly implemented the measures we have put in place managed to flatten the curve, and when they relaxed the measures, they saw a resurgence of the virus.

We should see these measures as a new normal that we have to adopt and probably learn to live with coronavirus.

Will things ever go back to normal?

Experts say this wave may subside but in another two to three years we might see another pandemic. We have to be prepared for pandemics by changing how we live, moving forward. I do not see us going back to previous ways of doing things.

OUTBREAK The community is the most critical battlefield in war against coronavirus

We need military precision to fight deadly invisible enemy

Kepher Odhiambo



By any definition, the situation the world finds itself in is known as biological warfare. The enemy, Covid-19, is as formidable an enemy as can be found.

It destroys the fabric of society. It disables and kills, disrupts the economy, restricts freedom of movement and worship, disrupts education, and helps undermine authority.

It is a mistake to think of coronavirus as only a disaster. A disaster has a timescale, after which the aftermath sets in. But this current crisis self-perpetuates; the disaster worsens daily and the aftermath escalates.

Critically, we have closed our borders. This is a move associated with a declaration of war. This type of enemy is routinely studied in military institutions (including our National Defence College) under the subject of nuclear and biological warfare, and models on how to tackle it have been designed accordingly.

Covid-19 has fooled many nations. Kenya included, into focusing all their attention on the medical angle as if it is the sole battle front. Some countries are looking for others to blame, and except for a few European and Asian nations, the rest of us have the wrong approach.

The most critical battle front for this disease is the community. Once it is lost, victory is almost impossible and we will suffer great casualties.

We have three weapons at our disposal: awareness, attitude change and actions (3As). Because they do not appear impressive, most countries have taken them for granted.

Those in authority rush to enforce 'actions' before citizens have fully understood the first two steps. This leads to negative attitudes and failure to comply.

A missing element in this war is a comprehensive command and control structure. Associated with this is a sometimes discordant, inadequate or absent communications and logistics (human and materials) support system.

Who are the commanders in this war? Is there a hierarchy? Apart from the national response team and county teams, how low does the command structure go? How much do the lower echelons know?

Are there teams dedicated to fighting this war, or are they doing it as part of other daily activities? How can it be prioritised?

In the military, every level of command, including the smallest cell of three soldiers, has a level of independence but with clear linkages at every

step, right to the top, so that specific tasks are prioritised and executed precisely.

Does every village headman or Nyumba Kumi leader know their specific commands?

Medical personnel are not our front-line soldiers. They are our strategic reserve forces, our special forces. These forces should be deployed sparingly and used to hit the enemy at critical entry points, or when the front-line has been breached and overwhelmed.

Quarantine is one of the most powerful weapons against Covid-19 and must be owned by the community, with pride. This can be at home or in designated isolation centres.

The move by law enforcement officers to turn isolation centres into penal institutions - thus demonising quarantine - sends the wrong message and will result in rejection.

When I interviewed my neighbours, none of them were willing to be quarantined because of the 'prison' stigma and neglect in the centres as exposed by the media. (A few have since changed their minds after I explained the rationale behind the isolation concept).

While the regular updates by the Ministry of Health on the disease patterns and trends appear to be useful, the true meaning of the data is only clear to people with backgrounds in epidemiology.

The reports of leaders worldwide eating humble pie is because they initially trivialised, out of lack of epidemiological appreciation, the seemingly low numbers in the disease's early phases.

The media, especially social media, are the community's mouthpiece and

"It is critical that we make anti-Covid 19 'weapons' (personal hygiene, face masks, social distancing, self-isolation and State quarantine available and attractive to citizens. The orders to punish errant citizens through quarantine should therefore be rescinded immediately."

should best reflect understanding and adoption of the 3As. But when they start questioning the government's actions and undermine its authority, a credibility gap is generated.

It is astounding how governments have neglected social media as a platform for executing this war. It has become the voice of authority that is determining what mainstream media is consuming.

Unfortunately, the conspiracy theory wing is active, and it is bringing positive efforts in this war into disrepute.

Sensationalism of peripheral issues



has taken centre stage and the disease is fighting back. Troops have been infiltrated and are stuck in the social media swamp.

Moving forward, the national and county governments should re-examine their efforts, enhance the 3As and let communities own this war that has so far been labelled a 'government effort'.

The status of the 3As must be regularly evaluated, preferably at the Nyumba Kumi level, and reports made public. The involvement of local voices like chiefs, religious leaders, teachers, students in tertiary institutions and politicians is important and they should be roped in to help without further delay.

Because disaster management committees or emergency response teams are not prepared to handle this kind of crisis, it is critical that the nation taps senior officers trained in biological warfare. They are an invaluable resource and, together with the National Intelligence Service, can design appropriate response models for all levels of society.

Punish citizens

It is critical that we make anti-Covid 19 'weapons' (personal hygiene, face masks, social distancing, self-isolation and State quarantine) available and attractive to citizens. The orders to punish errant citizens through quarantine should therefore be rescinded immediately.

The conditions in quarantine centres must be improved to make them attractive and welcoming to citizens who suspect they may be sick. The State has to be the friend of citizens who are best placed to detect and report law breakers.

It is a tall order to rely purely on brute force in this war. The aim should be to create an alliance with citizens.

Media houses should look for sponsors and come up with programmes promoting the 3As. These would have a big impact if they run every few hours on radio stations.

Social media must be recruited as

an ally. There should be teams to check for lies and counter with facts. Truth will win easily but it needs to be delivered consistently.

The briefs by the Health ministry should continue, but not every day. The citizens do not necessarily need to know how the medicines are doing although important information like morale and availability of personal protection equipment can be broadcast.

Our regular Kenya Defence Forces are now an auxiliary support division, who, because of their training, are best placed to assist and support the infantry (citizens), especially in logistics, communication and other challenges.

They will help in managing the challenges the country is facing. Deploying the military as such does not imply martial law. It is just prudent reassignment.

Do not deploy the military on security issues. The regular police are still best placed for that. They only need to be sensitised that citizens are fellow combatants and should not be brutalised.

The medical services are now your special forces and they should be well armed. Just like any war adversary, Covid-19 'knows' the devastating damage to morale caused by the loss of even a single doctor. The single most important weapon in war is troop morale and readiness to deploy, gained from understanding and appreciating how critical their roles are in every skirmish, battle and phase of the war.

Citizens must own this war - mind, body and soul. And while those who err must be punished, this must not be at the expense of others. Finally, and this point cannot be reiterated strongly enough: do not turn quarantine facilities into centres for detention without trial. The infected will simply go underground.

Dr Odhiambo is a consultant orthopaedics and trauma surgeon. He served in the military for 25 years

Quarantine

Rights agency queries police

An international human rights agency has warned against the use of quarantine to punish curfew offenders.

The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) yesterday accused the police of weaponising the fight against the viral disease to harass and extort money from members of the public.

This came as some Kenyans claimed that they had been detained in various government facilities for failing to pay quarantine fees.

The Senate Committee on Covid-19 was on Thursday told how individuals who have tested negative more than once were still being held in the various quarantine centres for not paying service fees running to Sh50,000.

Yesterday, ICJ Chairperson Kelvin Mogeni called on the government to establish a task force to look into reports of abuse and violations of rights at these centres.

"ICJ reminds the government and the National Police Service that every enforcement must be lawful. The 14-day quarantine is not and should not be a form of punishment but a measure to curb the Covid-19 pandemic," said Mr Mogeni in a statement.

"The quarantine must not be weaponised by the police to harass, punish or ask bribes from Kenyans. We, therefore, call on the government to establish a task force to look into reports arising out of abuses and violations occurring in the context of enforcement of quarantine measures."

ICJ further urged the government, in collaboration with counties, to ensure that Kenyans who need medical care that is only available in the capital or other hospitals in emergency situations are allowed access despite the dusk-to-dawn curfew and lockdown of some counties.

In Parliament, a protest letter from some of those in mandatory quarantine to Acting Director General of Health Patrick Amoth, was submitted to the Nairobi Senator Johnson Sakaja-led committee for intervention.

The victims painted a picture of a government keen on collecting service fees from those in mandatory quarantine before they can be released. They questioned why they were being compelled to part with money or have their passports detained when there were funds from international donors and contributions by Kenyans to help in the fight against the disease.

"Why are we being compelled to pay for mandatory quarantine when it was a government-initiated policy and the government has received sufficient funding towards the Covid-19 response?" they asked. [Moses Nyamori]



Transform Kenya Virtual Forum

Infrastructure and Transport: Built To Move Forward

Can the government implement policies to enhance growth and flow, amid pandemics?

PANELISTS



Silvester Kasuku
Director General,
LAPSET



Hon. James Macharia
Cabinet Secretary,
Ministry of Transport & Infrastructure



Andrew Mutuma
Managing Director,
DHL Express



Wanjiru Gikonyo
National Co-ordinator,
TISA (The Institute of Social Accountability)



Aby Agina
Senior Business Anchor, KTN News
(Moderator)

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SCIENCE Experts think instances of "reinfection" in recovered patients are more likely relapses in patients whose bodies had not cleared the virus

20 promising drugs and vaccines in the

Researchers are burning the midnight oil to come up with a solution to ease the strain on healthcare systems.

By Christine Soares
Medical Editor, Reuters

With much of the world living in lockdown, the spread of the new coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, that was first detected in China late last year is beginning to slow in some places.

As of April 19, 2.4 million had been infected and 165,000 killed by Covid-19, the disease caused by the virus.

While a safe, effective vaccine is still more than a year away, researchers are rushing to repurpose existing drugs and non-drug therapies, and testing promising experimental drugs that were already in clinical trials.

Even moderately effective therapies or combinations could dramatically reduce the crushing demand on hospitals and intensive care units, changing the nature of the risk the new pathogen represents to populations and healthcare systems.

New drugs, together with new diagnostics, antibody tests, patient- and contact-tracing technologies, disease surveillance and other early-warning tools, mean the anticipated next "wave" of the global pandemic does not have to be nearly as bad as the first.

More than 70 vaccine candidates are also in development around the world, with at least five in preliminary testing in people. Here are some of them:

Gilead Sciences: Remdesivir

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed experimental
Early results: 0-3 months.

Antiviral drug, originally developed to combat RNA viruses including respiratory syncytial virus. At least 13 trials underway in China, Europe and the United States with preliminary results from two Chinese trials expected as soon as April 2020. A February assessment by the WHO flagged this candidate as the most promising for battling Covid-19.

Caveats

Initial data are expected to come from studies of patients with relatively severe Covid-19. Because antivirals work best when patients are healthier, these results may show limited effectiveness.

Hydroxychloroquine/chloroquine

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed
Early results: 0-3 months

Malaria drug also believed to have antiviral activity. Blocked SARS-CoV-2 entry into cells in an in-vitro experiment. In one small French study, some Covid-19 patients showed improvements but there was no way to know if the drug was the reason. Results published in April from another study in France and one in China found no benefit in patients treated with the drug. Dozens more clinical studies are underway around the world.

Roche: Actemra (tocilizumab)

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed

Early results: 0-3 months

Monoclonal antibody approved for rheumatoid arthritis and also for treating the 'cytokine storm' immune over-response in cancer patients. Fifteen registered trials in China, Europe and the United States are testing it on Covid-19 patients, alone or in comparison to other therapies. One French trial is looking at 28-day effects on Covid-19 in patients with advanced or metastatic cancer.

Sanofi, Regeneron Pharmaceuticals: Kevzara (sarilumab)

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed
Early results: 0-3 months.

Monoclonal antibody approved for inflammatory arthritis, and in trials targeting the 'cytokine storm' immune response in severely ill Covid-19 patients. Regeneron's chief scientific officer has said initial data on effectiveness could come by late April.

Novartis, Incyte: Jakavi (ruxolitinib)

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed
Early results: 0-3 months.

Developed to treat inflammatory and autoimmune diseases, and in late-stage development as a cream for atopic dermatitis. One trial each in Canada and Mexico will test the drug in Covid-19 patients with severe respiratory symptoms associated with the 'cytokine storm' immune response, with preliminary results expected by June 2020. In the US, Novartis established a managed access programme for use in severe/very severe Covid-19 illness on April 7.

Moderna/NIAID: mRNA 1273

Type: Vaccine
Status: Experimental
Early results: 0-3 months

RNA vaccine made with messenger RNA (mRNA) encoding the spike protein of SARS-CoV-2 encapsulated in a lipid nanoparticle. The phase 1 trial with 45 subjects aged 18-55 at three locations in the United States will evaluate the vaccine's safety and provide early data on the immune response it induces. Trial completion is anticipated to be June 1, 2020.

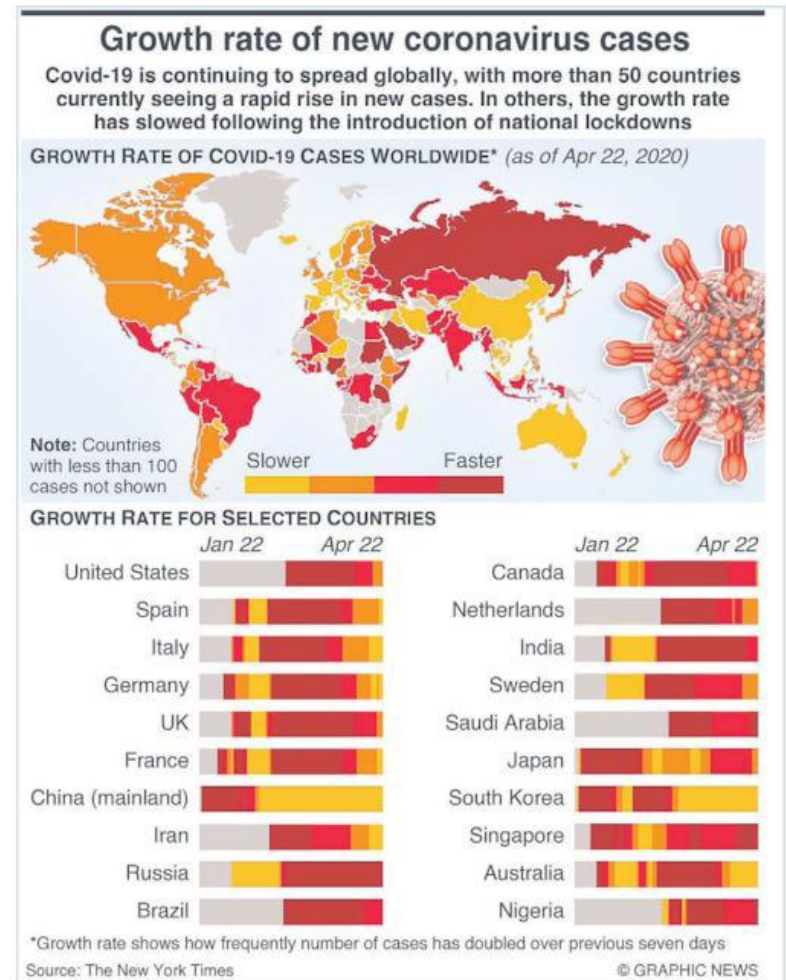
Convalescent plasma

Type: Non-drug therapy
Early results: 0-3 months.

Blood plasma from recovered Covid-19 patients is transfused into patients who are currently ill, in the hope the freshly-made antibodies it contains will help fight the virus. The method has been used for more than 100 years and carries little risk of harm or side effects. Small case studies suggest it may help reduce virus levels, and controlled trials are in progress in China, Europe and the United States to gather stronger evidence for a benefit. Results published in April from a study in 10 patients with severe illness in China found significant improvement compared to similar patients who did not receive the treatment.

Caveats

Immediately available and already in limited use, but supply of plasma from recovered patients may not be sufficient to meet all needs. Further studies of recovered patients must



also determine if everyone produces a full immune response to the infection, including 'neutralising antibodies' at sufficiently high levels to become donors.

Abbvie: Kaletra (lopinavir/ritonavir)

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed
Early results: 0-3 months.

Antiviral combination used to treat and prevent HIV infections. More than twenty trials around the world are testing the drug as a Covid-19 treatment or post-exposure prophylaxis for people with high-risk close contact with a confirmed case. Initial results expected as soon as May 2020.

Caveats

One randomised controlled trial in China published results in March showing no differences in viral load or 28-day mortality among 199 patients.

Median time to clinical improvement was one day shorter in patients taking the drug. However, the same investigators, doctors at Jinyintan Hospital in Wuhan, said in April that they believe Kaletra, as well as a second drug, bismuth potassium citrate, helped some Covid-19 patients.

Chongqing public health medical centre, Chongqing Sidemu Biotechnology Co Ltd: NKG2D-ACE2 CAR-NK cells

Type: Non-drug therapy
Status: Experimental
Early results: 0-3 months.

NKG2D receptor for the immune system's natural killer (NK) cells paired with the ACE-2 receptor that the coronavirus uses to enter human cells. A multicentre Phase 1/2 trial in 90 patients is testing whether this cell therapy can prevent the SARS-CoV-2 virus from entering cells and multiplying, and will look at efficacy over 28 days in patients with severe or critical

Covid-19 pneumonia.

Novavax: NVX-CoV2373

Type: Vaccine
Status: Experimental
Early results: 0-3 months.

Novavax said its Matrix-M adjuvant would be used with the vaccine candidate - NVX-CoV2373 - to enhance immune responses. Trials in 130 adults is expected to begin in mid-May with preliminary immunogenicity and safety results in July, according to the firm.

Caveats

Strong immunogenicity in animal tests, but might require two doses in humans, which would limit supply.

Apeiron Biologics: RhACE2 APN01

Type: Drug
Status: Experimental
Early results: 3-6 months

A recombinant human angiotensin con-

fight against Covid-19

verting enzyme 2 (rhACE2) under Phase-2 clinical development in ALI (Acute Lung Injury) and PAH (Pulmonary arterial hypertension). This synthetic version of the human protein that the novel coronavirus uses to enter cells is being tested in Austria to see if it can block viral entry and decrease viral replication in Covid-19 patients, reducing deaths or need for mechanical ventilation. Preliminary results from the trial that was announced on April 2 are expected in September 2020.

Shenzhen Geno-Immune Medical Institute: Lentiviral Minigene Vaccines

Type: Vaccine
Status: Experimental
Early results: 3-6 months
Engineered minigenes encoding viral antigens; lentiviral vector designed to infect dendritic and T cells to induce immunity. The trial in 100 adults in Shenzhen, China, is expected to be complete by July 31, 2020.

Murdoch children's Research Institute; UMCUTRECHT: BCG TB vaccine

Type: Vaccine
Status: Repurposed
Early results: 3-6 months
Bacillus Calmette-Guérin tuberculosis vaccine that induces a broad innate immune-system response, which has been shown to protect against infection or severe illness with other respiratory pathogens. Large trials in Australia and the Netherlands are testing whether using BCG to rev up immune defences in health workers and the elderly reduces unplanned absenteeism, respiratory illnesses including Covid-19, severe illnesses and deaths. Two additional trials by the Max Planck Institute in Germany of a TB vaccine candidate, VPM1002, are in the works.

Inovo Pharmaceuticals, Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (Cepi): INO-4800

Type: Vaccine
Status: Experimental
Early results: 3-6 months
DNA plasmid vaccine delivered into the skin via a patch-style electroporation device. A clinical trial launched on April 3 could yield preliminary data by late summer, according to the company, which has said it can manufacture one million doses by year-end for additional trials and emergency use.

University of Aarhus, Denmark: Camostat mesylate

Type: Drug
Status: Repurposed
Early results: 6-12 months
Protease inhibitor licensed in Japan and South Korea to treat chronic pan-

creatitis. In vitro experiments found it blocks a mechanism Sars-Cov-2 uses to enter human cells. As of early April, an estimated 180 Covid-19 patients aged 18-110 were being recruited at nine locations in Denmark for a phase 2a trial that will examine 30-day changes in disease severity and mortality, with results expected by December 2020. The University of Tokyo also announced plans for a trial of camostat mesylate and a related drug, nafamostat mesylate, starting April 2020.

Inflarix: IFX-1

Type: Drug
Status: Experimental
Early results: 6-12 months
Monoclonal antibody targeting complement activation product C5a. Designed to block a mechanism of inflammation, the drug is also in clinical trials for Hidradenitis Suppurativa, ANCA-associated vasculitis and Pyoderma Gangrenosum. In early April, a trial in the Netherlands launched to test IFX-1 in patients with severe Covid-19 pneumonia, with preliminary results expected in late October 2020.

Cansino Biological Inc/Beijing Institute of Biotechnology: ADS-nCov

Type: Vaccine
Status: Experimental
Early results: 6-12 months
Non-replicating viral vector. A single-centre phase 1 trial with 108 subjects aged 18-60 in Wuhan, China, started in March to test the safety and immune responses generated by a recombinant vaccine that uses another respiratory virus, adenovirus, as a vector. On April 12, a randomised controlled phase 2 trial with 500 participants launched to test varying doses against placebo. Phase 1 completion is in late December 2020, and phase 2 results are expected in January 2021.

Imperial College London: Aspirin, Clopidogrel, Rivaroxaban, Atorvastatin, Omeprazole

Type: Drug

Race against virus

- New drugs, together with new diagnostics, antibody tests, patient- and contact-tracing technologies, disease surveillance and other early-warning tools, mean the anticipated next 'wave' of the global pandemic does not have to be nearly as bad as the first
- More than 70 vaccine candidates are also in development around the world

Early results: 9-12 months.

Trial of cardioprotective drugs to prevent direct damage to the heart muscle that appears to drive the severity of Covid-19 in certain patients as well as their likelihood of needing intensive critical care. The trial will include over 3,000 patients in the UK, with a completion date of March 30, 2021.

University of Oxford: ChAdOx1

Type: Vaccine
Status: Experimental
Early results: 12-18 months
Non-replicating chimpanzee adenovirus vector. Phase 1/2 trial with 510 subjects aged 18-55 at four centres in the UK. The trial will test safety and immunogenicity of one or two doses of the vaccine, and is expected to be completed in May 2021.

Serology/Antibody Testing

Type: Testing
Status: Experimental
Early results: 0-12 months

Governments and academic groups have started to test blood for antibodies indicating that a person has been exposed to the new virus, with or without showing symptoms. The presence of antibodies indicates past infection, but separate, ongoing research is needed to know what type and concentration of virus-neutralising antibodies protect against a new infection, whether all infections produce a full antibody response, and how long protection might last.

Wide serology testing for antibodies will soon provide a broader understanding of the scope and dynamics of the pandemic, help identify which recovered patients may have some immunity to reinfection and for how long, and also help identify the neutralising antibodies that could become templates for monoclonal antibody therapies, as well as models for desired responses from a vaccine candidate. Data from serology testing are expected to begin appearing within weeks.

Caveats

Early data on Covid-19 patients in China suggests that most develop varying amounts of antibodies in response to infection. One pre-publication report analysed plasma from 175 patients and found a sign of inflammation correlated with higher antibody titers and that younger patients were less likely to produce large amounts of antibodies.

Experts think instances of 'reinfection' in recovered patients are more likely relapses in patients whose bodies had not cleared the virus. Data is still lacking on whether mild or symptomless infections generate meaningful antibody responses or protection.

Legislation

MPs defer debate on rules to govern labour relations

An amendment to the law to prohibit sacking of employees, forcing pay cuts and allowing employers to send workers on unpaid leave if they are unable to pay salaries during Covid-19 crisis is still pending in Parliament.

The proposals were suspended in the National Assembly to allow negotiations between the Ministry of Labour and workers' unions on agreeable rules to govern labour relations until the coronavirus is halted.

Finance committee chairperson Joseph Limo, who is also Kipkelion East MP, said they deferred the proposed amendments to the Employment Act to facilitate efforts to craft a more comprehensive version.

The proposals seek to outlaw termination of service or dismissal of an employee where the pandemic has adversely affected the ability of an employer to pay salaries. The proposed amendment also prohibits coercing an employee to take a salary cut.

It also shields the employer stating: "Where an employer is unable to meet his obligations to pay salaries or wages, the employer shall permit an employee to take leave of absence without pay for the duration of the pandemic."

The government is expected to issue administrative guidelines to mitigate the pandemic effects in the labour sector.

The Labour ministry continues to engage Parliament to legislate on laws that will protect the industry from job losses and forced pay cuts.

Yesterday, Labour Cabinet Secretary Simon Chelugui (pictured) said he is having a dialogue with Central Organisation of Trade Unions (Cotu-Kenya), Federation of Kenya Employers (FKE), Kenya Private Sector Alliance (Kepsa) and Kenya Association of Manufacturers (KAM) on the best way to navigate the current situation.

He disclosed that since FKE has over 2,300 workers while Cotu-Kenya represents thousands, he has been seeking a solution.

He went on, "The loophole may be abused by some employers as it will be convenient for them to send workers home on unpaid leave. We should tighten the weakness." On the flip side, he also argued that it was better to be temporarily out of job than to be permanently unemployed. [Roselyn Obala]

tions to ensure employees' rights as well as employers' interests are protected.

"I will issue a statement detailing the guidelines to be followed. The employers and employees can then deliberate at 'shop' level. This secures jobs and addresses the issue of layoff, business sustainability and pay," he disclosed.

"I have talked to Parliament to legislate to outlaw redundancy at this crucial period. We also discussed on how to work out a plan to have employees get 30 days paid leave, then 15 days on half pay and if the situation persists, review and maybe send them on unpaid leave," he said.

The CS affirmed that the effects of the pandemic in the sector was enormous.

Cotu-K Secretary General Francis Atwoli and FKE Executive Director Jacqueline Mugo have been engaging the CS on the matter.

"This matter is serious. Sacking is outlawed. Though labour is a factor of production, we must protect workers and employers. When flower and vegetable firms produce for export and the airspace is locked, the logistical nightmare weighs in on the employer," said the CS.

In light of the CS intervention, the National Assembly on Wednesday deferred the approval of proposals by the Finance and National Planning committee to amend Section 94 of the Employment Act to cushion employees from unfair sackings.

However, focus is still on MPs to tighten any loopholes to be exploited by rogue employers as already pointed out by members who pushed for the deferment of the proposed amendments for further consultations before they break for a long recess next week.

This provision for unpaid leave generated heated discussion among members, with Minority Leader John Mbiadi (Suba South) terming it a populist amendment.

"My position is contrary; this matter can be dealt with administratively through the Labour ministry. The government can offer a stimulus package based on the data by the labour ministry to protect jobs by paying salaries for three months," proposed Mbiadi.

He went on, "The loophole may be abused by some employers as it will be convenient for them to send workers home on unpaid leave. We should tighten the weakness." On the flip side, he also argued that it was better to be temporarily out of job than to be permanently unemployed. [Roselyn Obala]

Tackling virus

Take your so-called vaccine trials elsewhere, Kenyans tell scientists

A London-based Kenyan advocacy group, TOGETHER, has angrily reacted to BBC medical correspondent Fergus Walsh's comments, which suggested that British scientists could start their Covid-19 vaccine trials in Kenya if tests in UK do not get the expected results.

In a strongly-worded Press statement, the group, led by interim chairman Thomas Musau, said Kenyans should resist such trials as reasons for the choice of the country were factually incorrect and the main reason for taking the trials to Kenya was suspect.

Speaking in an interview on the BBC World News on Friday, Mr Walsh said scientists from Oxford University were looking to conduct further trials in Kenya because of a steady rise in Covid-19 cases.

The statement terms this a lie, as China, Italy, Spain, US and UK

are the world's worst hit by Covid-19. "These countries are the epicentres of Covid-19, with infection rates and deaths higher than those of Kenya. South Korea and Singapore are currently having higher infection rates than Kenya," the Press release reads.

The backlash comes weeks

after two French doctors were accused of racism after a TV debate in which one suggested that trials should be carried in Africa to see if a tuberculosis vaccine would prove effective against the novel coronavirus. World Health Organisation Director-General Tedros Adhanom

Ghebreyesus condemned the remarks as racist.

TOGETHER warned Kenyans against taking part in such trials "as the test carries theoretical risk that the virus could induce serious reaction to the body with dire long-term consequences." [Sunday Standard Reporter]

HARD TIMES.

Why churches must devise novel methods to survive

Interviews with the clergy, administrators show churches are now poorer than proverbial church mouse.

By Sunday Standard Team
newsdesk@standardmedia.co.ke

The coronavirus outbreak, just like it has distressed every facet of human life, has forced religious organisations to rethink ways of holding worship services, which typically involved people gathering in a confined space.

Today, just like it has been the tradition for the last one month, pews will be empty. This means empty coffers, salary cuts and consequently job losses. This is the reality churches are facing.

In place of the hums of melodic hymns and the din of musical instruments, the places of worship will be empty and deserted, courtesy of a government order to close churches to keep the coronavirus at bay.

Faced with these unprecedented challenges, and without clear cut-out timelines on when normalcy will return, churches must adopt new and innovative ways to remain afloat.

ACK Bondo Diocese's bishop David Kodia says they had been forced to devise other measures to survive.

Bishop Kodia told The Sunday Standard the church had been dependent on funds from Christians, and with the closure of churches, there was no cash-flow.

"This is a wake-up call for the churches to venture into entrepreneurial activities to support the clergy," said Kodia. Isaac Mwangi, the secretary general of National Alliance of Registered Churches of Kenya, an association of the founders of evangelical churches, estimates that the income from some of the churches has fallen by as much as 90 per cent.

"We are only just getting by," said Mwangi, adding: "In my church we have only had three tithers in the two months since we were ordered to close our doors. All our members are crying because most of them were paying bills and had people that we had employed in the church."

The situation is mirrored across the country.

While a handful of churches are trying to migrate their followers online, the jury is out on whether the fraction of faithful will provide the churches the lifeline amidst



Reverend Elijah Mwangi of Deliverance Church Life Celebration Centre, Nakuru during Sunday service streamed online on Facebook and Youtube [Joseph Standard]

financial distress. As other churches are considering laying off parish staff, others have effected salary cuts and gone on aggressive drives to scrounge up whatever their faithful are willing to offer.

Bishop David Oginde of Christ is the Answer Ministries (Citam) says the church has been forced to make adjustments.

"The weekly givings have been reduced significantly, almost by up to 50 per cent. But the situation changes as time goes. We have had to suspend our programmes and the staff is taking a salary cut," he said.

The Catholic Church has also been affected, with some of its leaders claiming they have gone broke because of missing church services.

For some, the situation has been worsened by the decision by their leaders to compel them to take salary cuts.

The clergy and church management in parishes across the vast catholic archdioceses of Kisumu are grappling with sustaining operations without contributions during daily and Sunday masses.

According to the archdiocese finance administrator Fr Felix Atinda, in a view to sustain operations, allowances for priests have been cut and money redirected to more urgent needs.

Early this month, Philip Anyolo painted a gloomy picture for the clergymen and advised them to brace for tough times.

"We have food that is sustaining the clergy, but soon families will turn to the church to provide for them. There are

tough times ahead," Archbishop Anyolo said then.

He said other than coronavirus, floods had continued to wreak, and directly affect the church. He gave an example of Ahero parish, which was submerged last week.

"The church is doing all it can to find solutions to the problems and we encourage Christians to support the church at this hour of need," Anyolo said.

Some churches are even knocking on the doors of their congregants asking for donations. Others are encouraging their faithful to use M-Pesa, an option that has always been available, but is not widely used, to tithe and give their offering.

For instance, the Presbyterian Church (PCEA) is broadcasting messages to their congregants encouraging them to keep supporting the church through the Covid-19 pandemic.

Like clockwork, every Saturday at 4pm, for the past three weeks, the PCEA church sends out messages to the parishioners.

Interventions

- As other churches considering laying off parish staff, others have effected salary cuts and have gone on aggressive drives to scrounge up whatever their faithful are willing to offer
- Bishop Kodia says it is a wake-up call for churches to venture into entrepreneurial activities to support the clergy

others reminding them to tithe to keep the church afloat.

Nyeri's Bishop Paul Wanjohi of Newlife Church said his church was getting by using commitments from some of the church's core faithful.

The effect on the church is not only borne from the closure of the churches but from the effect of the coronavirus on the greater economy.

Nyanza's chairman of Inter-denominational Church and State Corporation on Development Ogonyo Ngide admitted that some of the clergy were struggling to even pay rent.

Archbishop Ngide said they were forced to rely on donations from a few well-wishers sending money through their pay bill.

Bishop Charles Asilutwa of ACK Maseno North said the church services were broadcast on YouTube and Facebook every Sunday.

Bishop Asilutwa said while the situation was worse for the smaller churches that relied entirely on offering from their parishioners, even bigger churches were feeling the pinch.

"It's quite difficult to operate, but the members hold home services that do not exceed 10 people and then take offerings and tithes, which are paid through the church's pay bill number or official church mobile phone number and then banked. The pastor intercedes for the flock from the church altar," said Rev Bernard Kutwa of King Jesus faith Church, Kanduyi.

Apostle James Mabwa of Victory Gospel Apostolic Church-Kakamega, said even

before the government ordered for the closure of churches, they were already observing the measures that were put in place as a way of curbing the spread of the virus.

At Metro International Church, Nakuru, believers are also channeling tithes and thanksgiving through a pay bill number.

The reverend Mike Brawan said failure to congregate was a major problem to most churches that depended on physical congregation despite being expected to pay bills.

He said some members were faithful givers offering tithe and thanksgiving to respond to needs of those who could not give. Like other churches, Metro says most of its finances goes towards supporting those socially and economically vulnerable.

The cleric says different initiatives run by the church, including education, health and support of destitute, have been halted due to the pandemic.

Bishop David Macharia, the Full Gospel Churches of Kenya deputy general secretary, said the church directed senior pastors to forfeit a percentage of their salaries in support of the needy.

Archbishop Moses Adulo of Kisumu's Legio Maria said they had about 300 widows and orphans who solely depended on the church's offerings.

[Report by Allan Mungai, Nathan Ochunge, Mercy Kahenda, Anne Atieno, Mactilda Mbenywe, Edwin Nyarangi, Isaiha Gwengi, James Omoro and Caleb Kingwara]

In Brief

Nyeri. Kimathi varsity set for video graduation

■ Dedan Kimathi University of Technology (DeKUT) has announced that it will hold a virtual graduation for students who were set to graduate this month. The administration stated that the decision was made following movement restrictions and a ban on public gatherings due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Those willing to take part in the traditional ceremony will have to wait until the pandemic is over. The online exercise will be carried out on May 8, while the traditional one is expected in November or next April, depending on how the health crisis unfolds. "Certificates will be ready for collection two weeks after the virtual graduation date. Arrangements will be made in accordance with the government's social distancing guidelines," reads a statement from the university. [Jacinta Mutura]

Nairobi. Truck crew to get mandatory tests



■ The Kenya Revenue Authority has directed all cargo truck drivers and crew to undergo mandatory screening for Covid-19 at border points. The new directives come a day after Uganda reported that several truck drivers from Kenya and Tanzania had tested positive for the novel coronavirus. Other measures include ensuring a maximum three crew for all cargo trucks crossing the international land border points, fumigating trucks at International Border Crossing and provision of sanitisers, disinfectants and clean water for truck crew. [Cyrus Ombati]

Mombasa. 2,000 homes get free medical cover

■ Mvita sub-county is offering health insurance cover for 2,000 families for the next year. This follows a partnership between the constituency and the National Hospital Insurance Fund (NHIF). The fund is set to receive Sh12 million from the CDF kitty in a deal that will see more than 10,000 residents covered by the public health insurer. While signing the deal in Nairobi, Mvita MP Abdulswamad Shariff Nassir said this would offer the selected families relief as far as health financing was concerned. NHIF has partnered with 12 other constituencies to provide health cover to vulnerable people. Services will cover inpatient and outpatient care and the full spectrum of essential health services. [Jekkonio Otieno]



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Welcome Home

Editorials

Virus may be bad, but deadlier evils lurk around the corner

State can learn from best practice around the world

Road accidents, malaria, the ongoing landslides and floods have individually killed more people than the novel coronavirus in a span of a month, ushering in a devastating traditional disaster season for the country.

Yet, even as the tolls from these disasters rise, the country's responsiveness, which includes fundraising, deployment of emergency and medical staff, as well as public service announcements all seem focussed on one element: fighting the virus. It is time the government thinks of other disasters as well, and spreads out its response to include these re-emerging threats to Kenyan lives.

The weatherman warns heavy rains will continue well into next week. The consequence of this is countrywide death, displacement and destruction.

We cannot predict the exact spot and time a landslide will happen. We can't predict who will be struck down next by malaria, but learning from our history, we can get a general idea of when these will start as well as potential hotspots, according to enough time to set up interventions to lessen the disasters' sting during this season.

Floods are making a nonsense of social distancing initiatives. Entire villages have been swept away, forcing neighbours to huddle together in search of security in numbers. Locusts are no longer making it to daily news bulletins, yet farmers across Kenya's breadbasket remain worried that as soon as their treasured crops break through the soil, locust swarms will descend upon them and erase all hope of future harvest. Yet interventions are few and sporadic. Many farmers have resigned themselves to fate.

Road accidents continue to leave their ugly mark in the daily lives of Kenyans. Tragically, the country has become numbed to the anguish caused by these crashes that unless a family member dies, the scary numbers remain just a blip; another sad story in the news insufficient to warrant outrage among the people.

Our obsession with reactionary interventions has resulted in us being forever reliant on short-term solu-

tions. Successive governments, including the current Jubilee administration, have always fallen short in disaster mitigation, planning and management.

We continuously remain reliant on a political system that demands blind faith from an electorate too busy fighting for survival to demand more accountability for the taxes they pay. As a result, when landslides bury entire clans, or malaria paralyses entire sub-locations we look to a cluster of politicians and individuals within government for help. The reality is that these individuals are well aware that in their twisted worlds, there are no points to be scored for averting disaster.

Instead, they sit on Marshal Plans developed by technocrats, knowing all too well that political points are only scored from parachuting into tragedies with carloads of blankets and cartons of powdered milk and distributing them to the less fortunate in the full glare of cameras to get shots for the next campaign poster.

Disaster mitigation is not rocket science. The government can learn from best practice around the world. Heck, if we can send delegations to Europe to learn about dairy farming, it is only fair that we get decision makers learning about the Mexican disaster relief fund and the successes it has recorded, or the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency or how relief aid agencies run their forecast-based disaster financing models, ensuring planned responses whenever the unthinkable happens.

But unless we deal with our near uncontrollable urge to dip our hands into the disaster fund cookie jars whenever the central government feels it needs a quick injection of cash into one project or another, we will remain forever at the mercy of nature.

It is OK to have the Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund and implement the raft of measures that the pandemic has elicited from the State. But we should also remember that road accidents, malaria, floods, landslides and many other perils that always seem to be around the corner are claiming lives every day, and no one is talking about them.

We're family; let's stop our fights and focus on surviving coronavirus

David Oginde



There is nothing as traumatising for a child or children within a family than warring parents.

Writing in *Psychology Today*, psychologist Blake Edwards argues that children exposed to domestic violence eventually experience a wide range of difficulties.

The attention given, emotions felt and memories imprinted onto a child's brain in moments of stress become inextricably linked together to shape their future conduct. These forever taint their feelings, beliefs and choices in relationships and so many other facets of life. Thus, in spousal abuse situations, children are not merely innocent bystanders. They are victims. Indeed, Brenda Branson of Focus on the Family affirms that more than one-third of the children who witness violence in the home demonstrate significant behaviour and/or emotional problems, including psychosomatic disorders, stuttering, anger, anxiety, bed wetting, excessive crying and problems in school.

Domestic violence

What is absolutely frightening is that when children witness abuse, they are likely to carry the impact of their stress into society. Many resort to alcohol, drugs, sex and food to numb their feelings. Some unconsciously practice on others the violence they have observed or experienced from the abusing parent or parents. It is, therefore, not uncommon for an older child to threaten or abuse younger siblings. They may do the same at school, in the neighbourhood or in their adult lives - at work.

The implications of these observations are far reaching, especially in this season of the Covid-19 lockdown. Reports from around the world indicate that domestic violence has been on a rapid rise. In a sense, this is not totally unexpected, considering that many family members who found refuge elsewhere are now forced to stay home. In group dynamics, it has been shown that when strangers come together to form a group, it goes through about four phases of development: Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing. It would be expected that many families that have operated largely independently are experiencing similar dynamics.

Within a family set up, the Forming stage is already a given through marriage or birth. What many families are now forced to go through is the Storming phase, especially if they

have not previously developed sound relationships with one another - as husband and wife, parents and children, or children among themselves. In any group setting, the Storming stage is often characterised by disunity, blaming, defensiveness, confrontation, tension and, at times, outright hostility. To successfully navigate this situation, two things are critical.

First is to acknowledge that disagreement at this stage is normal, since we are 'strangers' coming together into an unusual encounter. Each comes with expectations, but also with unique frustrations. Second is to appreciate the Storming is not permanent, or it does not have to be.

With some effort from each individual involved, the disagreements can be navigated and some very positive bonds cultivated. Such a disposition would readily usher the group or family into the Norming stage. Norming calls for establishing clear ground rules or norms that guide activities and communication within the home. If this is done objectively, it is just but a matter of time before the relationship grows into the Performing stage.

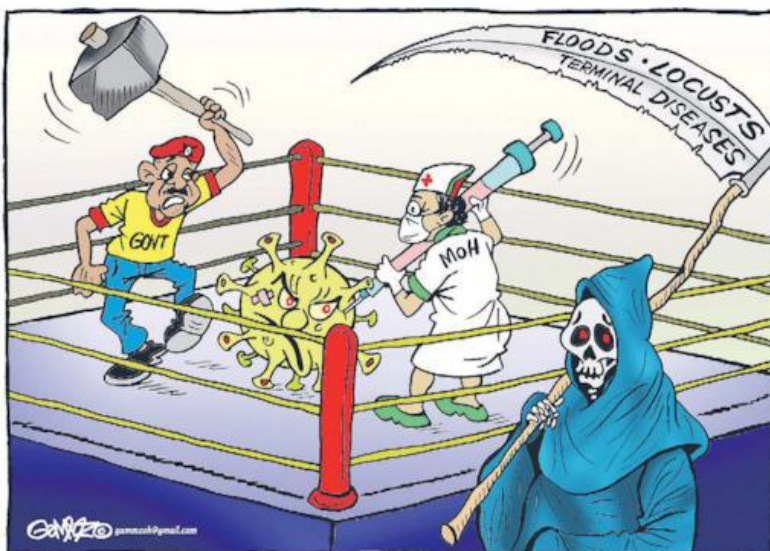
In organisations and groups, the Performing stage is marked by the establishment of very structured processes and procedures to communicate, resolve conflict, allocate resources. This enables everybody to know their roles and responsibilities and reduces areas of conflict. Even though a family is not an organisation,

"The implications of these observations are far reaching, especially in this season of the Covid-19 lockdown."

tion, agreeing on such little things as meal times, who washes the dishes when, who makes the bed, or even who holds the TV remote, can go a long way into building healthy relationships. Determine, at a personal level, to overlook minor offences and little irritants, and instead focus on the positive side of life.

The reality is that, a healthy family requires cultivating a conscious sense of belonging - accepting that this is my family and I cannot run away from it. Granted, Covid-19 may have locked us in with some people we would rather be far away from. But then, even inmates develop friendships. Let us stop fighting and focus our energies on surviving this pandemic. It might just be God's way of healing our families and building a strong next generation, devoid of domestic violence scars. Anne Mbugua - a veteran family lawyer - observes that if a marriage turns toxic, its impact can be all round devastating. And if the couple cannot call a ceasefire, there will be no winners - only losers. She cautions that even if you choose to end the marriage, your spouse, yourself and your children will emerge with battle scars that may never fade.

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Turn oil woes into green economy with more jobs

Isaac Kalua



Last week featured two big days for the environment. The first of this came on Monday, April 20, when for the first time ever, US oil prices plunged to almost -\$40 a barrel. This means that oil producers were paying buyers approximately \$40 for every oil barrel that they hauled away since there was nowhere left to store the oil. The second important day for the environment was two days later on Wednesday, April 22, which was Earth Day, a day that marks the birth of the modern environmental movement on April 22, 1970.

These two days will have a direct impact on the lives of every Kenyan in the coming months and years. The two days are like a T-junction with each day on either side of the junction. If we turn left to the 'Oil Road,' we will find a road paved with an addiction to oil. Because of this addiction, the oil producers across the globe produce millions of barrels per day to meet an ever-growing demand.

The US, which is now the leading oil producer globally, produces almost 20 million barrels every day, followed by Saudi Arabia at 11.8 million barrels per day and Russia at 11.5 million barrels per day. Rounding off the top five producers is Canada with a production of 5.5 million barrels per day and China with a production of 4.9 million barrels. Collectively, the top 10 oil producers churn out at least 100 million barrels of oil per day. Although this figure keeps fluctuating, it provides a clear picture of the global oil supply for an insatiable oil demand.

When the coronavirus sprout-

ed in China and flew around the world through infected people, the world largely and rightly focused on the infectious nature and mortality rate of this disease. But another lethal effect of the virus was on the oil industry. Because the world generally ground to a halt, planes disappeared from the skies, as cars, trucks and buses veered away from roads into parking lots. Consequently, demand for petrol, diesel and jet fuel fell sharply. Hence the oil glut that led to negative oil prices in the US.

Lonely skies

However, history has shown oil to be a resilient player that rides expertly on the world's insatiable appetite for oil. It is therefore highly likely that as the world stirs itself from the current lockdown and begins to operate, the oil addiction will start creeping back. Vehicle engines will begin revving and the roads will fill up with long distance trucks, long distance buses, short distance cars and millions of other vehicles. The

currently lonely skies will again teem with thousands of planes ferrying millions of travellers to the four corners of the globe.

If this scenario plays out in this manner, we will be back to business as usual, our oil addiction intact. As a result, pollution will have the last laugh and greenhouse gases will continue puncturing the ozone layer and driving climate change into higher gear. Thankfully, the T-junction also has a right turn, to 'Earth Day road.' On this road, oil addiction has been dealt a knockout blow. Now that the lockdown has taught us that we really don't need all that oil that we consume, we should embrace this new reality.

We can do this by embracing the green spirit of Earth Day and following in the footsteps of those millions of people who came together on April 22, 1970 and started a movement that pushed the world towards a greener direction with much less pollution in the rivers and atmosphere. The green baton has now been passed on to us

and it is up to us to take bold and unending steps on green pathways that will lead us to more renewable energy and less oil; more conservation and less degradation.

Because money determines almost everything, divestment from oil should be accompanied with investment in renewable energy and ecosystem restoration. Practically speaking for Kenya, I implore the national and county governments to take small, yet decisive steps that will heal us from our oil addiction. For instance, they should integrate cycling lanes to roads that don't have them and ensure that all new roads will have cycling lanes. We should also restore our forests, marine ecosystems, landscapes and rivers. This will keep our bodies and planet healthy even as it creates thousands of new green jobs. We have enough reasons to think green and act green.

The writer is founder and chairperson, Green Africa Foundation. www.isaackalua.co.ke

OVERHEARD

Baby dumped at ex-MP's home

Life for a one-time lawmaker, who also made a baby with his receptionist, has become a nightmare. This is after the ex-MP's lover decided to take matters into her own hands after failing to get child support. A week ago, we are told that the mother took her three-year-old child to the former MP's place but did not find him. She left the baby with a forwarding note at the ex-MP's gate. When the politician and his wife returned home, he was shocked to find the baby abandoned at his gate.

Police ferry home law breakers



Enterprising Kenyans eager to travel out of the Nairobi Metropolitan area have arrested the attention of the police. The curfew law breakers are paying police to transport them to their homes. We are told that they entice the police with irresistible bribes, sometimes as much as Sh10,000, to be arrested, handcuffed and ferried out of the city. Once they are delivered to their destination, they are unshackled and released. The police are loving their new job and have at times been advising prospective clients going the same direction to form travel groups.

Governor takes isolation too far

A governor has become the talk of town after self-isolating and preferring to execute his duties remotely from the comfort of his city home. In the spirit of working from home, the county boss has been combating coronavirus via telephone calls, Zoom and WhatsApp. However, his constituents, who are about 400km away, are not impressed because they are not getting enough attention as they battle with the pandemic and floods. Some have been heard complaining that the distance he was keeping from his county was antisocial and politically unhealthy.

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TOUGH TIMES

Concerns over violence and human rights violations in Coronavirus war have put a damper on national initiative

Why State has failed to impress in managing Covid-19 pandemic

George Kegoro



A public contest of truths and increasing violence against civilians suggests that the government is losing control and leadership of the country's responses to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The contest of truths is evolving into an information war, characterised by increased evidence of "alternative facts" aptly illustrated by two incidents, one in Siaya and the other in Homa Bay.

In Siaya, a huge rumpus, and now a lawsuit, have followed the night-time burial of James Onyango Oyugi, with pictures and videos showing two men hauling a body off a vehicle and throwing it into a shallow pit - as would happen to the carcass of a dog - while wailing family members watch helplessly. While the government claimed Onyango had died of Covid-19, and needed to be buried quickly as a public health measure, his family said he had been injured in a road accident, and may have died from undetected but serious injuries he may have suffered as a result. However, his hurried burial prevented an investigation into the cause of death, especially the theory that

injuries from the accident killed him, and has left behind a controversy over the utter disrespect with which his body was treated.

While the government defended the hurried burial arrangements as justified in terms of the applicable World Health Organisation standards for disposing the remains of people who die of Covid-19, Chief Government Pathologist Johansen Oduor conceded that the burial did not meet the guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health, which emphasise dignity and family involvement. WHO guidelines on the burial of Covid-19 victims are clear about the need to consult with families about specific requests with regard to a dignified burial. Onyango's family has now sued the government.

In Homa Bay, a man who drove a vehicle transporting family members who had an empty coffin from Nairobi has been placed in medical isolation after he allegedly tested positive for the coronavirus. The family members he drove are also in a local quarantine facility as his contacts. The driver has, however, disputed the positive test results and claims these were available after about six hours from sample collection - an impossibility given that the sample would have had to be transported four hours away to Kisumu, the nearest for testing and processing the results.

Homa Bay Governor Cyprian Awiti, earlier cited by the Health CS as the

"In his early performances, Kagwe was seen as a breath of fresh air and had engendered higher levels of public trust."

source of information about the incident, has told the media that he did not speak to the minister.

The controversies surrounding these two incidents were followed by a much-criticised claim by Education CS George Magoha that the government was already delivering online learning to all schools and would not need to postpone examinations scheduled for the end of the year. Responding to Prof Magoha, Mwingi Central MP Gideon Mulyungi said the CS was out of touch with the reality on the ground since most students in rural areas were unable to access online learning materials. The information war has erupted at a time police violence is increasingly being employed as a means of enforcing restrictions meant to curb the spread of the virus. The first night of the dusk to dawn curfew was marked by police violence.

At least six people died as a result of the violence. It was so serious that President Uhuru Kenyatta took the unusual step of offering a halfhearted public apology. The coast-based Muslims for Human Rights has documented the case of Eric Ng'ethe, a 22-year-old killed in Diani on April 1. A policeman hit Ng'ethe on the head with a bludgeon, resulting in him convulsing and dying on the spot.

Even where police violence has not resulted in death, it has led to serious injury as happened to James Ogero, a 28-year-old public health officer with whom I spoke on the telephone on April 20. James said that on March 28, while riding his motorcycle in Nambale, Busia, where he works, he met five police officers who attacked him with big sticks, resulting in a serious injury to his stomach and face. The assault on his stomach

led to significant injuries on his internal organs, which needed hospitalisation under intensive care in Kisumu, where he went into a coma. More incidents of police violence have come to light, and now include the use of quarantine procedures as a way of punishing citizens. There was a widely circulated story on social media of Eko Dydda, whose car was towed to Kilimani Police Station in Nairobi, where he was held overnight because he was still on the road during the curfew. After an argument between the police and his wife the following day, police allegedly sent him into a quarantine facility for 14 days as punishment.

While Health CS Mutahi Kagwe has won wide acclaim for his assured leadership of the response to the Covid-19, there has been a certain defensiveness about the response. There is a growing frustration that the government is not demonstrating that it has a big-picture understanding of the Covid-19 crisis or a capability to respond to it. Because the president and his deputy William Ruto made extravagant pre-election promises in 2013, many of which were not fulfilled, the Jubilee government has accumulated public mistrust.

Mr Kagwe is a late-comer in the Jubilee government. In his early performances, Kagwe was seen as a breath of fresh air and had engendered higher levels of public trust. However, controversies and the pervasive police violence indicate the government is unable to manage the Covid-19 pandemic through persuasion, and is increasingly resorting to propaganda and violence.

The writer is the executive director at KHRC. gkegoro@gmail.com

Real estate sector should prepare for a new normal

Ken Gichinga



As the government continues to lower taxes in a bid to cushion the economy from the devastating effects of Covid-19, economists have been debating whether the new tax relief measures will drastically reduce revenue going to the State, leading to a slowdown in government operations.

The evidence on the ground suggests that this is unlikely to happen. Already, clues are starting to emerge regarding which sectors the government will be turning to for additional tax revenue. The real estate sector is a prime candidate. Only last week,

tucked away in a hidden corner of one of the local newspapers, a notice from the Kenya Revenue Authority in conjunction with the Ministry of Lands and Physical Planning notified all leasehold owners about the obligation to pay land rent annually as required under Section 28 of the Lands Act. This could just be the beginning of the new revenue strategy that the government will be deploying in post-Covid Kenya.

The public notice from KRA observed that there has been a common trend among leasehold owners to only pay land rent upon transfer or change of their property. It is easy to see why this practice is no longer tenable, particularly at this time when government needs every shilling. There is a high likelihood that the same approach might be adopted by county governments with respect to payments of land rates.

Naturally, this will place a greater financial demand on leasehold owners who might have in the past failed to comply.

As it stands, land rates are calculated based on 34% of the unimproved site value. The site value has historically been anchored on land valuation that was conducted in 1980, and therefore the amounts in question have been relatively low and easy to comply with.

However, recent efforts by City Hall to revalue land in Nairobi will see land rates shoot up astronomically, particularly in areas which have seen a sharp appreciation of land over the past years. Take, for example, one acre in Nairobi's Upper Hill business district. In 2002, the value of that property was Sh50 million, which later appreciated to Sh120 million in 2010 and ultimately ballooned to Sh552 million in 2019.

Even if the new land rates are capped at the proposed one per cent of the property value, the owner of the land will have to part with a whopping Sh5.52 million every year. Assuming the piece of land has been relatively idle, generating no income for the landowner, there will be

serious pressure to either commercially develop the property or sell it off entirely to reduce the liabilities placed upon him by the government.

These attempts by the government to formalise revenue collection from leasehold owners will direct the real estate industry to resemble that of South Africa or the United States, which have minimal speculative activity. The obvious outcomes of these new measures, coming at a time when the Kenyan economy is operating on a wing and a prayer, will be seen in a general decline in demand and a subsequent drop in property prices.

Mortgage lenders ought to monitor this situation very keenly because there could be a rise in "underwater mortgages" - a term used to describe a situation when the actual property value is lower than the mortgage value that a borrower is servicing. This generates a negative equity position and often triggers widespread defaults.

The outlook on the real estate

will largely depend on how much liquidity the government can inject into the economy. A dramatic fall in home prices could create a macro risk event similar to what happened in New York City in 2010 when Tishman Speyer Properties and BlackRock Realty walked away from the Stuyvesant Town-Peter Cooper Village properties, leading to the largest commercial mortgage default in US history. The critical lesson for stakeholders in the Kenyan real estate sector is on the need to be highly proactive in mapping out the best and worst case scenarios as well as to identify measures that could cushion the industry. Now could be the time to adopt all the technological innovations that promise to deliver efficiency across the sector. A good example is the blockchain real estate initiative the government has been researching on for several years. Could this be the time to deploy it?

The writer is Chief Economist at Mentoria Economics

BELIEVE IT OR NOT

Toilet roll cakes keep baker happy

A quick-thinking bakery in Helsinki, Finland, has saved itself from financial ruin due to the new coronavirus pandemic by creating a cake that looks like a toilet roll. The dismayed staff at the Ronttosrouva bakery found all their orders cancelled last month, at the same time as panicked consumers began to hoard toilet roll. This sparked the idea of a toilet roll cake made of oat batter, passion fruit mousse and covered with fondant.

Little donkey gets love on the web



A miniature donkey named Mumbo is getting some online love in North Carolina, US, where a farm is getting in on the idea of having animals spice up tedious virtual meetings during the coronavirus pandemic. Peace N Peas Farm will rent Mumbo, the eight-year-old miniature donkey, and his friends to crash company conference calls. This camera-crowding donkey is "like a pesky little brother" that "doesn't let anyone relax too long," Francine Dunlap, Mumbo's owner, said. Companies can choose other farm animals they want to invite as guests on their video calls. According to the farm animal's meeting registration web page, they include three horses along with chickens and ducks.

Woman hides at mayor's home

A mayor said he found a woman hiding in his cellar. Bowling Green Mayor Bruce Wilkerson said he found the woman Wednesday morning after he heard noises and smelled cigarette smoke outside a home he was renovating. When he checked the cellar, he told police he found traces of blood on the cellar's doors and a bag with women's leggings. Wilkerson saw the woman when he went back to the cellar a second time after the electricity in his house went out. The media woman with dark hair told him she was "hiding from someone" before she ran away into the street. -Agencies

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ILL-INFORMED BILL

Government stands to lose in major ways in the event of a dysfunctional capital market

Tax amendments could lead to collapse of our capital markets

Kiprono Kittony



The Tax Amendments Bill that is currently in Parliament could sound the death knell for Kenya's capital markets if allowed to pass in its current form. The Bill, which was introduced in response to the presidential directive to cushion and stabilise the economy in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, could end up fueling greater economic turmoil, if passed.

The Bill has problematic sections and omissions that need to be urgently amended. Without these critical amendments, the new tax regime could decimate trading activity on the bourse, undermine Nairobi's place as the regional financial hub, drive away foreign and local investors, lead to massive job losses in the financial industry and cost the country billions if not trillions in future economic opportunities.

Parliament should not let this happen. Besides harming the financial industry, the Bill also carries significant risks for the government of the day and future administrations. The central government is one of the largest market participants in our capital markets. It dominates the bond market and

has significant equity stakes in blue chips such as Safaricom, where its 35 per cent stake yielded a dividend payout of Sh26.2 billion in 2019. The government, like the financial industry, stands to lose in a major way from a dysfunctional capital market, underlining the need to urgently revise the contentious sections of the Bill.

The Bill's proposal to repeal the tax-exempt status of green bonds and infrastructure bonds needs to be rejected flat-out. Now is not the time to flip flop and introduce taxes on interest income barely a year after promising tax exemptions to local and international investors who bought the inaugural green bond in 2019.

Green bonds

We can't afford to lose credibility in such a flagrant way as we will need the full trust of investors when we return to local and international markets to look for funds in the imminent future. Importantly, environmental sustainability, which is essentially what green bonds are designed to fund by matching green projects with affordable capital, is one of the defining issues of our time. We can't cut off funding to it - which is what could happen if the Bill is passed - without pulling the plug on our future.

In the same vein, the proposal to introduce taxes on infrastructure bonds is out of touch with the underlying state of our economy. Infrastructure bonds are longer tenured, meaning their repayment schedules are more manageable and don't put a strain on government taxes and expenditures in the same way short-term debt does. It is therefore self-sabotaging to take away

the incentives that attract investors to long-term infrastructure bonds at a time when our public balance sheet is laden with short-term debt. Data from Capital Economics and the World Bank released in April shows the amount of money needed to service short-term external debt as a percentage of foreign reserves stands above 70 per cent, highlighting the need for longer-term debt such as infrastructure bonds.

Other proposals in the Bill that pose a clear danger to the future of our capital markets include the introduction of 14 per cent VAT on brokerage services, which were previously exempted from VAT; the increase of the withholding tax rate for dividends for non-residents from 10 per cent to 15 per cent; a reduction in tax exemption for pooled funds such as retirement schemes; and the removal of corporate tax incentives for newly listed firms.

The inevitable outcome of these proposed tax changes is that trading activity on the Nairobi Securities Exchange (NSE) will drastically fall to economically unviable levels. This will not only put dozens of firms in the financial industry out of business, but also negate the progress Kenya has made to position itself as the financial gateway to Africa. Today the NSE is one of the

"The outcome of these proposed tax changes is that trading activity on the Nairobi Securities Exchange will drastically fall to economically unviable levels."

best performing bourses in Africa, despite the current bear run. Recent innovations such as the launch of M-Akiba, exchange traded funds and derivatives will be brought to naught. The Ithaka Programme, whose aim is to encourage new listings by incubating promising unlisted business, is also set to encounter challenges as companies may be discouraged from listing and look for alternative sources of capital. This will extend the IPO drought and the current bear run, eroding wealth from our economy.

Capital markets are the greatest wealth creation machines in economic history. This is because before capital is turned into profit, it first creates jobs and transforms the economy by funding production, supply chains, trade, infrastructure and real estate. You cannot restrict capital flows in an economy through disproportionate tax hikes without undermining long-term economic prospects. You cannot slay the goose that lays the golden egg in pursuit of quick gold.

While we acknowledge that someone has to pay the bill for the shocks brought about by the coronavirus, it is not prudent to solve one problem today by creating a bigger one tomorrow. The capital markets must be shielded from a hostile tax regime, lest we come to the painful discovery that Pulitzer Prize winning author Thomas Friedman was right when he said: "capital is a coward."

- Mr Kittony, Vice Chair World Chambers Federation, is a member of the Board of Directors, Nairobi Securities Exchange

Behaviour change critical in times of corona; a lot is at stake for nations

Laila Denise and Ahmed Alwy



Sanofi and GSK began human trials on a Covid-19 vaccine last week, and scientists' projections indicate it could be at least 18 months before a vaccine is ready. Until there is a vaccine, we cannot go back to our normal lives.

Without a vaccine, interventions like social distancing, wearing masks in outdoor areas and hygiene measures have to be in place across the whole society to lower the risk of a rebound of infections. While such interventions have proven to be the most effective at curtailing rapid transmission, their effectiveness hinges on collective compliance.

One of the fundamental principles of economics is that people respond to incentives. Incentives may have either a positive or negative impact and as such, individuals will always weigh the cost against the benefit accrued. Incentives used consistently can alter people's behaviour in a certain way towards attaining a certain public goal.

However, incentives can result in either desirable or undesirable outcomes. For example, the use of force may not be the most effective way to attain compliance as people often develop resistance over time, touting the infringement of their individual rights and liberties. This implies that choosing the right incentives is critical to spurring behavioural changes that can be consistently maintained over a period of time.

Regarding Covid-19 mitigation, an intervention based on behavioural economics means an opportunity for the government to effect long-term behavioural changes that will translate into new habit formations with more long-term benefits and a reduction in overburdening our health-care system.

The government is already facing challenges with the partial lockdown as individuals continue violating curfew directives, hosting secret parties, escaping quarantine facilities and failing to report suspected cases due to fear of stigma. This poses a serious challenge to the success of lockdown measures. Enforcement through use of force may work in the short-run but will only entrench the mistrust between citizens and the state.

Non-compliance can be taxing and costly for any government. For most institutions, non-compliance leads to ineffectiveness, bureaucracy and a lack of public trust, which contributes to negative outcomes.

Building the desired behaviour will require citizens to voluntarily comply. This will be effective only when we incentivise compliance. Understanding the underlying reasons for deviant behaviour is key. The Kenyans living hand to mouth may violate stay-at-home directives. However, a cash transfer programme to offset lost incomes will enhance compliance.

People exhibiting Covid-19 symptoms may refuse to come forward for testing due to fear of stigma and undesirable conditions in most quarantine centres. Others may be reluctant to provide names of relatives and friends they have been in contact with, thinking they are protecting them from being taken to these isolated units. Some may also question the credibility of all these interventions based on perceptions that governments, especially African, are known to provide misleading information.

Public sensitisation is needed to make people understand that the only way we can receive a semblance of our normal lives

"Incentives can result in either desirable or undesirable outcomes."

pertaining freedom and liberties of movement and activities is to sacrifice for the short-term. The cost of non-compliance is a complete disruption of life as we know it. This encompasses an open conversation, not a matter of enforcement. Covid-19 is a highly infectious flu, not a crime. It is a public health concern and not a security threat. Robust civic engagement and education are needed to empower and enable the citizenry to take responsibility by altering behaviours accordingly as outlined in public health guidelines.

The ultimate test for survival against Covid-19 is the ability of the human race to adapt to changes in human behaviour. The (new) normal post-Covid-19 will have a new economy shaped on new habits and regulations, based on reduced close contact interaction, and tighter travel and hygiene restrictions. The current social disruption will change how we work, learn, eat, shop, socialise and manage our health.

Laila Denise and Ahmed Alwy are public policy students

Tale of cunning Ben10s, blackmail and Covid-19

Njoki Kaigai

THE SIREN

This Covid containment season is proving to be a time of great learning. Following my educational session into the world of slay queens courtesy of Monica, I now know a lot more about the world of Ben10s, thanks to two young men who reached out to me - Timo and Wayne.

We even set up a Zoom call so that I could understand about their world and the hardships they are going through. For those who might not know who Ben10s are, here is a simple definition: young men between the ages of 20 and 30 who provide sexual pleasure for older women. Simply put, they are paid or kept toyboys.

Wayne and Timo told me that there exists a huge boychild population of Ben10s who are suffering. Just as much, if not more than, slay queens. Most Ben10s are usually college students who have identified a niche in the market.

They have recognised that there are many women (both single and married) in the 40 to 60 age bracket who are looking for able-bodied men to meet certain sexual and emotional needs. According to Wayne and Timo, these women are desperate for serious bedfastics, which their husbands are incapable of providing, mainly because their bellies get in the way or because they have outsourced their needs to their slay queens.

Containment and curfew

This containment and curfew mania means that the women (commonly referred to as cougars) are not coming out to play and the Ben10s are suffering. Wayne and Timo told me that cougars, unlike male sponsors, offer them better deals because they like to maintain high standards. They do not like to just hang out anywhere, they do not like those smoky, dingy meat-eating joints that male sponsors like to frequent. So they usually take their Ben10s to better joints - usually lounges, which had become the norm pre-Covid-19.

They also do not like to be seen with men who look young and broke, so they use their credit cards and trips abroad to shop and upgrade their Ben10s. I was told that one only needs two weeks of delivering good service to get the 'new look' - which is usually designer wear (though some are knock-offs from China), new colognes and of course a new smartphone. The married cougars are usually terrified of being caught and ruining their precious reputation (I was told some of them even serve in the Mothers' Guild and in Parent Teacher Associations). They are also very fussy about matters health and hygiene so they do not like visiting dodgy lodgings and hotels. For this reason, they set up their Ben10s in rather decent abodes, far removed from college hostels.

These residences have everything a



young man in his 20s needs - free wi-fi, a decent bed, cash allowances, drinks, a massive TV. When Ben10s deliver outstanding service over months, they get to travel abroad and sometimes even get a car.

Now all these hopes of future riches are in tatters because the cougars have lost interest and opportunity. Those cougars who have made their money off trading in goods from China, or from milking government allowances and tenders, are not in a position to fund anyone at the moment.

They are more worried about their livelihoods than their libidos, so that means that the future looks bleak for Ben10s. Wayne and Timo told me that come May 1, they will be kicked out of their flats since the cougars will no longer pay - plus they now no longer answer their calls since they are surrounded by family 24/7. The Ben10s are feeling used and discarded, broke and fearful of the future.

They told me that if things continue this way, they might have to resort to desperate measures - namely blackmail. You see, Ben10s have mastered the art of hedging their bets to cover all their bases.

They have also been filling the needs of many married men, especially in this city, who like to push certain sexual boundaries. Some of them like to dabble in the world of homosexuality from time to time, never mind being married and publicly declaring how all gay men should be burnt at the stake. Others like to venture into the world of sexual voyeurism, like being whipped or being made to bark like dogs.

Wayne and Timo told me that these men make for good clients for not only do they pay for the services; they also pay extra for silence. Ben10s who play in this field like to keep secret ammunition, which they use to make demands for

THEIR MODUS OPERANDI

Wayne and Timo told me that these men make for good clients for not only do they pay for the services; they also pay extra for silence. Ben10s who play in this field like to keep secret ammunition, which they use to make demands for extra cash from time to time.

extra cash from time to time. Desperate times call for desperate measures, so now they have a plan.

They will intensify their threats and demand a hefty sum of money, failure to which they will leak the pictures and videos on social media or to some popular blogger. Nothing makes a man pay up faster than the thought of certain images being posted online.

They told me that they have images of some top office and government officials all nude and chained like dogs and others wearing nurses' uniforms. Wayne and Timo are sure that these men will pay up for they all know that Kenyans are looking for anything other than corona to keep them entertained. So their plan is simple - get the massive blackmail payout from the men and use it to buy time in their flats where they can continue to order food online and watch Netflix.

When this is all over, revert to usual settings of the cougars where they can still continue enjoying being spruced up and set up. At the end of the Zoom call, I was not sure whether to applaud the Ben10s or fear them. All I can say is this containment better end soon before the blackmail begins.

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HOT ON TWITTER

■ **Donald B Kipkorir**@DonaldbKipkorir: China needs Africa for its abundant natural resources & agriculture & also for its One Belt One Road global project. Why then does Africa leaders look away when its people are hounded & mistreated in China? Why is it keeping quiet when China Ships throw Africans to the sea?

■ **Nelson Havi**@NelsonHavi: If we could convince the following to apply for Chief Justice: Ahmednasir Abdullahi SC; Prof Tom Ojienja SC; George Odunga JA; and Prof Joel Ngugi JA and monitor the Judicial Service Commission not succumb to manipulation, Judiciary will be independent and accountable come 2021.

■ **Martha Karua**@MarthaKarua: Now that @MOH_Kenya says Kenya is open to testing of British vaccines in Kenya let them be tested on members of the cabinet and their families and thereafter all elected representatives and senior government officials

EVENTS IN HISTORY

April 26

■ **363 AD:** Roman Emperor Julian is killed during retreat from the Sassanid Empire. General Jovian is proclaimed Emperor by troops on the battlefield.

■ **1718:** Tsarevich Alexei Petrovich of Russia, Peter the Great's son, mysteriously dies



after being sentenced to death by his father for plotting against him.

■ **1797:** Charles Newbold patents 1st cast-iron plow, though farmers fear effects of iron on soil

■ **1995:** Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani deposes his father Khalifa bin Hamad al-Thani, the Emir of Qatar, in a bloodless coup.

■ **2013:** 20 people are killed after a rescue helicopter crashes in Uttarakhand

■ **2014:** Following the military coup in Thailand, people are warned that anyone calling for protest on social media will be prosecuted for sedition

GOVERNANCE

Risk of Covid-19 in Garissa is worsened by bad leadership

■ Although Garissa County has not recorded any case of coronavirus, the revelation from the chair of the North Eastern region Kenya Medical and Pharmacists Union (KMPDU) that the County is not medically ready for the virus is shocking and worrying. The pronouncement came after the local healthcare workers downed their tools on Thursday because of poor welfare and working conditions. But the same distressing feeling is visible in the scarce and wanting briefings from the county leadership regarding the preparatory works for combating the virus. For example, the April 21 presser, which was the governor's second public speaking opportunity in this month since April 7, left many astounded. He offered a shallow humanitarian proposal to supply food vouchers to a mere 6,000 needy households. Garissa is one of the most food insecure counties according to the 2019 census, with 195,000 poor people out of the total population of 432,000. Governor Ali Bunow Korane's plan to help only 6,000 households is, therefore, merely a drop in the ocean and a mockery to care during this tough time, considering also the current slump to business and preexisting challenges of the county such as the high rate of unemployment and basic utility issues. One also wonders why the county government is not massively funding the essential virus prevention items such as face masks and hand sanitizers for mass distribution, given its relatively smaller and inadequate health manpower and resources compared to the national standard and the needs of the local population.

Some Members of the County Assembly of Garissa, who recently criticised the governor's leadership style in the wake of the Corona pandemic, were attacked by hired goons in what doubly showed the worsening state of political tolerance in the county as well as the crisis of social confidence under the governor's disconnected and ham-fisted administration. It was similarly funny to realise that I had been blocked from the governor's official Facebook page after I politely questioned the relevance and essentiality of a photo that was shared of the governor meeting a group of local elders and one of the MCAs who had criticised him in what looked like a mission to silence dissent during this crisis that is fully consuming the time and resources of every other governor and leader elsewhere. It bears repeating that people do not run for public office to be liked or entertained; the purpose of leadership is to offer efficient service delivery to the wananchi, and, naturally, with that task comes either praise or criticism. As a result, there is an exigent need for the Garissa governor to seriously shape up when it comes to his leadership priorities during this health crisis to avoid creating unseen devastation to the residents. As Benjamin Franklin said: "By failing to prepare, you are planning to fail." Hassan Malik Mohamed, Garissa.



Let's treat police as friends, not public enemies we employ

■ Since President Uhuru Kenyatta announced the curfew laws, the conduct of our police has been under scrutiny, especially on how they contain law breakers. The public has lashed all sort of condemnatory sentiments upon them; Kenyans have complained about torture and brutality meted on civilians. It is a fact that there has been such cases. However, we must look with sobriety on the bigger picture of why police behave in such manners. Our nation needs to change its attitude towards the men in uniform. These are young men and women from families within our borders, and with a duty to protect life and property. They are ready to pay the ultimate price for this course. From how some people talk about police, you get the feeling that adorning a police uniform is slowly becoming a threat to an officer's own life. This attitude should change. One night a friend and I were stopped by policemen. I answered questions asked softly and stayed calm. They let me go. My friend, on the other hand, chose arrogance and violence; wondering why they needed to know where he was coming from. He got it rough. I am not a sadist, neither do I find it consequential to celebrate heinous acts. The truth is, we get what we give. Humanity will handle you the way you present yourself. In line of duty, police usually find it rough. Few will sympathise with them when they get an accident during patrol. No one counts the number of officers who get injured as they maintain order outside our houses. In Bungoma, for instance, the public nearly lynched one over some mundane allegation. There is due process. If you have an accusation against anyone, do what is lawful. And by the way, who cares about police meagre earnings. Who cares about their deplorable living conditions? Frankline Amunga

Letters.

Allow churches, schools to reopen, provided lives are not endangered

■ As good news of a possible find of the vaccine to the novel coronavirus trickles in, it is necessary that government opens schools and churches. Children from rural areas have limited or no access to internet and have been struggling to acquire knowledge, compared to those in urban areas. Opening the schools partially, especially to the candidates, will help pupils and students get a level play field when sitting the national

examinations. Parents and the teachers' organisations should not be hard on the government on this matter, but help in a way to ensure children sustain high hygiene standards to help contain the virus. Meanwhile, it is clear that the closure of places of worship was done without proper consultations. It is in churches where we pray and get relief from all sorts of calamities.

Julius Abungana is a cleric

UhuRuto fallout not good for the country's development



■ No longer is it a secret that President Uhuru Kenyatta and his deputy William Ruto have fallen out politically, going by the wrangles in the ruling Jubilee Party and the running of government affairs. At a time the country is battling the effects of Covid-19 pandemic, the inability of the two to read from the same script is a setback. The energy and resources that could have been used to marshal concerted effort towards managing the impact of Covid-19 is diverted to settling scores. While it is to be appreciated that the fallout between the two did not start with the emergence of coronavirus, there needs to be an amicable approach to resolving the conflict between the two foremost leaders of this country without sabotaging the country's interests. The two should heed the words of the Bible in Matthew 12:25: "...every kingdom divided against itself is laid waste, and no city or house divided against itself will stand." While the working relationship between Uhuru and Dr Ruto seems at its lowest, opportunity exists for them to mend fences for Kenya's future's sake. Without undermining gravity of their political differences, the two should assess short-term and long-term effects of their fallout and reach a truce that would secure a prosperous nation. If the President could mend fences with his former

political foe and Opposition leader Raila Odinga, why not try to engage his deputy to end the wrangles within the party? It is understandable that this will automatically alter the political situation, but just like the President said at one time, only God knows who Kenya's next president will be. Working hard to block any person from ascending to the seat might be futile because among the current crop of leaders who have expressed interest in the presidency, none can claim to be totally innocent or lean as far as corruption is concerned.

Since the early days of the clamor of multi-party system in Kenya, the clarion call has been the leveling of the playing field for everyone so that Kenyans can have leaders of their choice. The sad reality is that it has, unintentionally, led to the balkanisation of the country along ethnic lines, which becomes easy fodder for politicians to ascend to positions of power and influence to the chagrin of the majority poor Kenyan voters. Uhuru and Ruto should work on a mechanism that promotes fairness and transparency in the electoral process and distribution of public resources in order to forestall any kind of conflict that would be a recipe for political instability now and in the future. Abiero Maurice Awuora is a researcher.



Place Kiraitu under quarantine. Meru County Woman Rep Kawira Mwangaza has called on the national government to place Governor Kiraitu Murungi under forced quarantine, claiming he flouted safety guidelines during a function. Ms Mwangaza accused the governor of flouting the rule on social distancing and a ban on gatherings during the distribution of sanitisers and masks in Maua, Igembe, on Thursday. But Mr Kiraitu, who was accompanied by county and national government officials during the exercise, termed the allegations political. Mwangaza said holding a meeting where people were not wearing masks and failed to maintain social distance went against government directives. "The law should apply to all. We had an MCA in Tharaka-Nithi where a few people mobbed her car to get masks, and she was arrested. What is the difference between the MCA and a governor who convened a meeting?" she asked. [Phares Mutebe]

Week in Review

Politics, Opinion, Analyses & Special Reports

RESPIRE Fixation on fight against Covid-19 gives governor breathing space

Virus scrambles attempt at quick Sonko takedown

Pandemic gives city boss the chance to shine after suffering embarrassing political beatings.

By Daniel Wesangula
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There was an elaborate plan in place to take down Mike Sonko and clip his wings. Key functions were taken away from the flamboyant Nairobi governor and, as one newspaper put it, he was left with "less influential responsibilities such as the licensing of dogs, controlling pornography, and other non-essential services, effectively rendering him a ceremonial governor."

But with the coronavirus crisis now occupying the minds of those behind the whittling of his powers, Sonko seems to have momentarily rediscovered his groove. Amid the pandemic, the State House meeting that saw Sonko sign away his city feels years away.

"Anyone who was receiving a beating before the virus is in a good place now," says political commentator Herman Manyora. "It has slowed his enemies."

On March 18, six days after Kenya confirmed its first coronavirus case, another State House meeting took place. A career military man was in attendance on the special invite of President Uhuru Kenyatta. After the meeting, the military man would swap his fatigues for a civilian suit and prepare for a different kind of war.

That is how Major-General Mohamed Abdalla Badi became entangled in a battle for control of Nairobi. On one hand was Sonko, who was obsessed with holding on to City Hall even as control slipped through his fin-

gers. At the time he was weighed down by a humiliating public arrest as he allegedly fled from the authorities, followed by a court case that resurrected ghosts from his less-than-stellar past.

Crown jewel

Then there was the State's fixation with wresting back control of their crown jewel from the hands of a man who was described behind closed doors as an embarrassment to the ruling party and, inexcusably, the presidency.

This is the political minefield that Badi walked into, armed with a clear fight plan from his commander-in-chief.

"Nairobians are hardworking and industrious people. For Nairobi to continue on this path, it is paramount that they get efficient and timely services," the President said, as he announced the creation of the Nairobi Metropolitan Services, an institution specifically created to usurp Sonko's power and hand over control of the city to the State.

"Citizens care not who is delivering the services... therefore we must also act as one and not blame one another for mwanaichi wants results, not excuses."

Away from the lofty state-

"The critical mass has moved on to other things. The middle class that was hugely critical of Sonko's leadership have other things to worry about."

Political commentator Herman Manyora

ments, Badi's brief was simple - get water flowing from dry taps, tackle the garbage collection problem, and sort out the public transportation mess. In other words, fix what was broken in the city and steal Sonko's thunder.

And then Covid-19 happened. "Something of this magnitude, once it is over, will not leave things the same," Prof Macharia Munene of the United States International University says. "After things settle down, a lot of schemes and designs will have to be abandoned."

For Sonko, a politician who knows how to work a crowd, the pandemic has given him the opportunity to reconnect with his supporters. His social media pages regularly churn out pictures and videos of his rescue team fumigating city streets or handing out face masks in informal settlements.

In the past one month - cognisant of the fact that he cannot compete for attention with Uhuru or Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe - Sonko has stepped up his public appearances while donning the most outlandish protective gear.

He is recreating the environment in which he thrives best, by muddying the political waters and dragging everyone in his sights down for a dirty duel.

For starters, the governor has refused to assent to a Bill allocating more than Sh15 billion to the NMS, thus setting the stage for what could be a drawn-out battle with Badi.

From the early days of his career, Sonko has been most successful when he has appealed directly to his supporters and blinded them into suspending logic.

During campaigns for the Makadara seat in a 2010 by-



Nairobi Governor Mike Sonko walks through a public sanitisation booth at the Kencom bus stop last Sunday. Below: Major-General Mohamed Abdalla Badi. [David Naga, Standard]



poll, could challenge him.

Back to Covid-19. While Sonko was spraying estates, Badi, the appointed heir to his throne, was getting bogged down in the bureaucracy that followed the creation of his new office.

He has been present at coronavirus update press conferences. He has been at Uhuru Park to supervise county council staff as they collect new letters of employment.

Chaos reigns

Amid the pandemic, Nairobi remains dirty. Water is not flowing from the taps of city residents and the public transportation sector is still chaotic.

Sonko's supporters are gathering again. He is trying to look like a man who can make things happen even as Nairobians appear to have set aside their

preoccupation with power games for the city's control.

"The critical mass has moved on to other things. The middle class that was hugely critical of Sonko's leadership have other things to worry about," says Manyora. "They are thinking of their next pay check, their next meal and whether they have stocked up enough."

When the virus passes, Nairobi may still be up for grabs.

A distracted populace, an overwhelmed central government and a broke business community could allow Sonko to worm his way back into the city that crumpled to its knees during his reign.

"But the crisis might also mean a lot of things in the city will have to be corrected. It may force us to deal with our chaos. Sonko cannot survive in a city without chaos," Munene says.

LEADERSHIP

No help for flood victims as Nyong'o, Outa clash in public

CS Wamalwa was expected in the county to assess the flood problem and launch food and water distribution to victims.

By Kevine Omollo
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The hopes of an estimated 32,000 people displaced by floods in Kisumu County were yesterday dashed after a meeting meant to offer solutions was called off amid political bickering.

During the meeting in Muhoroni, which was supposed to be attended by Devolution Cabinet Secretary Eugene Wamalwa, Kisumu Governor Anyang' Nyong'o and Senator Fred Outa exchanged harsh words as the flood victims listened in consternation. Tempers flared and the governor had to be restrained by his security when he confronted the senator, who had contradicted him in public. After the clash, the leaders left in a huff, leaving the about 2,000 victims, whose homes had been destroyed by the floods, in limbo.

After the aborted meeting, only two water bousers, delivered by Lake Victoria South Water Service Authority, were left for the victims even as the National Irrigation Board



Kisumu Governor Anyang' Nyong'o (left) with Senator Fred Outa. The two clashed in public over distribution of relief food and clean water to flood victims in Nyando and Muhoroni. [File]

promised to deliver rice later in the day.

Mr Wamalwa was expected to assess the flood situation in Nyando and Muhoroni, where he was to launch food and water distribution to the flood victims.

However, a few minutes after 10am, Nyong'o arrived at Katundu Evacuation Centre, which was to be the CS's first stop, and announced that Wamalwa would not make it due to bad weather.

Bad weather

"I have spoken to the CS and the weather in Nairobi is not good for flights, so we have agreed to postpone the exercise to another day, which will be communicated," said

Nyong'o.

But Outa immediately disrupted the governor's address, claiming it was Nyong'o who had blocked the CS from coming because he had not been consulted.

"It is sad for a whole governor to block the help coming to our people just because he was not consulted. Which kind of consultation did he want, yet this is a national government project," posed Outa.

Within no time, the crowd was divided into two, with one allied to Nyong'o and another to Outa, chanting in protest.

Nyong'o had to be restrained by his security team after he tried to physically confront Outa, who was already addressing one group, casti-

gating Nyong'o for failing to provide leadership.

"What we need now is a solution and not politics. Nyong'o should use funds from his government to save the people who suffered the impact of floods instead of engaging in politics," he said.

And with the social distancing becoming a major issue at the evacuation camps, the leaders agreed that the flood victims should be assisted to avoid double tragedy occasioned by coronavirus fears.

Last month, Kisumu County allocated Sh200 million towards aiding residents affected by the impacts of the pandemic, but the money is yet to be released. Outa accused Nyong'o of misusing the funds

and instead of offering help, he was depending on national government aid.

"We must be told where the Sh200 million is. Our people continue to suffer as the governor plays politics," he said in Nyong'o's presence.

The governor, however, claimed the money was yet to be released because the County Assembly was yet to pass it.

"For us to spend any public money, the assembly has to approve it. And as we speak there is a Bill before the assembly in regards to the funds and once they approve it then we will release the money," he said.

Transition period

Nyong'o added that the delay in passing the Bill had also affected any transaction in the special account, which was created for the Covid-19 response of which the Sh200 million was to be part of.

The county executive was also set to raise Sh3.5 million for the initiative, coming from salary deductions from himself, his deputy, executive members, chief officers and directors.

County Woman Representative Rosa Buyu, who also attended the botched event, joined Outa in castigating Nyong'o, whom she accused of not being responsive to the residents' plight.

Kirinyaga

Ndambiri not behind bill to oust Waiguru

Kirinyaga Deputy Governor Peter Ndambiri has distanced himself from claims he plotted and funded the impeachment motion against Governor Anne Waiguru.

Ndambiri, however, reiterated that his name will be on the ballot for the county gubernatorial position in 2022.

Speaking yesterday at Kanjini area in Mwea East Sub-county, Ndambiri said some people were misleading the governor that he was the force behind her ouster motion moved by Mutira MCA David Wangul. The motion will be debated when the assembly resumes next month.

MCAs accused Waiguru of gross violation of the Constitution, abuse of office and gross misconduct. She has denied the allegations and dismissed the ouster attempt as political. She obtained an injunction stopping the impeachment proceedings temporarily due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ndambiri said those lying to Waiguru sought to destroy the cordial relationship between him and his boss. "I have not financed or met the MCAs (behind the impeachment) in a hotel," said Ndambiri.

There has been speculation of a rift between the two leaders who are rarely seen together in official county functions as it used to happen before they were elected in 2017. Ndambiri acknowledged his absence from two or three county functions presided over by the governor, but said it was because he was not informed about them. [Joseph Muchiri]

Kisumu

Nyanza governors defend responses to control Covid-19

Nyanza governors have defended their performance in the wake of the coronavirus, rubbing claims that they have done little to curb the pandemic in their counties.

Kisumu Governor Anyang' Nyong'o and his counterparts Cyprian Awiti (Homa Bay) and John Nyagarama (Nyamira) insisted they have been in the forefront preparing their counties to deal with the disease.

"I think a section of the media grossly misunderstood what we have done in Kisumu to control Covid-19," said Prof Nyong'o.

He said he has been on the front line, working tirelessly to ensure Kisumu does not join the league of other counties that have reported many Covid-19 cases.

"We have been distributing personal protective equipment (PPE). We have opened isolation

wards and quarantine centres. We have waived taxes and distributed food to those adversely affected by the curfew and closure of businesses," said Nyong'o.

Contrary to reports, Nyong'o said, they have no dispute with medical workers and had smoothly relocated traders, who initially worked at the now closed Kibuye market.

Mid this week, Kisumu County announced the completion of the first phase of the expansion of a Sh113 million donor-funded Lumumba Hospital as it continues with efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19.

The facility has been earmarked to serve as one of the quarantine centres with the county working on procuring 70 isolation beds.

In their expansion plans, Kisumu County has increased its bed capacity from 18 to 100, built



Kisumu Governor James Ongwae

a maternity wing and created additional wards including a surgical one. It has also boosted water supply.

Yesterday, the facility got a boost after a steel company donated 30 beds to help in preparing an isolation ward for Covid-19 patients. With the creation of 70-bed capacity to act as a quarantine centre for suspected



Nyamira Governor John Nyagarama

cases of coronavirus, the facility is set to play a vital role in containing the virus.

Nyong'o said with the additional facility, it now means the county has an isolation capacity of 398.

"Even as we equip quarantine centres, we have gone ahead and set up five-bed holding centres at

all our county hospitals," said Nyong'o.

Nyong'o has also launched a fundraiser towards mitigating the impact of coronavirus and targets to raise Sh800 million, which will be channelled towards cushioning people weakened and disadvantaged by the effects of the pandemic.

In Homa Bay, Governor Awiti protested reports he has been missing in action as the county battled Covid-19. He said the county purchased PPEs worth Sh3.8 million to be used by medical practitioners in fighting the virus.

The PPE are head gears, disposable gowns, thermometer guns, face masks, gloves, hand washing gel, among other equipment.

The county has also received two ambulances from development partners for fighting spread

of the virus.

Awiti said he had launched an emergency fund to raise money that will be used to cushion residents whose livelihoods had been disrupted by the pandemic.

In Nyamira, Governor Nyagarama said he had taken control of the operations as his county battled the virus. On Friday, he distributed thousands of PPEs and announced the opening of new isolation and quarantine centres.

And Kisumu Governor James Ongwae said traders of food items in open air markets will be exempted from remitting daily taxes to cushion them against the reduced demand due to the pandemic.

Mr Ongwae also suspended penalties for late payments for Single Business Permit, and waived market dues and monthly stickers for PSVs. [Harold Odhiambo, James Omoro and Stanley Ongwae]



Week in Review
A weekly roundup of the most important news stories from around the world, including politics, economics, and culture.

Week in Review

News, Politics, Economics, Culture



News, Politics, Economics, Culture

Virus scrambles attempt at quick Sonko takedown

Kenya's president says he will not step down until the country is free of the virus.

Kenya's president says he will not step down until the country is free of the virus.

Kenya's president, Uhuru Kenyatta, has announced that he will not step down until the country is free of the coronavirus. He said that the virus has caused a "scramble" in the attempt to quickly remove him from office. Kenyatta has been in office since 2013 and has faced several challenges, including a controversial re-election in 2017. He has also been accused of corruption and human rights abuses. The president's statement comes as the virus continues to spread across the country, with many people dying and others in quarantine. Kenyatta's announcement has been met with mixed reactions, with some people supporting his decision and others criticizing it. The virus has also caused economic hardship for many Kenyans, with businesses closing and people losing their jobs. Kenyatta's statement is seen as a way to distract from these issues and to focus attention on the virus. However, it has also been seen as a way to avoid the challenges he has faced in office. The virus has also caused a "scramble" in the attempt to quickly remove him from office.

The president's statement has been met with mixed reactions, with some people supporting his decision and others criticizing it. The virus has also caused economic hardship for many Kenyans, with businesses closing and people losing their jobs. Kenyatta's statement is seen as a way to distract from these issues and to focus attention on the virus. However, it has also been seen as a way to avoid the challenges he has faced in office. The virus has also caused a "scramble" in the attempt to quickly remove him from office.

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A group of people, including a man in a white shirt with 'I Love Up' written on it, are standing under a large orange umbrella.



The man in the military uniform is likely a high-ranking official, possibly a general or colonel. He is wearing a dark uniform with a peaked cap and a sash. The image is a headshot, showing him from the chest up.

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Enforcing law

Commission wants police to get allowances

National Police Service Commission (NPSC) wants police officers to get more allowances to cushion them from effects of the coronavirus.

NPSC Chairman Eliud Kinuthia said he has initiated negotiations with Cabinet Committee on

National Development Implementation and Communication and Salaries and Remuneration Commission to have all police officers considered for uniform extraneous allowance for all ranks and responsibility allowance for commanders commencing

March until the country returns to normal enforcement of law and order.

He has also proposed sufficient budgetary allocation for police officers to be supplied with sanitisers and personal protective equipment in all the work sta-

tions including temporary roadblocks and formed units in operation areas to protect them from contracting Covid-19.

"I appeal to the public to be law abiding during this difficult period and avoid unnecessary confrontation with police. They

should also not fabricate allegations against officers," he said.

Kinuthia noted that the new work environment has put police to big test of balancing between protecting civil liberties, public safety and their security and welfare. [Cyrus Ombati]



National Police Service Commission Chairman Eliud Kinuthia. [File: Standard]

In Brief

Mandera. Locals get 5,000 masks, sanitisers

The county government on Friday distributed 5,000 face masks and 4,000 alcohol-based hand sanitisers to the public as it heightened the fight against coronavirus. Health executive Mahamud Adan led county officials in issuing the masks and sanitisers to the business community, taxi operators and workers involved in cleaning of roads and garbage collection. "We expect to roll out the distribution across all sub-counties to help our people," he said. The administration has also donated hand-washing equipment to various institutions. Mandera is regarded as a hotspot for Covid-19 due to its porous borders with Ethiopia and war-torn Somalia. [Cyrus Ombati]

Narok. Civilians return firearms, ammunition



Members of a Maasai clan in Trans Mara region have surrendered six illegal firearms and 16 rounds of ammunition which they have been using in inter-clan clashes. Elders from Siria clan, who surrendered the firearms to Deputy County Commissioner Hassan Noor, expressed regret over the prolonged conflict with members of the Uasin Gishu clan. "We are grateful, and other members from both clans are free to surrender illegal firearms," said Noor. He challenged the warring clans to emulate residents of Esoit who surrendered at least 100 firearms two years ago. Davis Dikirr and John Sakaja, who surrendered the guns on behalf of the Siria clan, said they had decided to take the initiative in order to ensure that the perennial conflict with the Uasin Gishu clan dating back to 1976 comes to an end. [Edwin Nyarangi]

DEFENCE. CA argued that the system would help tame proliferation of counterfeit and illegal devices

State gets greenlight to tap private phone calls

Judges declare that there was no credible evidence to show that the system was meant to spy on consumers' private information.

By Kamau Muthoni
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The Court of Appeal has allowed Communication Authority of Kenya (CA) to install a mass surveillance system.

This now paves way for the government to snoop on your phone conversations.

Court of Appeal Judges William Ouko, Martha Koome and Daniel Musinga have overturned a High Court judgement that outlawed the controversial Data Management System (DMS) which is meant to monitor mobile phone networks.

The judges faulted Justice John Mativo, saying he failed to appreciate that there was no credible evidence to demonstrate the system was meant to spy on consumers' private information.

The High Court had scuttled plans by the regulator to listen in on mobile phone conversations, but CA insisted that DSM will help to detect fake mobile devices.

Strike a balance

In a judgement read by Justice Koome, the Court of Appeal found that consultations with telecom operators Safaricom, Airtel and Telkom Kenya on the design of the system were not yet complete.

They ruled that although there were concerns about the right to privacy, it was equally important to weed out illegal devices but in consultation with the three top mobile service providers.

"The right to privacy is important but the issues of abuse by unscrupulous mobile operators also needed to be tackled so as to strike a balance



Justice William Ouko



Justice Martha Koome



Justice Daniel Musinga

between securing the right to privacy and dealing with the problem without infringing the right to privacy. It is clear to us that there was no concrete evidence that the DMS was going to spy or intrude on private communication other than the unsupported newspaper cuttings," judges ruled.

Justice Mativo had found that CA was going overboard in its mandate because there was already an anti-counterfeit agency in place, adding that telecom operators could also detect and block blacklisted devices.

"Accessing mobile telephone subscriber's information in a manner other than that which is provided under the law infringes the right to privacy. It follows that for the DMS to be lawful, the reason given must not only be lawful, but must meet the threshold of a reasonable, justifiable, and democratic society," he ruled.

On January 31, 2017, former CA Director General Francis Wangusi wrote to the three telecom operators about DMS, saying it was meant to access information from illegal handsets that would help to fight cyber-crime.

But the firms opposed the plan, saying DMS was spyware whose purpose was to eavesdrop on people's calls, read

The initiative

On January 31, 2017, former Communications Authority of Kenya Director General Francis Wangusi wrote to the three telecom operators about Data Management System (DSM), saying it was meant to access information from illegal handsets that would help to fight cyber-crime. DMS is meant to monitor mobile phone networks. But the firms opposed the plan, saying DMS was spyware whose purpose was to eavesdrop on people's calls and track financial transactions.

messages and track their financial transactions.

In the case filed by activist Okiya Omtatah, he argued that if CA intended to lock out counterfeiters, it ought to have started at the point of entry instead of going after citizens who bought the handsets.

The regulator told the Court of Appeal that the system had been born out of consultations.

"The learned judge erred in law and fact by making findings which were not supported by evidence on record and ignor-

ing the uncontroverted position of and the evidence adduced by the appellant in the High Court," argued CA's lawyer Wambua Kilonzo. "The judge also failed to appreciate the nature of CA's letter dated January 31, 2017, to mobile network operators."

According to CA, the system would help detect mobile phones stolen abroad and tame the proliferation of counterfeit and illegal devices which are allegedly a concern.

Safaricom, which had been named as a party in the case, told the court the regulator disregarded concerns that allowing third parties to access their systems would infringe their customers' right to privacy.

"The decision to install the devices without consultation is arbitrary as the law does not grant CA powers to interfere with devices by tapping, listening to, surveillance or intercepting communications," Safaricom argued.

Lawyers for Telkom told the court they would not take any position but would be happy with either outcome of the case. Airtel did not reply to the case.

The authority had already awarded Broadband Communications Networks Ltd the Sh100 million tender to install and maintain the system.

Allegations

Water boss grilled over tender

The National Water Harvesting and Storage Authority (NWHSA) acting CEO, Geoffrey Sang, was yesterday grilled for the second day over claims of graft at the agency.

Mr Sang was picked up from his office in Industrial Area, Nairobi on Friday and taken to the Directorate of Criminal Investigations. He was released and told to go back yesterday.

The detectives picked a number of documents from his office and the procurement department to be used in the probe over the construction of a Sh231 million dam in Turkana.

The Naku'tum Peace Dam is among three that President Uhuru Kenyatta had ordered built to help Turkana and West Pokot residents. A budget of Sh3.5 billion was set aside and Naku'tum allocated over Sh231 million.

But officials said there were irregularities in the manner in which the tender was awarded.

Police reports show the agency's chief legal officer did not sign the documents, but the NWHSA management pushed for the project to proceed.

NWHSA's chair Erick Okeyo said he had not been briefed about the arrest, adding the agency would support the probe.

"I have not been briefed about the allegations. I have been chairman for only one month," he said.

According to officials, the project was supposed to see the construction of an 18-metre dam made of clay core and shell materials, with a water inlet and a delivery steel pipeline of a 200mm diameter and a length of 500 metres.

It was also supposed to have communal water points and three cattle troughs.

The agency had been embroiled in a leadership row for months before Sang was picked by Labour Cabinet Secretary Simon Chegwi, when he was still in the Water ministry, to take over from Sammy Mburu.

[Cyrus Ombati and Roselyn Obala]

Kericho

Villagers turn away mourners from city

Residents of Kalyet in Kipkelion West Constituency blocked a group of mourners from Nairobi from setting foot in the village in an effort to curb the spread of Covid-19.

Kericho County Police Commander Silas Gichunge said the villagers intercepted the bus carrying 15 mourners at around 9:30pm on Friday night before they disembarked.

Earlier, the mourners had attended the funeral of a university lecturer at Kabanga village in the neighbouring Kipkelion East Constituency.

"When the bus carrying the mourners arrived at Kalyet village to drop one of the passengers from Nairobi who is resident, a standoff ensued after the villagers ordered the driver to turn back," said Mr Gichunge.

The county police boss rushed to the scene after a tip-off from residents and escorted the mourners to Kipkelion Police Station where they spent the night in the bus.

Kericho County Director of Medical Services Betty Langat said the group was screened for symptoms of Covid-19, which turned negative.

Gichunge explained that since the mourners had obtained clearance from the government to attend the funeral and were given a clean bill of health, they were released to return to Nairobi, as "there was no other reason to hold them".

Kipkelion MCA Anthony Ruto commended residents for being vigilant. [Nikko Tanui]

Flouting rules

Woman fined Sh15,000

A 32-year-old woman has been fined Sh15,000 or serve four months in jail for contravening rules to curb spread of Covid-19.

Nardos Simons was yesterday arraigned before a Nakuru court. Nardos was charged that on April 10, she was found along Kenyatta Avenue in Nakuru, having travelled from Nairobi Metropolitan, which was declared an infected area, without a valid pass.

Upon questioning by the police, Nardos said she had travelled to see her child who was with her sister-in-law.

Appearing before Principal Magistrate Faith Munyi, she pleaded guilty to the offence. Nardos was granted 14 days right of appeal. [Julius Chepkwony]

LANDSLIDE The senator had taken food and cash aid to victims

Police warn Murkomen for defying Covid-19 measures

Photos of leader addressing a huge crowd in Elgeyo Marakwet have been doing rounds on social media.

By Stephen Rutto
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Security officials have warned Elgeyo Marakwet Senator Kipchumba Murkomen and two MPs for flouting government directives in the fight against Covid-19.

Mr Murkomen, Kapseret MP Oscar Sudi and his Marakwet counterpart Kangogo Bowen addressed a crowd, among them people displaced by a landslide that killed 18 people in Kipchumba area, Elgeyo Marakwet and Chesogon in West Pokot on Thursday. The meeting flouted a ban on public gatherings.

Elgeyo Marakwet security chiefs yesterday described the meeting between the leaders and locals outside Wewo AIC church as a rally, which was attended by people who were not affected by the landslide.

Photos of Murkomen, Sudi and Bowen addressing a huge crowd of people, most of whom were not wearing masks, have been doing rounds on social media. The trio visited the area on Thursday to deliver food and Sh1.8 million cash donations to those displaced by the mudslide.

County Commander John Mwinzi said police officers have been instructed to arrest any leaders who flout government directives in the guise of taking aid to the landslide survivors.

"The leaders are aware that all public gatherings were banned. Security agencies would also wish to do public sensitisation meetings, but we can't because of the restrictions. We have instructed police officers to arrest any leader addressing crowds in the affected area," Mr Mwinzi said.

He banned any distribution of relief food to people affected by the disaster, directing well-wishers to donate food through the county's Covid-19 response team co-chaired by County Commissioner Ahmed Omar and Governor Alex Tolgos.

"We saw the pictures online and were



Elgeyo Marakwet Senator Kipchumba Murkomen addresses a crowd said to be victims of landslides that hit Kipchumba area in his county on Saturday last week. [Stephen Rutto, Standard]

shocked that leaders have now resorted to using the disaster to hold rallies to gain political mileage during such sensitive times. Leaders must know the restrictions apply to everyone," he said.

"No one is allowed to distribute food in the area from now henceforth. The food donations will be distributed through the county Covid-19 response team," ordered Mwinzi.

He further directed residents still living along the landslide prone areas to relocate immediately.

Mr Omar accused the trio of putting hundreds of locals who turned up for the meeting at risk of contracting Covid-19.

"What the leaders did was wrong and illegal. They now want to bring another disaster in the name of helping residents affected by the mudslides. They conducted rallies and talked to people while wearing masks yet the people they were addressing had no masks and they also sat too close to each other, flouting the social distancing require-

ment," Omar said.

The commissioner said a list of people affected by the landslide provided by the Red Cross and government agencies is smaller than the number addressed by the leaders.

He described the leaders' actions as disrespectful to authority and warned that they risked being arrested if found addressing any meeting in the area when the Covid-19 restrictions are still in force.

"We will not spare anybody regardless of their position in government or community," he further warned.

In a tweet on Friday, Murkomen who is also the leader of majority in the Senate dismissed claims that he held a rally, saying he addressed only those affected by the landslide.

"We saw the pictures online and were shocked that leaders have now resorted to using the disaster to hold rallies to gain political mileage during such sensitive times."

John Mwinzi, Elgeyo Marakwet County police commander

Murkomen instead hit out at national government officials for failing to visit the area to assess the situation after the disaster.

"I have seen some misguided media reports and comments attributed to public officials pontificating and giving lectures from Nairobi over the lack of social distance among landslide victims in my county. No single minister has gone to the ground. I never called a meeting; I visited internally displaced persons," the senator said.

The national government had, however, deployed Agriculture and Livestock Chief Administrative Secretary Linah Kilimo and Arid and Semi-Arid Lands Principal Secretary Micah Pwong, who have been coordinating relief services to the landslide victims.

In Brief

H/Bay. Philanthropist distributes food

■ Nairobi businessman Jared Otieno has distributed assorted food stuff and coronavirus protective devices in eight sub-counties. Mr Otieno said yesterday he had stepped in to help the people cope with the hard economic times that the

virus has caused them. The food and Personal Protection Equipment was distributed through Jared Otieno Foundation managed by members of the Homa Bay Youth Movement for Change. Otieno held a youth empowerment convention in Homa Bay town before flagging off the distribution. "Covid-19 has greatly affected the economy and I have established many residents can't afford a single meal," Otieno said. The food was distributed to elderly people, those living with disabilities and other vulnerable persons. The beneficiaries received packets of rice, sugar, maize flour, cooking oil and soap. [James Omoro]



Nairobi. Senior officer moved from Nyanza

■ Nyanza regional police commander Vincent Makokha (pictured) has been moved to police headquarters in mini changes within the service. The new police commander in Nyanza is former Coast region police boss Noah Mwangi. Dr Makokha was posted to police headquarters and named the director of National Police Reserve. The changes were announced by Deputy Inspector General of Kenya Police Edward Mbugua on Thursday. Until his appointment, Mwangi has been based at police headquar-

ters Vigilance House as the director of complaints while Makokha has held the position in Nyanza since January 2019. The changes have been communicated to the National Police Service Commission. This comes as major transfer of officers to new stations was suspended until the ongoing concerted efforts to contain the infectious coronavirus bears fruits. Mr Mbugua, in a letter dated March 24, suspended the movement of the officers that were due for transfer until further notice. Police in respective stations are now maintaining the curfew orders. [Cyrus Ombati]

Probe

Kenei father shown evidence of murder

Detectives investigating the murder of a police guard attached to the Office of the Deputy President have explained to his father why they concluded his son was killed.

Directorate of Criminal Investigations (DCI) detectives briefed John Chesang (pictured) for hours about what their investigations have uncovered so far following the death of Sergeant Frank Kenei and why they believe he was murdered.

According to those aware of the developments, the team told Mr Chesang that Kenei was not supposed to be on duty on the day former Sports Cabinet Secretary Rashid Echesa and two foreigners drove to the GDP and signed a fake Sh39.5 billion arms deal.

The DCI made the decision after they learnt that "strangers" have been pestering Chesang, who is a government officer, to say his son committed suicide.

Chesang was given all the evidence supporting the probe so far, including video recordings captured at the office and data from Kenei's mobile phone. CCTV footage shows the sergeant receiving instructions or orders from a certain source.

After police approached Chesang, Kapsabet MP Oscar Sudi asked why the DCI was taking so long to conclude the probe, and claimed the move to call Kenei's father had a hidden agenda.

"Don't think we are fools. We know all your plans, including your plans to take Kenei's parents

to some high-ranking office this week," Mr Sudi wrote in a Facebook post.

Other sources said three police officers attached to the DP's office recorded statements in connection with Kenei's murder.

Investigators have concluded the sergeant's death was a murder that was later staged as a suicide. His killers deleted all communication data from his mobile phone that is yet to be recovered.

Kenei's body was found on the floor of his house, near the door, with a visible gunshot wound on his chin on February 18. The bullet exited through the upper part of his head. [Cyrus Ombati]



Siaya

Kin of man who succumbed to virus demand to know their status

The family of a Kenya Ports Authority staff who died of Covid-19 in Siaya County has now petitioned the government through the Ministry of Health to disclose their status.

The more than 20 close family members who are still in quarantine at the Kenya Medical Training College Siaya Campus say they have not been given any medical reports since they were quarantined, yet samples were collected for testing.

One of the relatives told *Sunday Standard* that their samples were taken immediately they were quarantined two weeks ago.

"Our greatest worry is that we have never been told whether we

are sick or not," said one of the relatives.

They also cried foul over the poor living conditions at the facility. And one of them who has tested positive for Covid-19 was moved to Siaya Sub-county Hospital isolation centre.

"We now feel frustrated and it is only right we are told when we are going back to our homes if we aren't sick," said the relative.

But the county Director of Medical Services Kennedy Orwenjo said results are usually given back as soon as they are out. James Omyango's family has also sued the government to have his body exhumed and buried decently. [Isaiah Gwengi]

AUCTION. Board of trustees selling properties to meet RBA's threshold

Railway pension group puts houses up for sale

The deal will enable the scheme, which has 97.78 per cent of its assets in immovable property, meet the Retirement Benefits Authority rules.

By Everlyne Kwamboka
ekwamboka@standardmedia.co.ke

Cash-strapped railway pension scheme has put on sale part of its properties worth billions of shillings to boost its investment returns. The scheme's board of trustees are said to have resolved to sell the properties spread within Nairobi and Mombasa counties through a tendering process that will close on May 7.

The sale is aimed at enabling the scheme, which has 97.78 per cent of its assets in immovable property, abide by

the Retirement Benefits Authority rules that only allows a maximum of 30 per cent in such investment.

"We are selling some of the properties to meet RBA's threshold and be able to pay members monthly," said Henry Toili, who is one of the trustees.

Mr Toili said they are unable to collect Sh65 million rent in some of the properties and this is one of the reasons they are selling them. The scheme collects monthly rent from its houses in Makongeni, Ngara, Landi Mawe and flats near the British High Commission in Upper Hill.

The immovable properties to be sold are two acres of land along Matumbato Road on Nairobi's Upper Hill area, 0.48 acres on Woodlands Lane, part of Kenya Railway Ngara estate, 0.71 acres off Ngong

Road and 2.67 acres in Shimanzi-Mombasa.

The Upper Hill property vested on the scheme has 10,097 members, and was placed on sale in 2017. It has a lease of 99 years that was issued in January 1932 and located within the prime Zone 1E.

Sh65 mil

Amount the scheme is unable to collect from rent in some of the properties in Makongeni, Ngara, Makongeni, Landi Mawe and Upper Hill.

"It is true that we have previously put up some of the properties for sale. The bidders offered very little money and that is why we are re-advertising some of them. We would rather sell the proper-

ties at the current cost value than go at a loss," he added.

In 2018, a group of 74 tenants of the Ngara property tried to stop the sale through a court process in vain. The High Court dismissed their application back in 2018, after losing a similar application before Justice Chacha Mwita. It is in this judgement that Justice Ogoki Obaga told the applicants to stop misusing the court process.

"The applicants who lost the petition in which they wanted to stop sale of the property have now come to this court and fashioned the same claim as a landlord-tenant dispute, but the ultimate aim is to stop the intended sale of the suit property by the first respondent. The present suit is *res-judicata* and an abuse of the process of the court," Justice Obaga ruled.

Meeting demand



Wezesha Apparel Factory in Kerugoya town, Kirinyaga County is producing 1,000 masks daily. [Joseph Muchiri, Standard]

Kirinyaga, Embu in mass masks production

To meet the high demand for face masks, Kirinyaga and Embu counties have kicked off mass production.

In Kirinyaga County, the Wezesha Mama Apparel Factory in Kerugoya town is producing 1,000 masks every day. The factory has been producing hospital linens and health workers' uniforms.

Governor Anne Waiguru said the factory will cater for all masks needed in the county and

beyond.

"The factory is an initiative targeting women in the textile industry. It has created hundreds of jobs for tailors who have been supplying hospitals with linen and garments. The focus now is on masks, which are on high demand," she said.

County officials said distribution of the produced masks will kick off tomorrow.

In the neighbouring Embu County, Tenri Vocational Train-

ing Centre will start making masks tomorrow.

Governor Martin Wambora said they target to produce 5,000 masks daily. The masks will be given out to needy residents.

"We have procured necessary materials for the production. Our aim is also to ensure the workers have a source of income even as the country continues to fight the virus," said Mr Wambora.

He said the other vocational training centres in the county will also start producing the masks.

Masks have been on high demand since the government recommended that everyone should wear face coverings in public to avoid unwittingly spreading the virus.

Kitui County Textile Centre and Ruvet East Africa have also been making masks. [Joseph Muchiri]

INFRASTRUCTURE. Some of the multi-billion shillings projects are fruits of the handshake between Uhuru and Raila

Mega projects stall as focus shifts to fight against corona

Authorities reduce operations in rice schemes as opening of port and construction of mega roads projects hangs in the balance.

By Harold Odhiambo
Hodhiambo@standardmedia.co.ke

When the year began, residents of Nyanza were upbeat that multi-billion projects earmarked by the national government to transform the region into a commercial hub would finally bear fruit.

State agencies rushed to implement the projects estimated to be worth Sh100 billion. Some of the projects were considered fruits of the handshake between President Uhuru Kenyatta and ODM leader Raila Odinga.

However, completion of the projects now hangs in balance as focus shifts to the fight against Covid-19. The projects include opening of the Kisumu port, completion of Ahero-Isebania road, expansion of Ahero Irrigation Scheme and construction of the Koru-Soin dam.

The projects had been tipped to be the game changer in transforming the economy of the region.

In the Nyanza rice belt, plans by the government to expand the land under production from 11,000 hectares to 16,000 suffered a setback after the area was marooned by floods. Farmers are unable to access farms in parts of West Kano Irrigation Scheme.



A section of Katito-Ahero road at Ayweyo that has cut off two towns, forcing motorists to drive for about 50km to reach Ahero, which ideally would have taken five minutes. [Denish Ochieng, Standard]

Although officials from the National Irrigation Board (NIB) opened waterways to channel water away from the rice scheme, farmers fear that the crop has already been damaged.

"We were happy with the expansion plans but nature had a different idea. The floods have grossly affected us," said Joseph Odhiambo, a farmer.

But it is not only floods that have affected farmers. A few weeks ago, the NIB announced plans to reduce activities at the rice scheme as part of efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19.

NIB Nyanza Regional Manager Joel Tanui told *Sunday Standard* that some of the

"We were happy with the expansion plans but nature had a different idea. The floods have grossly affected us."

Joseph Odhiambo, a farmer

activities that have been reduced at the schemes include operations. Floods also destroyed part of Ahero Irrigation Scheme.

Interviews with several farmers established that they have already started feeling the pinch of reduced operations at Ahero and West Kano Irriga-

tion schemes. Julius Okungu, the chairman of Ahero Irrigation Scheme said they were hoping that the government will scale up operations at the schemes even as they ensure safety.

He warned that reduced operations at the rice schemes will affect food security as the virus continues to devastate the economy. And residents will have to wait longer for the planned construction of the Koru-Soin dam, which has been tipped to control flooding.

A few weeks before the first Covid-19 case was confirmed in the country, National Water Harvesting and Storage Authority had started collect-

ing views from the public on the project.

CEO Geoffrey Sang told *Sunday Standard* that they had already started stakeholders' engagement with a view of delivering the project. But the ban on public gathering has hampered collection of views from residents.

The creation of Special Economic Zones in Nyando has also been affected by Covid-19 even though a feasibility study of the project is still underway.

And multi-million road projects have stalled. They include the Kisumu-Kakamega road as well as the Sh70 billion ring roads running along Lake Victoria beaches, from Busia to Migori.

Construction of a bridge connecting Kisumu with five counties along the Ahero-Isebania road, which had also been earmarked for expansion, is likely to delay.

Destroyed beaches

Motorists who want to access southern Nyanza through the Kisumu-Ahero-Katito road, which is about 30km have to go through Kisumu-Awasi-Katito that is almost twice the distance, or Kisumu-Kericho-Sondur, which is longer.

And with the developments, plans to open the Sh3 billion Kisumu port have been put on hold again. Although the port holds promise for the region, the rising water level of Lake Victoria has destroyed several beaches and this is likely to dampen plans of prospective investors.

MCAs set to okay medics' pay rise

The assembly will decide on Thursday whether to adopt a Sh900 million budget to cater for workers' salaries and allowances during the Covid-19 period.

Speaker Florence Mwangangi said Members of County Assembly (MCAs) are to deliberate at a special sitting on the short term cash flow.

The money will cater for the health service providers' special allowances in the fight against Covid-19 as announced recently by Governor Alfred Mutua.

It will also ensure the MCAs get their monthly salaries and allowances by 26th of the payroll month.

Other issues to be transacted include consideration of the county's fiscal strategy paper 2020 and the annual development plan.

In a request to the assembly to consider approving the Sh900 million, Deputy Governor Francis Maliti reminded the assembly that the sum was within the five per cent monthly threshold allowed by the law.

If approved, the deal will see the county government borrow money from commercial banks to pay if the Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) does not lend it the amount applied for.

Article 212 of the Constitution provides that the county government may borrow money only with the approval of the county government's assembly.

Section 142 of the Public Finance Management Act, 2012 (1) states that the county government may authorise short term borrowing by county government entities for cash management purposes only.

Mr Maliti said the law anticipated situations of this nature and empowered the County Assembly to exercise its mandate and grant approvals for warrant requests.

"I humbly pray that you cause a motion to be tabled and processed in accordance with your relevant Standing Orders," reads part of the letter addressed to the clerk of the assembly.

In a letter to the Council of Governors, Salaries and Remuneration Commission chair Lyn Mengich warned governors against offering special allowances without its advice, adding that this would likely cause inequality in remuneration across the health sector.

However, CoG chair Wycliffe Oparanya dismissed her sentiments, saying the incentives for health workers had not violated any rules as they were guided by the regulations of their specific Public Service Boards.

Mutua will pay health workers a special monthly allowance ranging between Sh5,000 and Sh20,000 for the next three months. [Everlyne Kwamboka]

Kisii

County kicks off major repairs on key roads

Several key roads within Kisii Municipality are undergoing major repairs as authorities seek to improve infrastructure in the region ahead of Madaraka Day celebrations.

Kisii Governor James Ongwae said he was working closely with the Kenya National Highways Authority (KenHA), Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA) and Kenya Rural Roads Authority (KERRA) to ensure the roads were in good shape by the end of May.

Some of the key roads undergoing a major facelift include Kisii-Kilgoris, Kisii-Kaplong, Kisii-Nyamira, Egasa-Nyatleko, Suneka-Rangwe and Nyamataro-Daraja Mbilili, which have been in bad shape.

"Majority of the key roads in the Kisii Central Business District have been in bad shape. I am glad work has begun," said Ongwae.

Mr Ongwae said Kisii Town was also undergoing a major infrastructural facelift to ensure that it was ready to host the celebrations on June 1.

County Municipal Engineer Haron Oyaro confirmed that routine maintenance of roads under Kura, which include the Kisii Stadium-Iterio, Barclays Bank-Kisii Hotel, Ram Hospital-Kisii Police Station-Hospital roundabout, and Hema Hospital-Jua Kali are almost complete.

"Under the Kisii bypass phase one, there is impressive progress so far along the Nyanza-Soko



Mjinga section. Tarmacking is also ongoing around the stadium stretch while base works are complete along the Gudka-

Christa Marianne Road with tarmacking set to commence soon," said Oyaro.

He further said the Bobarcho-Menyinkwa to Iterio-Riamasagara bypass and the road leading to the mini State Lodge under construction is also being rehabilitated to ensure that all roads within the area are catered for.

Those under Kura include Menyinkwa-Iterio, whose patch and shoulder maintenance is ongoing, while Getare-Kanyimbo-Nyatleko is being gravelled.

The ongoing works have brought to an end complaints by boda boda operators and other road users over the poor state of roads in the region. [Edwin Nyarangi]

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Is it still safe to invest in Real Estate?

"Real estate cannot be lost or stolen, nor can it be carried away. Purchased with common sense, paid for in full, and managed with reasonable care, it is about the safest investment in the world." - Franklin D. Roosevelt.

The novel corona virus is a global pandemic that has taken the world by storm. Lots of people are in turmoil over it as borders have been closed, economies shut down and industries are putting themselves on pause and all manner of small businesses are taking hits. The real estate industry has also felt the heatwave of the virus as many buyers are being cautious during this volatile period.

So, your down payment was safely in cash, you'd planned, perhaps for years, for the 2020 home-buying or real estate investing season. Then, just as you identified your perfect house or apartment in the market, the coronavirus turned the world on its head.

Should you go through with the purchase?

Assuming you have the money, can afford a mortgage and the other costs involved and your job or business is not in danger, then yes.

There is so much we don't know about what the next few months will bring, including whether it will even be over in the next few months. But one thing is certain, the virus will clear and the markets will recover and get back to the usual way. So, the question is, what do I need to be doing during this time as a real estate investor? If data from the past is anything to go by then these are integral tips that will help you make the right move during this pandemic and when the dust settles, you will be standing tall.

Panic sales

A pandemic that lasts for a long period normally causes panic sales. People liquidate their assets to ensure cash flow to take them through the pandemic. Developers will be putting their properties on offers, so as an investor you should be on the lookout for properties that are put on sale during this period.

It's not as if anybody selling is suddenly going to step up and say, 'oh sure, I could have sold this property for 10 million but because of what is happening and I am afraid, you can buy it for 5 million, but it's definitely a good time to shop around, get a good rate.'

Market Strength

The real estate industry has developed a lot of autonomy over the years. A crisis like this has caused major businesses within the service sector to suspend activities. The real estate market, however, has slowed down but not at the rate other industries have been forced to do.

Information is Key

Knowledge, during this time, is power. Having the latest information on available properties will be highly sought-after knowledge. Now's the time to innovate and hunt because there will be opportunities.

Conclusion

A pandemic causes a lot of changes in every industry. As much as some negative change occurs, there are always new opportunities created at the same time. Real estate is still a safe means of investment. As the famous saying goes, "Tough times don't last, tough people do."

So, if want to invest in real estate, don't quit, keep making those calls, compare properties while staying safe. Be alert so you can ride through this wave successfully. Whether all is well or not, the bottom-line is, investing in real estate is smart because property is tangible. People always have, and always will, need shelter. This means it is very unlikely that the need for shelter will ever go away."

And if all of this talk of risk-taking gives you more anxiety than you'd like to admit, fear not, time is on your side. You can reach out to us on sema@kwea.ke for more information or reach out to your real estate consultant for advice.

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Company donates Sh20m maize flour. Food and beverage company, Capwell Industries, has donated maize meal worth Sh20 million to the Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund to support vulnerable communities. The company targets to feed over 85,000 Kenyans across the country with the donation packaged in the firm's Soko brand. "As a responsible corporate citizen, we have always been at the forefront in standing with Kenyans," said Chief Executive Rajan Shah. [Correspondent]

Business

SPORTS. INIESTA REVEALS MOVING BATTLE WITH DEPRESSION. PG 40



On Twitter:
@piersmorgan

Priti Patel just proudly informed us that shoplifting has fallen during the lockdown. Has anyone told her most shops are shut?



Online

TV firm launches shopping platform

Pay television provider StarTimes Kenya has introduced an interactive online shopping platform. The StarTimes GO platform will offer the public access to an enhanced shopping experience through integrated services available via television, online and calls.

It will be available through the company's streaming media application StarTimes ON and as 15-minute programmes that will broadcast on the firm's channels.

"This is a strategic new line of business for us in our effort to enable customers to access products conveniently across Kenya," said StarTimes Regional Marketing Director Aldrine Nsubuga. "StarTimes GO is our innovative solution aimed at making it possible to shop securely through our StarTimes ON online platform." [Correspondent]

Distribution

Firms in deal to deliver fresh food

Jumia has signed a distribution deal with Twiga Foods to deliver fresh and processed food to consumers following movement restrictions to curb Covid-19.

The service, dubbed Jumia Freshi powered by Twiga, will allow customers to shop on Jumia for their fruits and vegetables.

"Customers will get same-day free delivery on the platform in Nairobi and will also save money as Twiga cuts out middlemen by buying directly from farmers and manufacturers across the country," said Jumia Chief Executive Sam Chapatte.

Twiga Foods has built up distribution for fresh and processed food, sourcing from more than 15,000 producers and delivering to over 5,000 retailers a day. [Correspondent]

FUNDING SOURCES

Share of concessional and programme-based borrowing has increased from Sh2b to Sh246b

Virus forces Treasury to dump Eurobond for cheaper loans

Government has reduced its target for commercial loans and turned its eyes to multilateral institutions such as AfDB, World Bank and IMF.

By Dominic Omondi
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When Kenya raised Sh275 billion from American and European investors in 2014, the word 'Eurobond' dramatically joined the disparaging lingo associated with the country's infamous scandals such as 'Goldenberg' and 'Anglo-Leasing'.

Suddenly, Eurobond - which means a dollar-denominated sovereign bond - became the name of a scandal.

The National Treasury insists no money was stolen, a position that was also taken by former Auditor General Edward Ouko.

Unfortunately, Kenya has been hooked on the Eurobond loans in what some pundits have described as 'Eurobondage'.

But the coronavirus pandemic, which has ravaged the financial markets and pushed the global economy into a recession, has offered a glimmer of hope.

Countries have barricaded themselves to prevent importation of more infections, dealing a heavy blow to global trade.

With tax revenues dwindling following implementation of draconian measures aimed at curbing the spread of the virus, Kenya is ingratiating itself to new debt masters - ones that it hopes to maintain even after the end of the outbreak.

Multinational banks and deep-pocketed pension funds from US, Europe and other rich countries have fallen down the pecking order of preferred external creditors with the African Development Bank, World Bank, International Monetary Fund and other multilateral institutions resuming the pole

position that they once had.

It is a situation that President Uhuru Kenyatta's government seemingly wants to maintain till the end of his presidency in 2022.

"I have spoken to most of our development partners and found a positive response. In the next week or two, billions of shillings will be added to our initiatives to offer direct relief to Kenyans," said the president in his address to the nation yesterday.

"I thank them for their solidarity and willingness to listen and respond to our proposals."

In the Second Supplementary Budget tabled last week, National Treasury Cabinet Secretary Ukur Yatani reduced the government's target for commercial loans by 97 per cent, from Sh200 billion to Sh6.2 billion.

Instead, he revved up the share of concessional and programme-based loans from Sh2 billion to Sh246 billion as the country tries to redeem itself from the original sin that saw it hooked on expensive commercial loans.

Kenya expects some funds amounting to Sh122 billion from the World Bank and IMF to help it fight against Covid-19 as well as to cushion those who have been adversely affected by the outbreak.

Treasury also expects to borrow around Sh300 million from the open market in the next financial year.

Meagre revenues

Foreign investors have been feasting on the country's meagre revenues at the expense of critical public services such as health, security and education.

Even now when Kenya is fast running out of revenues as economic activities all over the world come to standstill due to the coronavirus pandemic, Eurobond bondholders expect to be paid.

They are the equivalent of the local landlords who insist to be paid their rent even when



■ Total public loan as of March 2020

Sh6.2b

The amount Treasury expects to borrow from commercial creditors by June, down from initial estimate of Sh200 billion

Sh246b

The amount Treasury plans to borrow from bilateral and multilateral lenders by June

their tenants have seen their incomes decline.

Concessional external loans are priced at a fixed rate of 1.75 per cent, with a repayment period of 25 years and up to 10 years grace period.

However, commercial loans - international syndicated loans and export credit financing - are contracted at a reference rate plus a margin. One such reference rate is the Libor, which is the basic rate of interest used in lending between banks on the London interbank market.

However, the Libor benchmark is being replaced.

Freeing Kenya from the Eurobondage seems to have been Mr Yatani's brief when Uhuru placed him at the helm of the Exchequer to replace dis-

graced former finance CS Henry Rotich.

"We want to be more proactive by making sure that we retire all the commercial loans," said Yatani in October last year.

Commercial loans, he noted, have an interest of between eight and nine per cent. They also have shorter grace and maturity periods.

He said they would instead embark on cheap, multilateral loans with an interest rate of less than two per cent. Of the six loans Treasury signed between May 1 and August 1 last year, four of them were concessional.

In 2018, an IMF report noted that Kenya's risk of defaulting on debt repayment had increased from low to moderate as the country ramped up external loans.

Imminent repayment of a huge external debt, including part of the 2015 Eurobond, piled pressure on the country's revenues.

"The higher level of debt, together with rising reliance on non-concessional borrowing, have raised fiscal vulnerabilities and increased interest payments on public debt to nearly one-fifth of revenue," said IMF.

Of the Sh105.4 billion that National Treasury paid to external creditors in the first half of the current financial year, 57 per cent went to commercial creditors.

Bilateral lenders led by China took up close to a third while multilateral institutions received 14 per cent.

For the first time, Treasury will not be floating a sovereign bond and might not do so in the next two financial years.

Commercial loans have also presented Kenya with another problem at a time when it is begging for a debt standstill.

Multilateral and bilateral lenders have already shown their willingness to suspend debt service to free up cash for the country to use in the fight

Cargo

SGR boosts transport of Covid-19 supplies to the region

Despite the movement restrictions imposed by the government to contain the spread of Covid-19, the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) freight services continue to operate normally, buoyed by the increased inflow of supplies.

Between March 25 and April 22,

Afristar, the operator of the SGR, transported 52 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEUs) of Covid-19 prevention materials such as disinfectants, ethyl and alcohol, and 732 TEUs of grain to the region.

In addition, it ferried export goods, including tea, coffee, tobacco,

clothing, canned seafood and fruit as well as imports such as auto parts, ceramics and fertiliser.

A statement released by Afristar indicated that the freight services were ongoing round the clock, with a significant number of employees still working.

"Following the suspension of passenger services, members of the passenger service team such as train attendants took leave. However, some passenger locomotive drivers were transferred to freight services," the statement read.

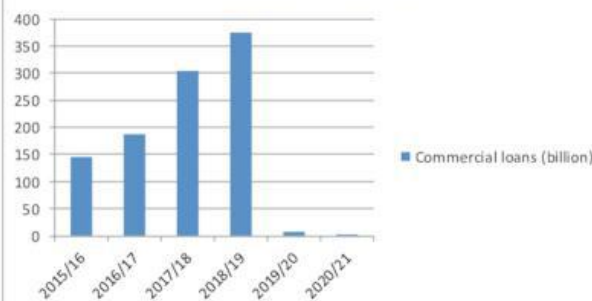
According to Afristar, the volume of cargo transported from the

port of Mombasa grew in the first quarter of this year, with 96,000 TEUs and 7,365 tonnes of bulk cargo ferried. A total 1,187 trains were used, at an average of 13 trains daily. [Correspondent]



Kenya's borrowing trend

Commercial loans (billion)



against the health and economic effects of the viral disease.

Instead, after a revision of its budget, Yafani was left with more funds to speed up payment of interest for last year's Sh210 billion Eurobond.

The fact is that after it was reclassified into a low middle income country, Kenya's financing terms changed. Unlike the least developed countries such as Tanzania and Ethiopia, Kenya's access to cheap loans has been difficult.

IMF has already approved debt payment relief to 25 poor member countries, excluding Kenya and other 'rich' countries that have been borrowing

from the open market.

A deal on debt waivers on commercial loans, which include Eurobonds and some Chinese loans that Kenya has in the past snapped up with abandon, is far from being firm, an IMF source told The Standard in an earlier interview.

Kenya has been pushing for debt relief to free up cash to boost the country's health system and cushion vulnerable populations from the adverse effects of the pandemic.

This complicates the country's financial position to meet its commercial debt obligation, which is set to fall due before June.

Fortunately, Kenya might feature in another programme that is expected to benefit low middle-income countries through a debt standstill by bilateral lenders under the umbrella of the G20, a club of 20 rich countries.

However, discussions on commercial loans are far from being finalised.

"For commercial loans, I can't say which mechanism is being used. What is clearer is the bilateral borrowing," said the IMF source.

Save billions

Kenya is expected to save \$675 million (Sh71.5 billion) in case of a suspension of debt payments by official bilateral creditors, according to the World Bank.

The global lender said such a debt moratorium would immediately inject liquidity and enlarge the fiscal space for governments.

Perhaps it is an illusion of the help it has been promised to get from the Bretton Woods Institution, even as the global financial conditions tighten, that is giving Kenya's government hope.

Before the crisis, Treasury officials were already planning to move away from non-concessional loans, an intention they laid bare in a debt report.

"In particular, it is aimed at accessing more concessional funding to minimise the carrying cost of debt, as well as local currency international bond issuance over the medium term," said Treasury.



"I have spoken to most of our development partners and found a positive response. In the next week or two, billions of shillings will be added to our initiatives."

President Uhuru Kenyatta

Project

World Bank plans to connect 1.3m households to solar power

A World Bank-funded initiative is targeting to connect about 1.3 million households to electricity generated from within their localities.

In total, 121 mini-grid sites will be developed under the Kenya Off-Grid Solar Access Project (Kosap), which is run under the Ministry of Energy.

Marginalised areas that often have sparse populations in 14 counties are the target of the electrification programme. Also targeted for connection are 207 secondary schools, 784 health clinics and 106 county offices.

The project will also result in the installation of 380 solar water pumping systems and 150,000 solar powered cook stoves.

"At its optimal level of operation, Kosap will have promoted the elevation of 20 per cent of citizens who were previously underserved, fostering a more inclusive society, a stronger economy and a better democracy," said a statement from the Ministry of Energy.

"It will be an ingenious project that creatively and realistically powers Kenya as a nation."

Kenya's access to electricity stood at 75 per cent as of 2018. However, most of the electrification is concentrated in 28 per cent of the country's land area, covering 33 counties.

It then means that households

in the rest of the counties have been excluded from social and economic life where significant populations of underserved communities live.

Their lack of access to electricity is exacerbated by poor access to roads, water and social services.

"At its optimal level of operation, Kosap will have promoted the elevation of 20 per cent of citizens who were previously underserved, fostering a more inclusive society, a stronger economy and a better democracy."

Ministry of Energy

Garissa, Isiolo, Kwale, Lamu and Kilifi are among the marginalised counties that are targeted by the programme. Others are Mandera, Marsabit, Narok, Samburu, Taita Taveta, Tana River, Turkana, Wajir and West Pokot.

Collectively, the counties cover 72 per cent of the country's land mass.

To mitigate the exclusion, the Ministry of Energy, supported by the World Bank's International

Development Agency (IDA), conceived the Kosap to be implemented over the next four years.

Kenya has historically been the leading African market in both mini-grids and stand-alone electrification systems, an advantage that the project leverages.

Kosap therefore accelerates the scaling up of off-grid electrification and energy solutions, rather than deviating from on-grid solutions.

The project design is informed by the principle that it ought to reach diverse beneficiaries with varied needs such as households and public facilities, it maximises private participation to increase impact and reach a larger number of beneficiaries.

It is also flexible with respect to market approaches in the sense that products will range from fully market-delivered approaches to more regulated ones where the government maintains a leading role in service provision.

"Kosap is aligned with various programmes such as the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) whose overarching goal is sustainable reduction in poverty and an increase in shared prosperity," said the statement.

Eradicate poverty

Specifically, the CPS highlights three domains of engagement including growth to eradicate poverty, human resource development for shared prosperity and building consistency and equity to deliver a devolution dividend.

"Due to the project's wide positive social and economic impact, it has broad support notably from the governors of the 14 target counties, Kenya Power which is providing mini-grids, the Rural Electrification Authority which is providing solar powered solutions, and SNV, a Netherlands based company which is our programme's results based financing partner," said the Energy ministry.

The project targets the most underserved, with specific beneficiary households, community facilities and enterprises already mapped out.

The success of the project in the beneficiary counties will be the success of the country as a whole through improved education, healthcare, innovation and connectivity. [Standard Reporter]



A solar power project at Kimbimbi, Kirinyaga County. [Munene Kamau, Standard]

Cost. At Sh100 apiece, total spending for a month would be above Sh2,000

How masks directive has upset low-income budgets

Many poor workers have to make a hard choice between buying the face covering or a meal.

By Peter Theuri
ptheuri@standardmedia.co.ke

Wanjiku, who lives in Kayole on less than Sh200 a day, is required to buy a mask at Sh100 every day.

This mask is the licence to her freedom outside her house. The government has made the mask-wearing mandatory and without it, Wanjiku should stay indoors.

But she cannot afford to stay at home, her children have to eat. She has to look for a job for the day, with most menial jobs paying about Sh200 a day.

She buys a mask, and heads to town. And there lies a bigger problem. The city is deserted and after a long day of looking for jobs and finding none, she will go home, having incurred a loss of Sh100.

In the face of such difficulty, Kenyans like Wanjiku - over 16 million of them - have resorted to buying homemade face masks that are reusable. You just need to wash them with soap and water.

Kenya Bureau of Standards recently said that there is currently no local standard for reusable face masks.

"At the moment there is no Kenya standard for these types of covering, certification for re-usable cloth coverings is currently not a mandatory requirement prior to sale," said the agency in statement.

"Cloth material masks should be made of double layer of fabric with a filter layer in the middle for

greater protection. However, the general public must take heed that such cloth coverings do not guarantee protection against coronavirus."

Hawkers are making a killing from the government's directive and have stocked up masks. In their array of goods are single-use masks, some minted in high-end factories and others grossly sub-standard, and reusable masks, most of which are homemade.

Most Kenyans, already battered as the economy remains slow, opt to go for the reusable masks that cost less but pose a high risk of infection from the deadly virus.

High poverty

Kenya has the sixth-highest number of poor people in the world, a 2019 report by the World Bank revealed, with 17.6 million living at below two dollars (Sh220) a day.

The country sits behind India, Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Madagascar, according to the Poverty and Shared Prosperity, 2018 report.

Kenya's official data showed that about 16.4 million people were living below the poverty line in 2015/16 period, meaning these individuals could not afford a decent meal.

If one is to buy a mask each day, Monday through Friday, for an entire month they would end up spending up to Sh2,000 on them.

Even for some salaried people, it is too much of an investment.

The Covid-19 disease has infected close to three million people worldwide, with over 198,000 deaths as at yesterday.



A man wears an improvised mask in Migori Town. [Caleb King'ara, Standard]

Campaign

Kepsa sends 'solidarity' flowers to UK

Kenya on Friday sent more than 300 bouquets of flowers to the United Kingdom to be distributed to doctors and nurses on the frontlines of fighting Covid-19, recovering patients and care homes.

The consignment was dispatched under the Flowers of Hope campaign, an initiative mooted at a presidential roundtable and implemented by the Kenya Private Sector Alliance (Kepsa) in partnership with its members as a uniting symbol in Kenya and the world in response to the pandemic.

Partners in the campaign include Kenya Flower Council, Kenya Association of Manufacturers, Elgon Kenya and Kenya Airways.

"Our member, the Kenya Flower Council, has done this to show empathy and this sends a strong message of partnership at a time when many countries are facing difficulty," said Kepsa Chief Executive Carol Karuga.

"It is part of our campaign, dubbed Flowers of Hope, informed by the realities brought forth by how the Covid-19 pandemic is impacting world economies."

After successful distribution in Kenya's main hospitals in Nairobi and the counties, the UK dispatch is the first international distribution, an important symbol as London is one of Kenya's biggest market for flowers.

"The campaign is a show of gratitude and support to the people at the frontline of or suffering from the pandemic, and will also help in saving thousands of farm jobs in Kenya's flower farms," Ms Karuga added.

According to data from the Kenya Flower Council, sales of cut flowers in overseas markets are below 35 per cent of what would be expected at this time of the year.

Business is mostly driven by the European and United Kingdom markets, where sales have declined to almost zero. Retailers are open to sell only essential foodstuff, and cut flowers remain on the shelves.

In 2018, the floriculture sector earned Kenya Sh13 billion, contributing around 1.07 per cent of the country's gross domestic product. It is the fourth-largest contributor of foreign exchange after remittances, tourism and tea. [James Warzala]

Hygiene. Pwani Oil donates soap to boost Covid-19 war in four counties



Support. Pwani Oil Marketing Executive George Mwasaru (left) hands over 2,700 pieces of Diva soap to Bethel Network Programmes Manager Robert Kibuga (centre) and Human Resources Officer Gideon Makumi. The soap will be distributed to more than 900 women in Murang'a, Kiambu, Nyeri and Kajiado counties to boost the fight against the spread of the coronavirus disease. [Jenipher Wachie, Standard]

Poll

CEOs expect revenue to fall by 10 per cent

Nearly 70 per cent of African businesses expect their revenue to decrease by more than 10 per cent next month.

In a live poll conducted by Africa.com on April 22 as part of its webinar series, Crisis Management for African Business Leaders, 47 per cent of respondents indicated that they expect their revenue to decrease by more than 25 per cent next month while 24 per cent expect income to fall by more than 50 per cent.

Only 20 per cent indicated that they expect revenue to remain the same or increase. Approximately 1,500 business leaders participated in the poll. Participants came from 41 countries across Africa, with the largest representation coming from Nigeria, followed by South Africa, Kenya, Ghana and Ethiopia.

The largest sectors represented in the webinar were financial services and professional services, followed by energy and manufacturing. Others were real estate, health care, agriculture, health care, and media, arts and entertainment. [Correspondent]

LOST Soldiers from numerous African countries fought for the Empire, but their contributions have not been documented

A tribute to Kenya's forgotten war hero

KN Iraki

Why should I distract you from Covid-19 to write about a man you have never heard about? Just wait.

Zachary Mburu Mwikonyi was buried on April 22, 2020 in Shamata, Nyandarua County. His national ID showed he was born in 1926. In an interview in 2017, he gave his date of birth as 1922. His eulogy gave the date as 1918.

Mwikonyi lived a long and illustrious life, away from the prying eyes of the public. He lived through ituka, the last secretive ceremony on leadership succession in central Kenya around 1928-30, the Great Depression, World War II and the Mau Mau uprising. If he was born in 1918, he lived through World War I and the Spanish flu.

He lived through King George V, Edward VIII, George VI, Queen Elizabeth II, Jomo Kenyatta, Daniel arap Moi, Mwai Kibaki and Uhuru Kenyatta reigns.

He epitomised history and its injustices. Few Kenyans will ever get such an honour, such a blessing.

Mwikonyi was born in Ngarua, Laikipia County. It is not clear what his parents were doing there; they were probably working for the British or Afrikaans who settled there after WWI, a reward for winning the war. The Afrikaans (Boers) were extending the great trek to Kenya. His parents came from Mang'u in Kiambu.

He moved to Embu in 1930 after returning to Kiambu - he said the British colonial administration forbade them from keeping more than five goats. Lots of central Kenya natives

moved to Embu as the mzungu took away their land. Overcrowding, family feuds and fear of witchcraft made others leave their ancestral land. Some never returned even during the land consolidation of 1966-67.

Mwikonyi volunteered to fight for the British Empire in WWII in 1944. Conscripted through chiefs was common, says Prof JH Kimura, whose father was a victim. Mwikonyi and others trained for three months at Ruiru and Tigoni, using .303 machine guns, he told us.

They left for Mombasa in February 1944. They were never told where they were going. One of his colleagues, Mahata, sneaked from Mombasa and never went to Burma. One of the ships in their convoy, SS Khedive Ismail, was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine only seven days after leaving Mombasa, he remembers.

The ship that Mwikonyi sailed in had 1,297 on board, including 77 female service personnel. Mwikonyi could recall most of the female victims

"He epitomised history and its injustices. Few Kenyans will ever get such an honour, such a blessing."

were nurses, which has been corroborated by independent sources.

Others ships after Khedive sailed to Colombo, Sri Lanka, and then Calcutta and Chittagong through West Pakistan (Bangladesh). They then got into Burma, crossing the Irrawaddy River to engage the Japanese who, he says, were good guerrilla fighters and knew how to hide in jungles.

Mwikonyi's pay was Sh45 per month and his service number was KML3.348, and he was one among many fighters from African countries (he confirmed that Dedan Kimathi was in Burma too). In all, about 600,000 Africans fought for the Empire.

My uncle saw action in the same faraway land, a discovery I only made

after he was dead. Did they meet Lord Louis Mountbatten, the British supreme allied commander for South East Asia? Mountbatten was the last viceroy of India and was assassinated by the Irish Republican Army in 1979.

Mburu witnessed the end of WWII when atomic bombs were dropped. "It rained that day and beer flowed while soldiers rolled themselves in mud," he recalled.

After the war, he came back through Bombay, India, to Mombasa. He says all the injured were thrown into the sea on the way home.

"Ever seen a disabled WWII veteran?" he asked me. From Mombasa, he took a train to Gilgil where they were demobilised after three months. He had the option of staying in service but refused.

Mwikonyi returned to Embu, and his military skills came in handy when the Mau Mau came. When I last visited, he told me he could make a gun in 15 minutes. He explained how they used young girls to bait policemen and grab their guns. He saw action in the jungles of Mt Kenya just like in Burma, a few years earlier.

Oathing Mau Mau

He was arrested for oathing Mau Mau adherents and ended up in Manyan prison on Mackinnon Road, but later escaped with his 17 colleagues. Only three made it to Nairobi, following the railway line; the rest died on the way. They bribed an Asian policeman with Sh20 to make their way to Nairobi railway station, hid in a goods train to Sagana and then to Embu and back to the forest.

After independence, Mwikonyi got land in Shamata ('high' in Maa language) under a million-acre settlement scheme. Shamata hugs the infamous Happy Valley.

He became a small-scale farmer. This area is part of the former White Highlands. His piece of land was next to an airstrip used by Patrick Clark-Turner.

The war veteran died 75 years after the end of WWII and 57 years since the Union Jack was lowered. The highest-



African men gather around a fire for warmth during World War I in this undated photo. More than one million African soldiers, labourers and porters were vital actors in the war in Europe. [Imperial War Museum via AP]

ranking official to grace his funeral was the local chief - the excuse being Covid-19. He died a forgotten hero. There were no gun salutes after all these wars.

It is a scene all too familiar; we are too obsessed with the living to bother with the men and women who came before us and made the way for us, often with their blood. We have no time to honour men and women who stood up against Hitler and other extremists in the world wars.

1,297

■ The number of people on board a ship that sailed to Burma from Mombasa during World War II

The contribution of Kenyans to great wars has never been fully acknowledged in our curriculum and honours' lists. Our historians think a

story on BBI would be better than one of an unknown Kenyan warrior. Compare the publicity around Ken Walibora and Mwikonyi, both buried the same day.

Lost records

Why was Mwikonyi not buried at the heroes' corner? What else could he have done to become a hero? Sadly, during Mau Mau, Mburu lost his records, medals, paybook and military uniform, which made it impossible to get a pension. He also missed out on the latest Mau Mau compensation.

When shall we realise that heroes are not made in movies but in reality when duty calls? I am honoured to have met this hero and recorded his story. We hope he will inspire the next generation to rise above pettiness and make this world a better home for all of us.

The writer is an associate professor at the University of Nairobi

Uganda underlines its intention to become a major oil player

Uganda President Yoweri Museveni, Tullow Oil and Total chief executives could not have chosen a better time to announce their agreement to resolve a long-standing capital gains tax dispute that had earlier prevented Tullow Oil from farming out its Lake Albert licences to Total.

Tullow Oil announced that it has agreed to the sale of its entire stake in the Lake Albert Development Project in Uganda to oil major Total for \$575 million (Sh61 billion) in cash, plus post first-oil contingent payments.

This is welcome news for both companies, Uganda and the oil industry globally and in Africa in particular, all of which are going through a period of distress in the face of Covid-19 and crude oil prices crash.

This will automatically catapult Uganda to become East Africa's biggest crude producer and provide much needed income for development and well-paying jobs.

Current estimates by the World Bank are that Uganda will register growth rates of over 10 per cent annually from oil production and associated activity.

"The deal shows a lot of foresight to make an acquisition of this nature for such an amazing but reasonable price," said African Energy Chamber Executive Chairman NJ Ayuk.

"The resolution of disputes that paved an opening for this deal should be commended. President Museveni, Tullow Oil and Total understood that being proactive and making concessions is good for Uganda, jobs, contracts for locals and regional growth."

Most importantly, the deal sends the right signals to the market and investors that despite the current challenges, Uganda is open and ready to do business.

Positive effects

In line with the African Energy Chamber's appeal to governments to show flexibility in appraising existing projects within the realities of the current business environment, the government of Uganda, with the direct involvement of Mr Museveni, was willing to cede ground and close the deal.

This is good for Uganda and an example for other African countries facing the oil crisis to follow.

It is likely to have positive effects far beyond the current crisis, with ever more explorers and oil companies likely

to take another look at Ugandan acreage in an attempt to replicate Tullow Oil's discovery successes.

Elizabeth Rogo, president of the Africa Energy Chamber for East Africa, said the deal is also a huge boost for the construction of a pipeline that will transport the crude to international markets.

The proposed Uganda-Tanzania pipeline in itself will not only lead to additional jobs being created, it will also render the entire country viable as a major oil frontier, she said.

We are likely to see other oil companies like Oranto Petroleum drill additional exploratory wells in adjacent blocks, in an effort to take advantage of the pipeline infrastructure.

The pipeline also increases the attractiveness of oil blocks located in the south of oil-producing neighbour-

ing South Sudan. Potential discoveries there are now likely to fetch a lower breakeven point due to reduced piping costs via Uganda.

While acknowledging the willingness of the Uganda government to compromise on the particular tax dispute, thus enabling this ground-breaking transaction, the African Energy Chamber continues to advocate for additional special measures that will facilitate a Final Investment Decision by Total and its partners, and the deployment of capital to other drilling and geophysical projects in Uganda in the current business climate.

We urge the government to continue working with the industry to improve the business climate for more oil and gas investments.

African Energy Chamber

We are Home...



Welcome Home

f t i @KTNHome

Whereas, children may be away from school, families are creating learning opportunities together. We are keeping teachable moments alive with some thrilling wholesome family entertainment...#WeAreHome



Keep yourself and your loved ones safe at home

- Wash your hands with soap under running water for at least 20 seconds and if unavailable, use hand sanitizer with at least 65% alcohol content
- Stay home and only go out when absolutely necessary
- Keep social distance (maintain at least 1.5m distance from people while in public)

Watch us on BAMBA 1, Dstv 272, GoTV 92, Zuku 12, Aldean 01, Azam & Continental STB's and Signet

Rwanda. President Paul Kagame says countries must employ international solidarity to tackle coronavirus. "The Covid-19 pandemic reminds us that global equity in health is absolutely critical; no one is safe unless we are all safe," Mr Kagame (*pictured*) said. He added that essential health technologies must be available whenever needed. "We must deploy everything we know about international solidarity to fight Covid-19 together," Kagame said. [Xinhua]



On Twitter:
@cnni

US federal investigators are concerned about the potential for hate crimes against minorities in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, according to the head of the FBI



World

SPORTS: CHAMP BARTY OPEN TO NEW TRAINING CHANCES. P.36

In Brief

Libya. Europe calls for humanitarian truce

The foreign ministers of Germany, France and Italy, and the EU's top diplomat made a joint call yesterday for a humanitarian truce in Libya, saying all sides must resume peace talks. "We want to unite our voices to those of the UN Secretary General (Antonio) Guterres and his Acting Special Representative for Libya Stephanie Turco Williams in their call for a humanitarian truce in Libya," they said. [Reuters]

Angola. Govt extends state of emergency



The Angolan presidency has extended the State of Emergency in the country until May 10 due to Covid-19. According to a Press release by President Joao Lourenco (above), the new extension of the State of Emergency aims to preserve the greater good of the human being, which is life. This is the second extension of the State of Emergency in the country and it covers a new period of 15 days, starting from April 25. The decision of the president comes after an unanimous approval by Parliament. [Xinhua]

India. 4 militants killed in Kashmir gunfights

Four militants and one of their associates were killed, while a policeman was wounded in two separate gunfights in restive India-controlled Kashmir, police said yesterday. Two militants and their associate were killed in Pulwama district yesterday morning, while two others were killed in Kulgam district on Friday evening. Both Pulwama and Kulgam districts are located south of Srinagar city. [Xinhua]

Pandemic

Envoy: War on virus key to stability in Great Lakes region

The international community should rally behind efforts to contain the Covid-19 pandemic and other external shocks that could threaten long-term stability in Africa's Great Lakes region, a UN envoy has said.

Xia Huang, the special envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Great Lakes region, said the fight against Covid-19 is imperative to help

achieve peace, security and prosperity in the resource endowed region.

"The Great Lakes region today faces challenges exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and the prolongation of the Ebola epidemic," Mr Xia told Xinhua in Nairobi.

"Indeed, the fight against the pandemic could be an opportunity to build greater solidarity

and strengthen regional collaboration."

Xia said the region has in the recent past made significant progress towards political stability, economic growth and social cohesion, adding that tackling the Covid-19 pandemic and other emerging shocks will ensure those gains are not reversible.

He singled out the peaceful

political transition in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and the commitment by leaders of the countries of the region to promote peace, security and economic integration as significant positive developments for the region.

"However, it should be mentioned that the stabilisation of the region depends on several other variables, including exter-

nal shocks related to the Covid-19 pandemic, progress in the fight against armed groups in eastern DRC, and effective co-operation between the countries of the region to address the root causes of instability," said Xia.

More than 4,766 Covid-19 cases and about 131 deaths have been reported in the Great Lakes region, according to the World Health Organisation. [Xinhua]

Security. Travel restrictions and mandatory quarantines are impacting the mission

Drawdown of UN mission in restive Darfur delayed

Officials say the current plan has become unrealistic in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic.

By Xinhua
Khartoum

The planned drawdown of the United Nations-African Union peacekeeping mission in Sudan's Darfur region will be delayed by months due to Covid-19, according to a senior UN official.

The current plan, circulated to Security Council members on March 12, has become unrealistic in the context of the pandemic, UN Undersecretary General for Peacekeeping Operations Jean-Pierre Lacroix told the council.

The restrictions of movement in place due to Covid-19, the UN decision to suspend all peacekeeping rotations until June 30, coupled with the onset of the rainy season in June, have rendered an effective exit of the mission by October 31 impractical, he said.

In Resolution 2495, the



A woman rides a donkey past a convoy of government troops in Tabit village in the North Darfur region of Sudan. The drawdown of a UN-AU peacekeeping force was delayed. [AP]

Security Council set March 31 as the date by which it should decide the courses of action regarding the drawdown and exit of the mission, which is officially known as the United Nations-African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID), and adopt a new resolution establishing a follow-on presence.

However, due to the delay of a special report it requested from the African Union and the UN secretary general, the

Security Council had to postpone these decisions by two months and decided to maintain the mission's troop and police ceilings and its team sites.

In his briefing, Mr Lacroix explained that the measures in effect in Sudan and elsewhere to combat Covid-19 will affect the mission's capacity to conduct a smooth and safe process.

Travel restrictions, mandatory quarantine and limited

shipping options have already started impacting the mission, making it increasingly difficult to conduct even basic logistical operations.

While all operational units could cease operations gradually before October 31, the end of the mission's current mandate, to ensure the timely closure of the team sites, it will be necessary to extend the drawdown period for several months beyond the date, he said.

Further, the rainy season, lasting from June to October, renders large areas inaccessible, particularly for the types of heavy transportation equipment required to move the troops and their equipment.

In view of the infrastructure limitations, the number of personnel, as well as the nature and volume of assets to repatriate or transfer, the drawdown period will need to be extended into the dry season to allow for unimpeded, safe and continuous movements among UNAMID camps, as well as between Darfur and Port Sudan, he said.

The requirements for a responsible drawdown, combined with the need to preserve operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness, will require close coordination between the drawdown of UNAMID and the establishment of a follow-on presence, he said.

The structure, mandate and establishment timeline of the new presence will significantly impact the sequencing and overall timeline of UNAMID's drawdown, said Lacroix.

Attack

Rebels kill 12 rangers in park

At least 12 rangers have been killed by suspected members of a Rwandan rebel group in the Virunga National Park in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Cosma Wilungula, a government official, said Friday's attack was the deadliest in recent history.

He said about 60 militiamen had ambushed a convoy of civilians that was being protected by the rangers.

Africa's oldest nature reserve is a popular tourist attraction known for its population of mountain gorillas.

The biologically diverse park is a Unesco World Heritage site in the restive east of the DR Congo.

Another six people were injured in the attack blamed on militiamen from the Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR), whose leaders have been accused of links to the 1994 genocide in which some 800,000 ethnic Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed.

The group has so far made no public comments on the accusations against it.

A statement on the park's website said there were indications that this was an attack on the local civilian population.

"Virunga Park Rangers were not the target of the assault, but lost their lives responding to the attack in defence of the local population," the statement said.

Kidnappers target tourists in the park. In 2018, attackers killed a ranger during a brief kidnapping of two British tourists and their driver. [BBC]

In Brief

US. 18 sailors aboard destroyer contract virus

At least 18 sailors aboard a deployed US Navy destroyer have tested positive for the coronavirus, marking the second outbreak at sea aboard a US Navy vessel, according to local media. The Pentagon said additional cases are expected aboard the USS Kidd, a destroyer carrying out a counter-narcotics mission near South America. Commanders are preparing to return the ship to port, where they will remove a portion of the crew. [Xinhua]

Russia. Putin eases law on acquisition of citizenship

Russian President Vladimir Putin has signed into law a Bill on the simplification of obtaining Russian citizenship. The document was published on the official legal information internet portal. The bill was passed by the State Duma lower parliament house on April 17 and endorsed by the Federation Council upper house on the same day. "We eliminate the bureaucratic red tape of Russian-speaking compatriots and those citizens of the former Soviet republics who relate themselves with Russia," State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin said. [Xinhua]

UAE. Etihad extends suspension of flights

Abu Dhabi's Etihad Airways yesterday said it would extend its suspension of scheduled passenger flights until May 15. The airline had said it would partially resume passenger flights from May 1. Etihad and other UAE airlines have been operating outbound-only flights for foreigners wishing to leave the Gulf Arab state, which has banned the entry of foreigners due to the global coronavirus outbreak. The coronavirus outbreak has virtually halted all international air travel. [Reuters]

Crisis. Countries in sub-Saharan Africa particularly at risk

Africa faces 'hunger pandemic' as coronavirus fuels poverty

Desperation could worsen as job losses mount and incomes plunge due to a Covid-19-induced recession.

By Reuters
Johannesburg

Since South Africa went into lockdown four weeks ago to slow the spread of the coronavirus, hairdresser Nasreen Pillay has had no income. Without a job contract, she cannot apply for government aid either.

"If my mother and father-in-law did not help me, I would be going hungry," Ms Pillay, a 28-year-old mother-of-two from Johannesburg, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

She is also fearful the economic squeeze is leading to more crime. Robbers broke into her mother's house two weeks ago, taking speakers, headphones and other items.

"People are desperate," she said.

Acute shortages

Such desperation could worsen as job losses mount and incomes plunge due to a coronavirus-induced recession, with countries in sub-Saharan Africa particularly at risk of spikes in poverty and hunger, experts have warned.

The world is "on the brink of a hunger pandemic", David Beasley, head of the United Nations' World Food Programme, told the UN Security Council this week.

Globally, 135 million people are facing acute food shortages and the coronavirus could increase this by another 130 million by year-end, he said.

"In a worst-case scenario, we could be looking at famine in about three dozen countries," he added.

Other health issues during the pandemic, warning that disruptions to malaria prevention and treatment could double the year's deaths in sub-Saharan Africa to more than 700,000 from 2018.

Exact figures on how many pregnant women are at risk is hard to know, said Dr Allen.

But he estimated that at any given time, five per cent of women in countries needing humanitarian aid, or about 168 million people, are pregnant at any given time.

That would mean about 8.4 million women were at risk.

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Coronavirus crisis could double world hunger

The number of people facing acute food insecurity could double by the end of 2020 as a result of the coronavirus pandemic, according to analysis by the United Nations' World Food Programme (WFP)

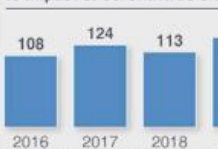
NUMBERS OF ACUTELY HUNGRY PEOPLE* (by driver in each region, 2019)

Conflict / insecurity Weather extremes Economic shocks



INCREASE IN ACUTE HUNGER (millions of people)

Additional number expected to be left acutely hungry due to impact of coronavirus crisis



*People facing crisis levels of hunger or worse

Sources: Associated Press, WFP



Picture: Associated Press

© GRAPHIC NEWS

ple) earning below \$1.90 (Sh203) a day ... where basically your life is in danger because, when you have this type of poverty and you cannot eat, you will die," he told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "This will affect the urban poor much more. In the last couple of decades, we have seen very fast urbanisation in these two regions."

In sub-Saharan Africa, more than one in five people were already going hungry even before Covid-19 hit, according to the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation.

In Ghana's capital Accra and surrounding areas where Elijah Addo runs a food bank, the past three weeks have been "filled with desperation and anxiety - people wondering what will kill them first, hunger or Covid-19", he said.

Oil prices

His organisation, Food For All Africa, had gone from feeding about 150 people a day to preparing 3,500 hot meals daily, he said - and 75 per cent of people relying on them are newcomers who have been affected by the virus, he added.

According to the World Bank's most recent estimates, 10 per cent of the world's population - about 730 million people - were living in extreme poverty in 2015. The combination of Covid-19 and a drop in oil prices could increase this number by 60 million.

Experts at IFPRI and FAO have said production of staple grains is stable but warned logistical hurdles and social distancing measures are putting pressure on food supply chains, particularly in cities where there is little land to grow food. About 80 per cent of urban Africans get their food through informal food markets, IFPRI said.

national Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI). More than half of those at risk - 79 million people - are in sub-Saharan Africa, with another 42 million in South Asia, said David Laborde Deubucquet, senior research fellow at the Washington-based think tank.

"We are talking about (peo-

Pandemic

Pregnancy, malaria a 'perfect storm' for avoidable deaths

Pregnant women in malaria-prone areas are more vulnerable to contracting Covid-19, especially where pesticide spraying to kill mosquitoes has been suspended due to lockdowns, health experts warned ahead of the World Malaria Day.

During pregnancy, women's immune systems are lowered so as not to reject the foetus, putting them at risk of contracting both malaria and Covid-19, they said.

They also are vulnerable to misdiagnoses as the two diseases carry similar symptoms. "It is a perfect storm," said Richard Allen, head of The Mentor Initiative, a humanitarian organisation fighting tropical diseases.

"The countries with the highest malaria burden, mainly in Africa, are also affected by conflict, population displacement, malnutrition and stress. You add Covid-19 and people - especially pregnant women and children - are extremely at risk."

Around the globe, there have been more than 2.7 million confirmed Covid-19 cases and nearly 190,000 have died, according to a Reuters tally on Friday.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has urged countries not to lose focus on

other health issues during the pandemic, warning that disruptions to malaria prevention and treatment could double the year's deaths in sub-Saharan Africa to more than 700,000 from 2018.

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In southern Ghana, pesticide spraying to battle malaria-carrying mosquitoes was put on hold when a Covid-19 case was confirmed at a gold mine, putting thousands of people at risks, according to the charity Malaria No More.

"We have seen this happen in Angola too and fear it will become more common," Allen told the Thomson Reuters Foundation.

The symptoms of malaria and Covid-19, including fever, body aches and coughing, are similar, potentially causing the wrong diagnosis, experts added.

"On top of this, it is typically mothers

who take children to health care facilities if they are sick, so they will be more exposed to viruses, especially if pregnant," said Samuel Asiedu, director of Anglo-Gold Ashanti's Malaria Control Programme in Ghana.

The combination of risks means vulnerable groups, particularly pregnant women and children still developing their immune systems, need to be protected, Allen said.

"This combination could tip people over the edge," Allen said. The annual World Malaria Day as designated by the WHO was marked yesterday. [Reuters]

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"This combination could tip people over the edge," Allen said. The annual World Malaria Day as designated by the WHO was marked yesterday. [Reuters]



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A22/NOTICES

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE PHYSICAL AND LAND USE
PLANNING ACT (NO.13 OF 2019)
CHANGE OF USE

The Registered owner of Plot L.R. No.309/1688 Situated along Muthithi road -Overland Area in Nairobi City County, proposes to change its use from Residential use to Commercial (Offices and Show Room). Subject to approval by Nairobi City County Government. Individuals/organisations etc with objections or comments to the proposal are requested to forward them in writing, within Fourteen (14) days of this publication to:

THE COUNTY SECRETARY
NAIROBI CITY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
P.O. BOX 30075-00100
NAIROBI.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PHYSICAL & LAND USE PLANNING
ACT NO.13 OF 2019
CHANGE OF USE

The owner of land parcel Mavoko Town block 64(Gimsu) / 86,8728 & 89 of Gimsu area proposes to amalgamate and change user from agricultural user to institutional user (medical facility) subject to approval by the County Government of Machakos. Individuals, institutions/ organisations with objection are required to forward in writing within 14 days to the:

CECM, Energy, Lands, Housing & Urban development
County Government of Machakos
P.O. Box 11-00204
Athirwa.

PUBLIC NOTICE

PHYSICAL & LAND USE PLANNING
ACT NO.13 OF 2019
CHANGE OF USE

The owners of land parcel L.R. No. 26899788 of Sabaki area proposes to change user from single dwelling residential user to multiple dwelling residential user subject to approval by the County Government of Machakos. Individuals, institutions/ organisations with objection are required to forward in writing within 14 days to the:

CECM, Energy, Lands, Housing & Urban development
County Government of Machakos
P.O. Box 11-00204
Athirwa.

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E9/APARTMENT

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Serviced Apartments Good Price
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COMMERCIAL

K1/SERVICES

Swimming Pool Services & Equip
Sasana/Steam/Pool Equipment Nrb
0737/0738511438 Msa 0722519153

RESIDENTIAL & BUSINESS PROPERTIES

L1/PROPERTIES FOR SALE

BURUBURU ph2 4br maisonette
@12M 0746806982

KAHAWA Wendani 5storey building
with 59units beditters income
590000kpm, price @55M Neg
0746806982

KASARANI Maternity 6 storey building
with 42units of beditters each
@6500 plus 2units of 1 br each
@10000 total inc 293000kpm price
30M 0746806982

KASARANI Clayworks 6storey building
with inc 367000kpm price @40M
0746806982

KIAMBURD Mushroom estate 5br
maisonette on 0.5acre @70M
0746806982

KIAMBURD Kirigiti 5 storey building with
20units of 3br each @26500kpm price
55M 0746806982

RUIRU Mugutha 3br new bungalow
on 50*100ft @7.5 m 0746806982

ZIMMERMAN 5storey hse with 62u-
nits of 1br @12000k per unit total
income 744000kpm price 83M
0746806982

L9/PLOTS/LAND FOR SALE

35 acres for sale - Kajado 2 parcels
of 35 acres at 2.1m per acre. Can
be subdivided on request Call
0708443731

1/8 Ac Namanga 600k neg
0723785864

5AC @IM, Dundori-Charagita
0724142050

ATHI river town 1.5Acres industrial
plot tarmac 0722858562

BIRIKA 6.5 ac Tony 0725772819

BIRIKA 2a, 1.5a, 1.4a 0725772819

DAGORETTI 0.160ac 072519049

DAWAMU 50/100 1.2m 0725749900

EMBU Kiamuringa 10 acres 1km off
Sakago road. 0787230086

ISINYA 5 acres fronting tarmac & 24
acres town centre. 0725210219

ISINYA Nikito Town 50x100 plot ready
title 7kms tarmac 0725210219

JUJA prime pits at Juja Town
1/8ac @3.3m 0728150836/
0724238459

JUJA Kenyatta Rd 1/8ac title 3M,
Muigai-Inn 1/8ac, 2.8M 0722467230,
0733213170

KAJIADO Town 1/4 plots Naisula area
on tarmac clean titles. Quick
sale 0721520121

KAMITI Corner / Kamiti Ridge Estate
1/8acre 300M from main tarmac road
ready titles call 0713998763,
0722527806

KAMULU 40x100 900K 0722788500

KANTAFU Donyo Sabuk 1/8acre
500m from tarmac ready titles call
0713998763, 0722527806

KARANJEE Lmr 1/8 pit dev 0788
395050

KAREN 20acr @50M per acr
0777904073

KAREN Hills Gated 1 Acre 70m Call
Owner 0733 201327

KAREN 2.5acres prime land ready for
development. Offers, 0722-526-408

KAREN 1/2ac plot red soil 35m call
0729906210

KAREN Shade 1/2ac 22M 0722467230

KASARANI Clayworks touching Thika
Rd 0.25ac good for Petrol Station
@35M 0746806982, 0721993439

KASARANI 6storey HSE inc 280KPM
@32M 0746806982

KASARANI 1/2 acre, title 0777 370
184

KATANI 1/4acre behind Katani
Hospital 2.5m ono 0723560455

KATANI 1/4 Acre 3.5M 0717-333344

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Mr. Anatole Isiye Ndombi
28 May 1986 - 26 April 2015

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But as God calls us one by one, one day the gap will be closed on the other side.

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May the Almighty God hold you in the palm of His hand.

KENOL plots 1/8 acre Call
0720315329 or 0728938358

KIAMBURD road Kugeria 1/2 acre
mature garden 071564522

KIKUYU Nachu 1/8ac 110K, 250K
0705910444, 0719989190 PATTMOS

KIMANA/TIKONDO 58 acres near
Sopa Lodges 072519049 owner

KISAJU Afa Sacco Scheme 1/4 acre
3km from main road 0722672750

KITENGELA quick sale, prime 1/4acre
plot @ 2.7M Call 0727889160

KONZA 2ac Comm Plot 5M,
0722782389

KONZA Malili 200Acres 0722753615

KONZA 300mts @475k 0799455444

LAIKIPIA 428 acres overlooking
Mwituri Hill neighboring Olapeta
Conservancy, Nyeri/Nyeri rd,
0722519049 owner

LAKE elementaita plot next to the
lake Acres suitable for camps,
lodges, Neg 078398866

L.ELEMENTAITA land touching the
lake good, for hotel 0700632181

LAVINGTON Hatheru RD 0.5Ac
@120M 0746806982

LENANA 2-5Acres ideal for develop-
ment on tarmac 0722858562

MAANZONI 2acres 45m, 0733522375

MAKUYU Manaja @180k
0799455444

MARAGWA Bobo 1.2Ac 0703585111

MARAGWA Kaharati 4ac 0723488507

MATHIRA 8.Acres 0718583849

MAURUI bypass 1/2ac 0722467230

MEMBLY prime 1/8ac, 1/4ac
0722467230

NAIVASHA 6acres 0721991166

NANYUKI 2km @370K 0799455444

NAZRA Estate prime Title
072815340

NDEIYA 2ac tarmac 0789471888

NDEIYA 4ac tarmac 0789471888

NDEIYA 1/4ac 1.2m 0789471888

NGARA, Pangani, Sec 3, 50x100
comm. title, Price - 38-68M neg
0721513344

NGONG road nakumat junction, lacres
with petro station, 600m
neg.0722520514

NGONG / kimuka 1/8 ksh 1.1 m 6
months instalment 0723218023

NGONG Ololua Karen West 50x100
Bacre plots. 0722682286 owner

NYAMAKIMA Duruma RD 50*100 ft
plot with old building price @150M
0746806982

OLKALOU 10, 20, 270ac 0722467230

ONGATA Rongai prime plots, 400m
from rd & 3br Bungalows 0721646646

ONGATA Rongai Masai Lodge 5Acres
prime land 0722858562

ONGATA Rongai Nkoroi 1/8, 1/4, 1/2,
acre plots ready title: 0722682286

PANGANI 1acre on Thika Rd. Super
Highway prime 071564522

PRIME 16 quarter acre plots located
17km from Magadi Rd 10km from Tuala
market price 800K per plot. Contact
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REDHILL Heights Gatanga rd 6km off
Thika rd 1/2acre gated 10m. Call
0722662774 owner

RONGAI-ACACIA 50x100@3m 1km
from h/way, call 0774883429

RUIRU Kinakis Bypass behind 3rings
50x100ft Commercial plots with title
@9.5M 0746806982

THOME 1 touching bypass 0.5ac
@60M 0746806982

NBA. Utah Jazz swingman Joe Ingles, an Australian in his sixth NBA season, said he doubts more with each passing week the halted 2019-20 campaign will ever resume. In a conference call with Utah media, the 32-year-old playmaker from Adelaide said it would be difficult to leave wife Renae and three-year-old twins Milla and Jacob for a seclusion plan to finish the campaign. [AFP]

Sports

FOOTBALL: KENYAN PREMIER LEAGUE PLAYERS WHO CHANGED POSITIONS AND EXCELLED, 38-39



Twitter

@BBC SPORT
Andy Murray will play Rafael Nadal next week - from his own home, in a virtual version of the Madrid Open.



TENNIS Ash is also the defending champion at Roland Garros

Champ Barty open to new training chances

'Tricky' for world number one to maintain training intensity in shutdown.

By Reuters
sports@standardmedia.co.ke

Ash Barty is finding it tricky to maintain high intensity in training during the shutdown but the women's world number one is hoping she will be back to her usual self with the flick of a switch when tennis resumes after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Like other sports around the world, professional tennis screeched to a halt in early March as the virus spread quickly around the world. It will not

restart until at least mid-July.

While Australian Barty, whose partner Gary Kissick is a golfer, has seen her golf game improve during the lockdown in Brisbane, her tennis training is in "a little bit of a holding pattern."

"It's kind of tricky to train with the same intensity as always," Barty, who turned 24 on Friday, told the Sunday Herald Sun. "Obviously, we're still not sure when we'll go back."

"Now, it's about maintaining for if and when we get an opportunity to play again this year, you can kinda flick that switch and go from there."

The shutdown did not allow Barty to return to the United States to defend her title at the Miami Open, which catapulted her into the top 10 in the rankings before

she finally sealed the top spot a few months later.

Barty is also the defending champion at Roland Garros, where she won her maiden Grand Slam title in Paris last June, but that has been postponed too.

This year's French Open was moved to September 20-October 4 from its May start while the Wimbledon championships, which were set to begin in late June, were cancelled.

September 20-October 4

■ When the French Open will be held

"Just kind of sitting back, this is really bizarre," she said. "You're preparing for that (hardcourt) swing and then you're on a plane back to Australia."

"It's different for everyone. For tennis players, there's that uncertainty. We need for pretty much the whole world to be clear before we can start our tour again."

"Domestic competitions have the chance to get up running again, but for a global sport it's a bit unique to be in that holding pattern."

Barty said she was in regular touch with some of her fellow players as she deals with the lockdown.

"All these girls I've had really good relationships with and am good friends with on a personal level. We're also chatting about what could be next for us and everyone is trying to get that new information," she said.

World number one Ashleigh Barty Australia in past action. [Reuters]



"Overall, it's been a bit of an adjustment but also lucky that it's a time where you get to appreciate the little things in life, which is your health and your family."

World number one Ash Barty



Cricket

Vanuatu defies coronavirus shutdown with women's final

Some overnight rain couldn't prevent Vanuatu from producing a rarity in these coronavirus-restricted times — a live sporting event.

The tropical island in the South Pacific was likely the only venue in the world hosting a competitive sports final yesterday, as most international sport remains shattered around the globe.

Vanuatu Cricket Association

chief executive Shane Deitz invited anyone missing live action to tune in to a live stream.

And more than 3,000 did at various times during a men's 10-over exhibition match and the women's Twenty20 final won by the Mele Bulls.

The rain meant a scheduled morning women's semifinal wasn't played due to wet grounds.

"It's one of the only live sports around the world at the moment. We can showcase a bit of cricket for everyone who is in lockdown," Deitz told the Associated Press on Friday.

The matches were played at the Vanuatu Cricket Grounds in the capital Port Vila, on the island of Efate. Officials set up four cameras and commentary for the online stream on Vanuatu Cricket's Facebook site.

et's Facebook site.

The commentators had a bit of fun as well, with one of them suggesting a few fans were getting rowdy "now that the red wine has kicked in."

Play was delayed for minute or two when a few children ran on the field, and the commentators apologized for not having many security people at the ground.

Vanuatu went into lockdown

late last month as a precaution during the coronavirus pandemic, and was then hit by a destructive cyclone on April 6.

Spectators who came to the ground yesterday were asked to bring food or clothing donations for those affected by the cyclone.

The lockdown and closed borders meant there were no reported cases of COVID-19 in Vanuatu. [AP]



Vanuatu women cricket players celebrate in Port Vila. [Reuters]

Health**Giro d'Italia cyclist turns delivery man to stay fit**

He really should be training for the Giro d'Italia instead of making deliveries during the coronavirus pandemic. But how else is a professional Italian cyclist supposed to stay fit?

At least that is what Umberto Marengo was thinking when he decided to pull on his lycra and start hauling pasta and pizza across the suburbs of the northern Italian city of Turin.

Marengo and his little Italian team Vini Zabu-KTM are still trying to gain a measure of respectability on the professional tour circuit.

The KTM riders considered themselves lucky to have even qualified for one of the three Grand Tours.

But the Giro will not be starting on May 9 because of the virus that has officially killed almost

26,000 across the Mediterranean country.

The 27-year-old had little to do but sit at home with his girlfriend. The subject of ice cream came up and Marengo's new career soon followed.

"We searched the internet and found this ice cream parlour making home deliveries," Marengo recalls.

Marengo got in touch with the

mayor and was soon speeding along abandoned city streets on his racing bike -- a rucksack full of deli sandwiches strapped to his back.

"The customers are all amazed," Marengo admits.

"Especially since I always try to go up by the stairs to stay that little bit fitter."

Marengo and the other riders will soon drop what they are

doing and enter extreme training regimes.

The KLM rider says delivering food has been rewarding -- although maybe not terribly useful for staying fitter.

"This is mainly to stay useful to my community," he says.

He makes up to 30 deliveries a day and has managed to set a personal lockdown record by riding 70 kilometres in a day. [AFP]



Past action in a past Giro d'Italia (Tour of Italy) cycling race. [Reuters]

FOOTBALL Form Three student leaves coaches yearning for her signature

Mukosh juggles between school and sports with ease

Coaches have put eyes on youthful and talented female footballer Involata

By Ernest Ndunda
ernoka@standardmedia.co.ke

In football parlance, attackers will win you matches, but defenders win you titles.

Defenders are tasked with building a solid reputation and remaining reliable. Maintaining a superb positional sense is what comes in handy for any player yearning for reputation.

And for one Involata Mukosh, she has most of these qualities. Her prowess at the back-line while playing for either her school team St. John's Kaloleni or her club Mombasa Olympic, has been enviable to

many.

Born in November 2002 in Kakamega, Mukosh, who captains former national and East Africa secondary school girls' football champions St John's Kaloleni of Kilifi, has kept on gaining more recognition from several coaches.

The Form Three student, who joined the school in 2018, has been making the right moves at both the club and school. Her ability to balance both has been incredible.

After finishing her standard eight examinations at Wanzalala Primary School in Kakamega County in 2017, Mombasa Olympic head coach Joseph Oyoo spotted the mercurial player and played a key role in ensuring she joined the 2016 national and East Africa girls' football champion.

St John's Kaloleni beat former champions Wiyeta 3-1 in the 2016 national games final in Kisumu to become the first girls football team from Coast region to win the coveted trophy.

The winning team, which featured Harambee Starlets striker Mwanahali-

Involata Mukosh

- Mukosh was born in 2002
- Joined St John's Kaloleni in 2018
- She is the team captain
- She is a top performer in class
- She dreams of playing professional football

ma Adam, now with Swedish top tier side Djurgardens IF based in Scotland, went on to win the East Africa schools title.

"I joined Mombasa Olympics while in Form one where we featured in the top women league in 2018 but due to financial constraints, we were relegated to the lower division after forfeiting three consecutive matches," said Mukosh.

The player, who is the school team's captain, said she played football while in primary school.

"I give praises to both my primary and high school coaches who have developed my talent in football," said Mukosh.

"I am happy to have joined a good school, where I have combined well in football and academics. I'm among the top performers in my class," she added.

"Due to my good combination (both in class and on the field), my school Principal Josephine Masimbo offered me a scholarship, which has pushed me to perform even better. My focus is to work hard and perform well in my Form Four examinations.

I will also thrive to keep playing football even after school," said the 17-year old player.

Coach Oyoo said several coaches including Harambee Starlets head tactician David Ouma, Falcon FC and Thika Queens heads are all eyeing to land the services of Mukosh.

"This player is in demand and several coaches are wishing to have her in their team. She's talented and has a bright future in football. I know speed kills but Mukosh has the technical speed," said Oyoo.

Interview**Darts queen on fame, equality and trailblazing**

Fallon Sherrock is casting her mind back four months, to a time when the world was a very different place, when sporting venues were full, and when she was briefly the talk of Britain.

She had become the first woman to beat a man at darts' flagship world championship -- in fact, she would do so twice -- and her phone was flashing non-stop with messages of congratulations and support from around the world.

Among them was an Instagram post from Sarah Jessica Parker, the "Sex and the City" actress with 6.2 million followers on social media, who wrote: "Making history and our hearts stop as we watched in astonishment and awe. A household of fans and admirers send their congratulations."

That was "absolutely mental," Sherrock recalled, but the biggest "wow" moment was when she was messaged by tennis great Billie Jean King.

"I mean, she is one of the biggest people there is for women in sport. To get someone like that tweeting me, that was incredible," Sherrock said.

The way her career is trending, that shouldn't be an issue.

Easily recognisable with her now-trade-mark pink top, her long and blonde hair and for regularly sipping water between throws to regulate an ongoing kidney problem, Sherrock is standing out in the darts world.

It is helping to shatter the widely held image of darts being a beer-fueled pub game typically played by out-of-shape men.

Online haters lurk -- a woman has no place competing with men, the misogynists claim -- but Sherrock is now firmly ensconced in the men's game, even a leading name on promotional literature, following her exploits at London's Alexandra Palace late last year.

Invitations have poured in for the "Queen of the Palace" for men's tournaments and exhibitions around the world.

Sherrock partnered Luca Toni, the former Italy football striker, in an event in Bonn, Germany, in January.

She says money is not a problem. [AP]



Fallon Sherrock, the first woman to win a game in the Darts World Championship. [AFP]

Involata Mukosh in a training session in Mombasa. [Gideon Mundi, Standard]

FOOTBALL Outfield players who turned into great goalkeepers in Kenya

Kenyan Premier League players who changed positions and excelled

The day Ugandan striker Karim Ndungwa saved Ingwe's blushes between the posts.

By Standard Reporter
sports@standardmedia.co.ke

Many footballers at times reveal their current playing positions is opposite to the roles they occupied when young.

In most cases, the players are tried out on different positions so as to determine their strength as they grow in the sport.

While majority end up playing in positions they started out at a tender age, some find themselves in totally different areas of play later in life.

Some footballers began their careers as outfield players, but ended up being goalkeepers, or the other way round.

That explains why in modern football, you'll find a few goalkeepers, with excellent ball distribution skills.

For instance, Manchester City goalkeeper Ederson, Manchester United's David De Gea and Burnley's Joe Hart, all started their careers as outfield players before eventually moving into goal.

And just like Mexican legend Jorge Campos, who

throughout his career was signed as a goalkeeper, but often played as a striker, in Kenya, there are a number of players who've either switched from the posts to the outfield position and vice versa.

Karim Ndungwa

AFC Leopards fans will forever remember Karim Ndungwa not for his goals but for saving them blushes when it mattered most.

The Ugandan, a natural striker, made headlines on June 9 with heroic performances when he made a series of saves to inspire 10-man AFC Leopards to a 1-0 victory over Sofapaka in a Kenyan Premier League match at Nyayo National Stadium.

"It was not about me, but all those players who showed up for the match. I'm glad we won," Ndungwa said then.

A section of Ingwe players led by the goalkeeping trio of Wycliffe Kasaya, Joel Baturo and Ali Kesi made good their threat to boycott the match over unpaid salaries and bonuses, forcing Ndungwa to wear a different jersey and don gloves.

Though in an unfamiliar territory between the posts, the Ugandan put up a brave face as he helped his side secure maximum points. Ndungwa later ditched Leopards for Rwandese side AS Kigali.

Barnabas Tiema (un-attached)

The former AFC Leopards, Sofapaka and Vihiga United goalkeeper started out as an offensive player at Olympic Academy (Kakamega), but switched to goalkeeping roles.

He shone at Sherehe High and Mumias Muslim where his goalkeeping skills were honed by then coach Nick Yakhama. He later joined AFC Leopards in 2009 on completion of his Form Four examinations.

After a four-year spell in the

den, Tiema switched his allegiance to Sofapaka where continued standing between the posts until late 2014 when he returned to the offensive role.

He later joined Ushuru for the second half of the 2016 season before moving to Vihiga United.

Mike Okoth (Former Kenyan international)

The legendary Mike Okoth started out as a goalkeeper at Iriero Secondary School in Kisumu, where he helped his school clinch the national football title in 1987. By then, he was playing for Shabana, but in 1988, he picked up the scorer's boots. He joined Tusker (then Kenya Breweries) a year later.

In 1992, he moved to Omani club Boshar and three months later switched to K.V. Oostende in Belgium. His most successful season was in 1998-99, when his club Racing Genk won the Belgian Pro League. In 2006, at the age of 38, he was still active in football, although in a low-division league. He scored 18 goals in 54 appearances for Harambee Stars.

Francis 'Dance' Ochieng' (Ulinzi Stars/Former Kenyan international)

He is the only player to have played for the national team both as a striker and a goalkeeper. He started off as a shot-stopper in 2001 with the defunct Mumias Sugar then switched to a striker for one season before going back to the posts.

But in 2008 while at Ulinzi Stars, he again moved from being a goalkeeper to a striker albeit for a year following his exploits in the military inter-brigade games. He came off the bench to score a consolation goal in his debut as Ulinzi striker in their 2-1 loss to Nairobi City Stars before hitting a hat-trick against Tusker (3-2) in the second match.

Ochieng' finished as the second runner-up in the golden boot award chase with 11 goals. He made his maiden appearance as

Harambee Stars striker in a friendly match against Egypt in 2008, before sustaining an injury that kept him out

Former Harambee Stars goalkeeper and Ulinzi Star coach Francis Ochieng'. [Jenipher Wachie, Standard]

Harambee Stars goalkeeper Boniface Oluoch. [Stafford Onongo, Standard]



for long.

Upon his return from injury in 2010, Ochieng went back between the posts and inspired the soldiers to Kenyan Premier League triumph with his exploits earning him the best goalkeeper in the Foya awards. He was also called to the national team for the Nile Basin Tournament in Egypt.

As a goalkeeper, many will remember him for scoring a free-kick from his half to secure a 1-1 draw against Thika United on March 30, 2014.

Boniface Oluoch (Gor Mahia)

The Gor Mahia goalkeeper is always at ease playing with his feet.

He spent most of his years as an offensive player at Joseph Apudo High School and then Railways FC in the early 2000s. But coming from a footballing family that boasts four goalkeepers, the 33-year-old Kenyan international was convinced by his late brother George Odhiambo (a former Gor Mahia goalkeeper) to wear the gloves.

"It started as a joke. There was a time my local team had less players and they asked me to play in the midfield before my late brother began to train me as a goalkeeper. But I'm glad my background as an outfield player shaped my goalkeeping career. I'm never afraid to do something with the ball," Oluoch told Standard Sports.

He joined Black Mamba in 2004 and later moved to KCB for one season before crossing the borders to sign a two-year deal with APR of Rwanda. He was lured by Tusker and returned to the KPL in 2008, but after a six-year stint with the 10-time KPL champions, Oluoch switched his allegiance to Gor Mahia (2015) where he has won three league titles. Occasionally, Oluoch plays as a striker in interstate tournaments.

Francis Onyiso (Ulinzi Stars/ former Kenyan international)

Onyiso was a commanding goalkeeper with great feet. The former Kenya one and Ulinzi Stars custodian started his footballing life as a flamboyant winger but moved between the sticks after he was persuaded by his junior teammates during a friendly match.

"I can tell you for free, Onyiso was a deadly midfielder. One day when we had gone for a friendly match at the barracks, we didn't have a goalkeeper so we asked him to try and he turned out to be excellent," Boniface Ambani, a former international told The Standard Sports.

Levis Opiyo (Nairobi City Stars)

The younger sibling to Kenyan international Peter 'Pinchez' Opiyo, who joined Nairobi City Stars last year, played as a midfielder at Islamic Youth Academy (later named Fullchester) in his early career.

He took over the goalkeeping role when their regular keeper failed to show up for a tournament.

"I started football as a midfielder at Islamic Youth Academy (later named Fullchester). One day our goalkeeper didn't turn up for a tournament and my coach Beto asked: 'Who can play as keeper?'. Opiyo told the club's website. 'I can,' I said. And I found it so interesting. And that's how I transformed from an up-field player to a goalkeeper."

Victor Onyango (Former Kenyan international)

From his ball handling skills, few could deny that Onyango was an outfield player. He played as a left back in his early career before converting into a goalkeeper. He went on to become one of the best goalkeepers of his generation, representing the national team Harambee Stars in

different international matches.

Salim Shaban (Former Sony Sugar/ Mumias Sugar)

The former Kenyan international was an excellent shot-stopper at Sony Sugar and defunct Mumias Sugar but played as a striker at different times.

Meanwhile, Manchester United executive vice-chairman Ed Woodward has said talk of mega-money football transfer moves "ignore the realities that face the sport" because of the coronavirus outbreak.

United have been linked with a £200 million (\$21 billion) bid to lure England captain Harry Kane away from Tottenham Hotspur.

But Woodward's comments suggest any such deal is unlikely in the current climate.

It is six weeks since the Premier League suspended all matches and, with no certainty as to when or if the season can resume, club finances are under strain at all levels.

United, one of world football's commercial powerhouses, are better off than most, however, with Woodward telling a fans' forum late Friday the club were determined to play their part in aiding those affected by the virus.

Some of the prominent goalkeepers who could play other positions

- David De Gea (Manchester United)-Winger
- Jose Manuel Pinto (Barcelona)-Midfielder
- Joe Hart (Burnley)-striker
- Jorge Campos (Mexico)-Striker
- Ederson (Manchester City)-Defender
- Michel Vorm (Tottenham Hotspur)-Winger

"We have always believed that our commercial model gives us greater resilience than most clubs and we are grateful for the enduring support of our commercial partners in helping us achieve that," he said.

"However, nobody should be under any illusions about the scale of challenge facing everyone in football and it may not be 'business as usual' for any clubs, including ourselves, in the transfer market this summer."

Woodward added: "On this basis, I cannot help feeling that speculation around transfers of individual players for hundreds of millions of pounds this summer seems to ignore the realities that face the sport."

Looking ahead, Woodward said he hoped "a season which still held so much promise for us in the Premier League, the Europa League and the FA Cup when it was suspended" could resume.

"And while it may be that games need to be played behind closed doors in the shorter term, we all recognise that football will not be fully back to normal until supporters are once again in attendance."

United have not taken advantage of the British government's coronavirus job reduction scheme, which sees taxpayers' money used to contribute to a portion of employees' wages, with Woodward stressing club staff were still being paid "in full".

Nevertheless he warned even United could not escape the economic impact of the virus.

"Of course, everyone is grappling with the economic realities of the pan-

demic and we are no different, so the longer the crisis continues the greater the impact will be for every club, including ourselves."

At the same time, Premier League strugglers Norwich City have defended their decision to use the British government's furlough scheme for 200 non-playing staff after the season was suspended due to the coronavirus pandemic.

With vast swathes of British industry shut down because of the coronavirus, the UK government launched a scheme that sees 80 percent of wages up to a maximum of £2,500 (\$3,000) a month guaranteed during the economic crisis caused by the pandemic.

Norwich, who were bottom when the campaign was suspended, and Newcastle are the only Premier League clubs currently using the job retention scheme.

Bournemouth, Liverpool and Tottenham Hotspur performed U-turns due to a vocal backlash after initially announcing they too would take advantage of the scheme.

Norwich say the suspension of football will cost them between £18 million and £35 million.

"The decision we made was in the best interests of the club and its staff," chief operating officer Ben Kensell told BBC Radio Norfolk.

"We've been very transparent that we're run in a self-financed manner."

"We generate a turnover of £123m - £93m of that is broadcast, and we've spent £125m this year - and that's how we run the club."

"Ultimately, if we had the available cashflow to not have to take up schemes then, like other football clubs have, we would."

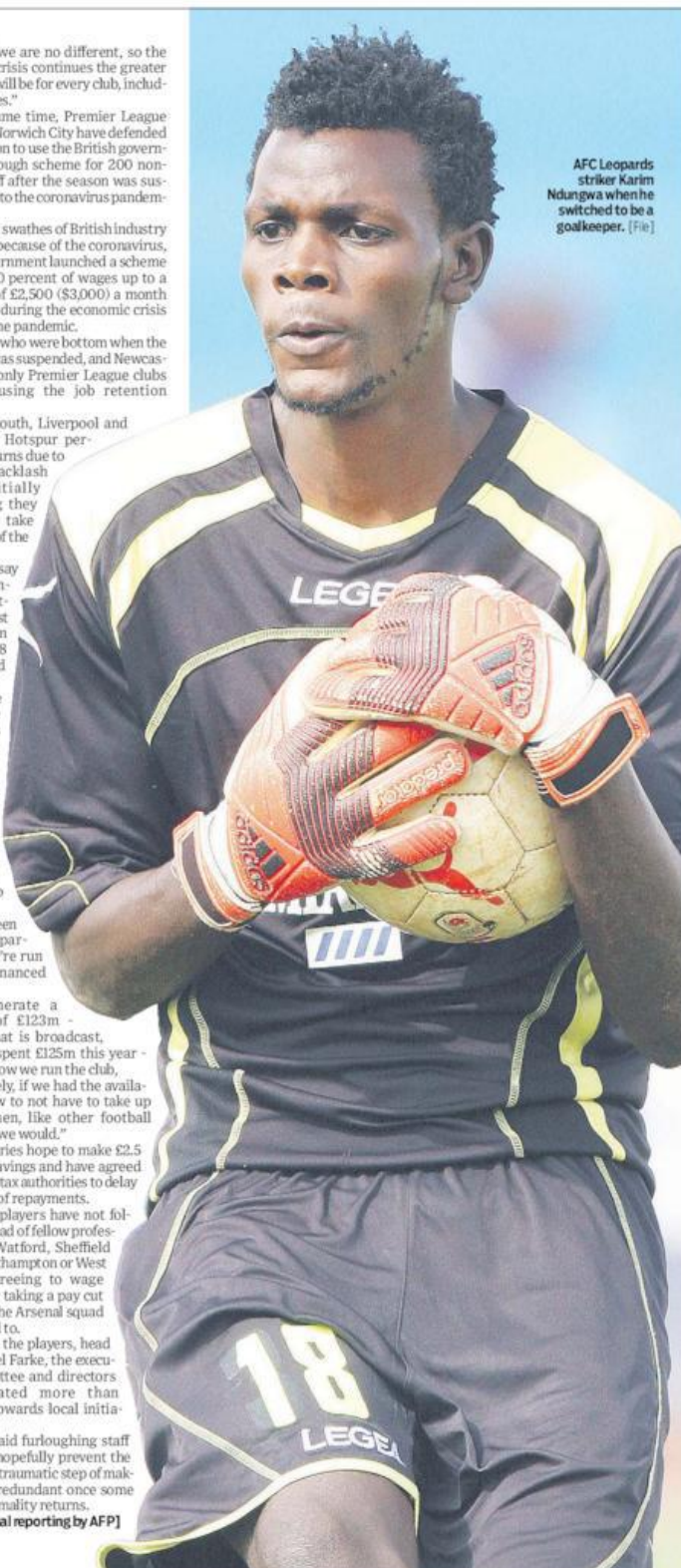
The Canaries hope to make £2.5 million of savings and have agreed with British tax authorities to delay £18 million of repayments.

Norwich players have not followed the lead of fellow professionals at Watford, Sheffield United, Southampton or West Ham in agreeing to wage deferrals or taking a pay cut as most of the Arsenal squad have agreed to.

However, the players, head coach Daniel Farke, the executive committee and directors have donated more than £200,000 towards local initiatives.

Kensell said furloughing staff now could hopefully prevent the much more traumatic step of making people redundant once some form of normality returns.

[Additional reporting by AFP]



AFC Leopards striker Karim Ndungwa when he switched to be a goalkeeper. [File]



Football: Meet Involata who is at ease on the pitch as class, pg 37

Sports

FOOTBALL: KENYAN PREMIER LEAGUE PLAYERS WHO CHANGED PLAYING POSITIONS AND EXCELLED, P 38-39

Sunday Standard

April 26, 2020

The Standard on Sunday



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FOOTBALL Andre's father thought his son might have to take a break from football

Iniesta reveals moving battle with depression

Behind those magical displays for Barca Andres suffered illness in solitude.

By AFP
sports@standardmedia.co.ke

Andres Iniesta has described his struggle with depression while playing for Barcelona, which his mother says was a "bottomless pit" that caused her 25-year-old son to ask to sleep with his parents.

Iniesta recalls his experience with the illness in a Rakuten TV documentary, *'Andres Iniesta - The Unexpected Hero'*, which was released on Thursday and covers his move to Japanese side Vissel Kobe in 2018.

After winning the Champions League under Pep Guardiola in 2009, Iniesta was battling injury and then hit by the death of his friend Dani Jarque, the Espanyol defender who suffered a heart attack.

"The days pass and you realise you're not improving, you don't feel good, you're not yourself. Everything clouds over and goes dark," Iniesta said.

On Jarque's death, Iniesta added: "That was like a body blow, something powerful that knocked me down again and I was

pretty low, clearly because I wasn't very well."

Iniesta's depression is described by those closest to him, including his mother Maria Lujan and father Jose Antonio. "I noticed he wasn't well one night when we were sleeping downstairs and he came down and said, 'mum can I sleep here with you?'" Maria said. "Then the world came down on my head."

Jose Antonio said: "Our 25-year-old son coming down at midnight and wanting to sleep with his parents means he can't be well. He said, 'I'm not well dad'. I said, 'what's wrong?' 'I don't know, I don't feel well.'"



Barcelona's Andres Iniesta consoles Lionel Messi. [Fie]

"Our 25 year-old son coming down at midnight and wanting to sleep with his parents means he can't be well. He said, 'I'm not well dad'. I said, 'what's wrong?' 'I don't know, I don't feel well.'"

Maria, Iniesta's mother

"The days pass and you realise you're not improving, you don't feel good, you're not yourself. Everything clouds over and goes dark."

Iniesta said.

Iniesta's father admitted he thought his son might have to take a break from football. "At one stage I thought he would have to stop because the most important thing was him," said Jose Antonio.

Iniesta began having sessions with psychologist Inma Puig, who said the Spaniard's recovery owed much to those around him, including Pep.

"Guardiola said this is the first time I've been in this situation as a coach," said Puig. "I remember he said, 'the most important thing now is Andres, the person not the player.'"

"They're people and this is a very human thing which affects millions of people around the world," said Guardiola. "They have to know we are there for them."

"Guardiola tried to get him out of that bottomless pit he was in," said Iniesta's mother Maria.

Iniesta came through Barcelona's La Masia academy and went on to win nine La Liga titles and four Champions Leagues with the club.

He also lifted the World Cup with Spain in 2010, after scoring the winning goal against the Netherlands in the final.

Despite receiving a hero's farewell from Barca, Iniesta hinted his relationship with the board influenced his decision to go to Japan.

"People at the club never imagined I could leave," Iniesta said. "It's like everything, in relationships if you don't discuss things at the right time there comes a time when there's no way back."

Football

Ajax agree with decision not award them title

Friday's decision to not award the Dutch league title to Ajax Amsterdam was understandable, said the club's general manager Edwin van der Sar as the season in the Netherlands was formally brought to a premature close by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Ajax were top of the standings with nine matches left to play when the season was suspended last month.

But the former European champions will not be awarded the title, the Dutch football association (KNVB) decided after hopes for a resumption of the season ended earlier this week when the government extended a ban on public events until September 1.

It is the first time since 1945 that there will be no Dutch champion.

"As players and coaches, you want to win the title on the field," said Van der Sar, the former Dutch national team and Manchester United goalkeeper.

"We have been top of the table throughout the season, so it is a pity we haven't been able to become champion but given the situation we are in, it is understandable."

"There are a lot more important matters than football right now," he told the club's television channel.

Ajax will, however, compete in the Champions League next season, taking up one of the two places for the Dutch in the competition. AZ Alkmaar, who had caught up to Ajax in the weeks before the suspension of the league and were only behind them on goal difference, will start in the preliminary rounds.

The KNVB, after a meeting on Friday of its 38 clubs, decided that Feyenoord Rotterdam, PSV Eindhoven and Willem II Tilburg, who are the next three in the standings, would participate in the Europa League, saying they were following UEFA guidelines issued earlier this week.

But sixth placed Utrecht, three points behind Willem II but with a game in hand and also still to play the Dutch Cup final against Feyenoord, said they would not accept the decision.

A lengthy statement on its website (fcu-trecht.nl) said it would seek judicial relief and also take its case to Uefa. [Reuters]



Ajax's Nicolas Tagliafico. [AP]

THE SUNDAY STANDARD: 26 APRIL - 2 MAY 2020

SUNDAY

Not
for
sale

Ranger who walked 100km to a PhD

How far would you go for an education or your dream? For Tuqa Jirmo, at the time barely nine, the answer is a long journey full of danger, hunger and determination; today he's a top conservationist. **P 8-9**

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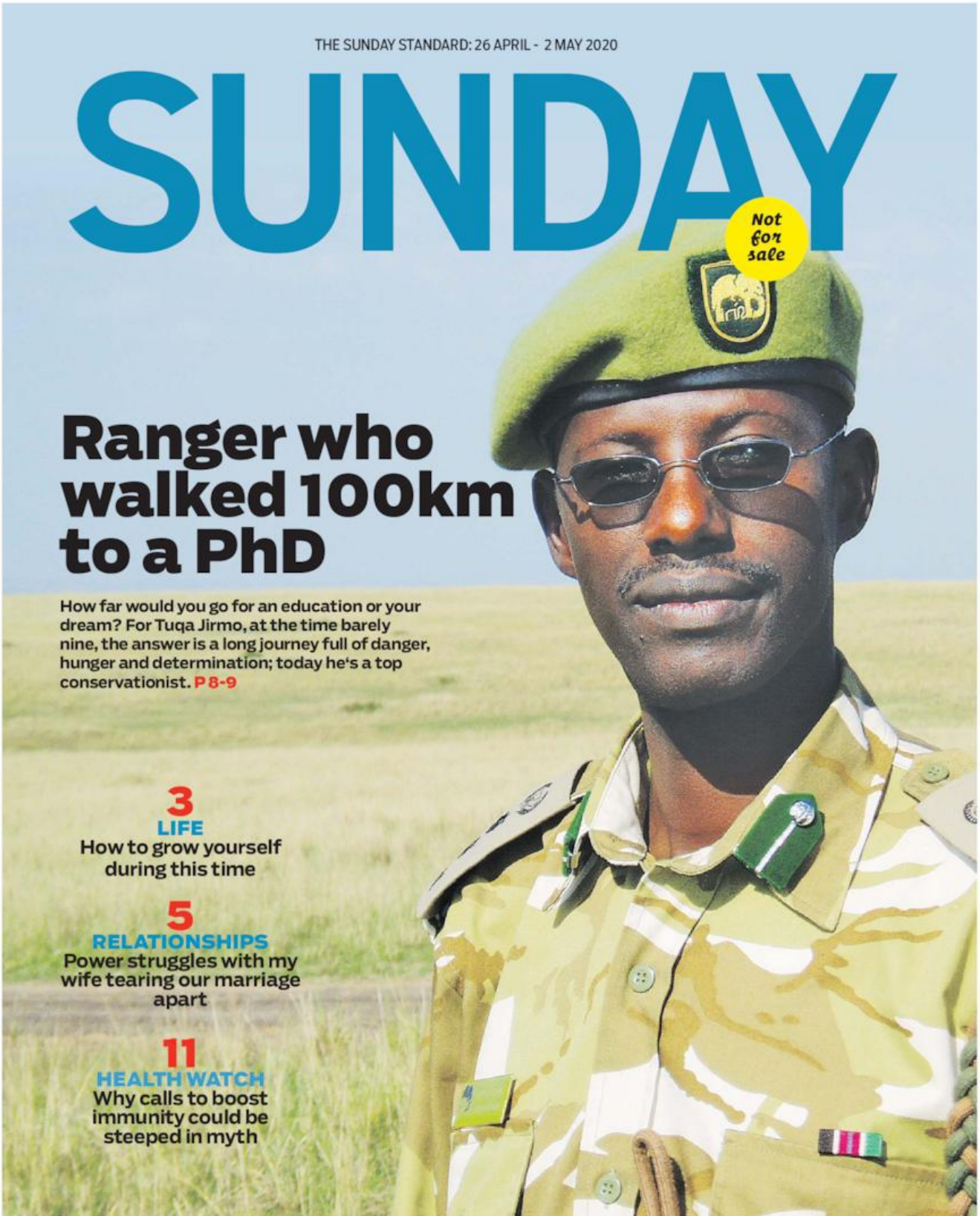
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UPFRONT

WHY YOU SHOULD USE PAPER TOWELS, AVOID HAND DRYERS

Paper towels are better than hand dryers at removing viruses such as coronavirus, new research shows. Scientists from the University of Leeds say hand drying is important to minimise the spread of dangerous microbes including the novel coronavirus.

For people who have not washed their hands properly, using paper towels is substantially more effective than hand dryers at removing the germs on their hands. Scientists say hand drying is important to minimise the spread of dangerous microbes including the novel coronavirus.

Failure to remove them increases transfer to other surfaces and opportunities for it to spread and be passed onto other people. The new UK study investigated whether the way you dry your hands in a public toilet made a difference to virus transmission in a hospital environment.

Dr Ines Moura, from the University of Leeds, said: "We believe that our results are relevant to the control of the novel coronavirus that is spreading at pace worldwide. "Paper towels should be the preferred way to dry hands after washing and so reduce the risk of virus contamination and spread."

Researchers also noted their findings have particular importance since there has been a general migration from use of paper towels to hand dryers in many settings and areas of the world.

In their research, four volunteers simulated contamination of their hands or gloved hands using a bacteriophage which is a virus that infects bacteria and is harmless to humans. Their hands were not washed after contamination to simulate poorly or inadequately washed hands.

Hands were dried using either paper towels or a hand dryer and each volunteer wore an apron to measure the level of contamination to the body and clothes while hand drying. They dried their hands in a hospital public toilet and after leaving, samples were collected from public and ward areas.

Scientists tested surface sites after contact with their hands or apron, including doors, stairs, handrails, lift buttons, phones, intercom buttons and chairs in public and ward areas.

Findings revealed both hand dryers and paper towel methods statistically significantly reduced virus contamination of hands.

But for ten out of 11 surfaces, significantly more environmental contamination was detected after using a hand dryer compared with paper towels. All surfaces tested following the use of hand dryers showed phage contamination, a type of virus, compared with only six surfaces after paper towel use.

Surface contamination

The average surface contamination following hand contact was more than ten times higher after drying hands with a hand dryer than with paper towels and viral dispersal to the apron and clothing was five times higher.

In the experiment, volunteers were also asked to fold their arms across their chest while using the apron before resting on the arms of a chair. Results showed transfer from the apron to armchairs was detected only after using the hand dryer.

This suggests microbes can not only be transferred to environmental surfaces directly from hands that remain contaminated after hand drying but also indirectly from from a person's body that has itself been contaminated during hand drying.

Findings were published in an abstracts book by the European Congress on Clinical Microbiology and Infectious Diseases (ECCMID).

The research was due to be presented at the ECCMID in Paris which was cancelled due to coronavirus. [Mirror]

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How to **grow yourself** while indoors



Because of the coronavirus pandemic - that has brought with it quarantine, isolation and social distancing, you might have found yourself with more time on your hands. So, which ways can you use that time to grow as a person?

Learn vertical farming

As markets largely stay closed, you may be fretting over where to get fresh vegetables. Having a garden outside would be great, but that is not an option for most urban dwellers.

However, you can easily turn your balcony into a garden and grow your own vegetables. You do not need much space to grow a lot of crops there, as you can do vertical farming. This is done by making tower gar-

dens, where the holes for the crops are drilled on both sides of pipes lined horizontally, and then placed upright instead of horizontally.

There are companies that can install them for you. You can also use old plastic bottles to grow plants.

Practise meditation and mindfulness

Meditation is a great tool to use during this time, where anxiety abounds. It can calm you down, help you learn to focus and give you mental clarity. You can also practise mindful-



activities that top business leaders say they do, and regular people rarely do.

Bill Gates, for instance, reads 50 books a year, which translates to about one book a week. The late Safaricom CEO Bob Collymore would also read three to four books in a month. The average person reads 12 books a year.

If you no longer have to commute to work, you can easily turn part of the time you used to go to work into reading time. Start by reading books on subjects you are interested in to build interest in reading.

Reading will improve your way of thinking, expand your knowledge and take you places you cannot go physi-

cally. As Mark Twain said: "The man who does not read has no advantage over the man who cannot read."

Learn a skill

The options here are endless - you can learn how to play an instrument, learn a new language, learn to cook different recipes, upgrade the skills in your profession, learn business and entrepreneurship skills and so much more.

The resources are equally endless. There is hardly a skill for which you cannot find tutorials on Youtube.

You can also take online courses and get certification.

Some of the options are: Coursera, Microsoft Office Training Centre, Google analytics, Edx (created by Harvard and MIT universities), Udemy and Brainbench.

Make money online

Turn your existing skills into profit online. One of the best sites to get freelance work is Upwork.

The site connects professionals and agencies to businesses seeking specialized talent.

The kinds of skills people are looking for include writing, software development, design, data science, animation, transcription and numerous more. Chances are that a skill you have is required by someone.

There are also other sites that do the same thing, some for specific skill sets. Iwriter.com, for instance is for writers only. Other ways to make money online include writing an ebook, starting a blog, digital marketing and copy writing.



ness. As defined by mindful.org, mindfulness is the basic human ability to be fully present, aware of where we are and what we're doing, and not overly reactive or overwhelmed by what's going on around us. The world has been so fast-paced that you may have not even noticed this ability slipping away from you, but now is a good time to refine it.

Most top CEOs and high performers also tout meditation as one of the things that helped them get and stay where they are.

There are numerous resources and apps online to help you meditate and be mindful. Mindful.org is a great place to start one simple type of meditation known as mindfulness meditation.

Read

This is another one of those beneficial



THERE IS HARDLY A SKILL FOR WHICH YOU CANNOT FIND TUTORIALS ON YOUTUBE. YOU CAN ALSO TAKE ONLINE COURSES AND GET CERTIFICATION.

Take time to **spring clean** your finances

As you spend more time at home due to the Covid 19 Pandemic, this is the perfect time for some spring cleaning to prepare yourself for the rest of the year.

You can start with your house – from wardrobes, kitchen, living room, to the bedroom. But don't forget to also put your financial house in order.

Once we set goals at the beginning of the year, it is easy to put our financial lives on autopilot and fail to evaluate our earning and spending habits. To become even better at managing your personal finance, you should make practice of spring cleaning your finances every year.

This exercise will help you evaluate which products and services and services you no longer use or could switch to get better rates. Financial spring cleaning can save you some money and help to get your financial goals back on track.

With that in mind, here are a few ways to tidy up your financial 'house':

Clean up your paperwork

Many people store a lot of "important financial papers" which they never even take a look at. Honestly, some of such papers are not as important as you make them out to be. But it is understandable that you'd want to keep them in case you need to refer to the information they contain in future.

The best way to store most of your financial documents is digitally. You can scan and store your documents in your computer, an external hard drive, and back them up on a secure cloud system. Having digital file storage will help you cut down on clutter and increase accessibility to important files.

It is prudent to keep physical copies of very valuable documents, such as business contracts and title deeds, in a fire-proof safe. Any document which isn't valuable enough to earn space in the safe can be stored digitally.

When discarding any financial documents, make sure you properly shred or even burn. This will help prevent the information falling into the wrong hands and leading to fraud or identity theft. You can buy your own paper shredder online.

Review your budget

At this time of the year, especially with the pandemic, it is a great idea to review your monthly budget.

Even if your income hasn't been negatively affected by the pandemic, you should only spend on the essentials so you can save more for the future.

Look at what you are spending your money on and evaluate which expenses are necessary and which ones you can do without. For example, you might have to go without any new clothes, gadgets, and eating out until the pandemic is handled.

However, if you're spending more time at home, it is reasonable to keep your cable TV and internet subscription. While at it, don't forget to plan and budget for the remaining irregular expenses for the year.

Irregular expenses might include birthday gifts, contributing towards a friend's wedding or baby shower, and rewarding your kids for good performance.

Failing to plan for such expenses can wreak havoc on your budget. You can set an account for irregular expenses and save money for the purpose.

Audit your statements

Take a look at all your monthly and annual statements and make note of the fees. Look at the recurring fees. Those seemingly low fees on checking or savings accounts can add up to significant amounts over the year, money which can go toward other financial goals. You can talk to the bank to your bank about the rates or simply switch to a bank offering better rates.

ing better rates.

While at it, this is also the best time to cancel any unnecessary subscriptions. Sometimes, we subscribe to products and services online and simply forget about them.

These subscriptions might include online journals, software updates, hard drive backup services, and health club membership. Take a look through your bank account or credit card statements to catch and ditch any such subscriptions.

Review health and life insurance policies

As you get older and your life circumstances change, your life and health insurance needs evolve. For example, if you have a spouse and children, you need more life insurance than a single person. When you are older or have dependants, you also require a better health plan.

If your job doesn't provide health coverage, shop for an affordable plan online or using a broker. An insurance broker can also advise you on how much life insurance you need based on your income and responsibilities.

Review asset allocation

Your ideal asset allocation will also change over time according to your age and responsibilities. As you get older, it is wise to keep away from investing more in stocks to avoid sequence of returns risk.

Instead, you should pay more attention to more stable, income-oriented investments such as bonds and as lower-risk real estate assets.

With the natural passage of time, it is expected that some of your investments will outperform the others. To see which investments are performing well to help in rebalancing your portfolio, you need to periodically review your asset allocation.

This will help to keep your asset allocation appropriate for your long term goals, age, and risk tolerance.

Plan retirement contributions

This is also a great time to look at your retirement investments and savings account. Calculate how much money you will have upon your retirement.

If this amount doesn't sound sufficient, you can start making plans to increase your contributions.

For example, you can ask the human resource department at your job to cut more from your paycheck or plan or increasing your investments for retirement.



MANY PEOPLE STORE A LOT OF "IMPORTANT FINANCIAL PAPERS" WHICH THEY NEVER EVEN TAKE A LOOK AT



Power struggles are tearing up our marriage



Hi Chris,
My wife and I disagree a lot, even over the smallest things. And to be honest, I tend to give in most of the time, even over important issues like sex and parenting, just for a quiet life. We also bicker endlessly over smaller issues too! Like I'm neat and she's messy, I'm a saver, and she's a spender. I could go on. Somehow it seems like my wife always needs to get her own way, and so when I don't give in there's a power struggle that can last for simply ages, and that really gets me down. One of my friends told me that disagreement is normal in a marriage, but our marriage seems way different from normal. Is there anything I can do to make things better?

Constantly Giving In

Hi Constantly Giving In,
It sounds like your relationship has conflict and control issues. Actually every couple does to some extent, so your friend's right about arguments being normal in marriage.

Arguments usually arise from basic personality differences, and are pretty much

inevitable. Personalities can't really be changed, and such disputes don't usually go away on their own. But you can learn to manage them, and they must not be ignored. Because they can wreck even the closest of relationships.

For example, constantly giving in means that you'll gradually become resentful about your needs not being met. That doesn't mean you should never go along with your wife's wishes. It's only when giving in becomes one-sided that it's a problem.

A couple's power struggles also do a lot of damage because of all the negativity during the battles for control. And when power struggles never get resolved, the couple usually becomes hostile and disengaged from one another. Some stay together like that, unhappy and frustrated, but most eventually part ways.

Conflict problems start whenever a spouse has difficulty giving up some control to their partner, or don't like standing up for themselves. Habits like that usually originate in childhood, and are generally something we

don't understand too well about ourselves, but everyone can learn to overcome them.

So you need to learn how to stand up for your needs, while your wife needs to learn to let you have your way more often. Both are well worth doing. Spouses who listen to their partner's opinions enjoy their marriages far more, as do those who stop trying to change every little detail in their partner.

And, as strange as it may seem, once your wife learns to give up some control, she'll find that she actually ends up getting more of what she wants. While when you become more assertive, your relationship will become far more secure.

It's also important to realise that some differences can't be resolved. For example, your spending habits and tidiness issues reflect deep personal preferences that rarely ever change.

So you'll both be a lot happier if you to learn to cope with issues where you just can't agree!

All the best,
Chris

What to do to find balance between family and career

Hi Chris,

My husband and I both work, and have done for years. We both love our jobs, but now that our children are growing, we're finding that striking anything like a reasonable balance between our family life and our work can be very hard. Impossible in fact, what with the increasing demands that the children's social life are adding to our already hectic schedule. Why is it so difficult to find enough hours in the day? Is it even possible?

Unbalanced

Hi Unbalanced,

You're not alone. Most couples struggle with work-life balance issues. Because how you manage your time affects everything you do: your income, your career and your social life. So there are no easy solutions.

But there are some good rules. Like discussing everything together! Start by considering the possibility of at least one of you working over the Internet, freelancing or consulting. And try to find work which minimises travel and long hours.

Successful working couples also live simply, to reduce financial pressures. They're focused and professional at work, arriving and leaving on time. They avoid bringing work home, and prepare for family emergencies by training subordinates to cover their responsibilities when needed.

They also protect their family time. They know which activities are the most important, and refuse anything that would interfere with the essentials. Because as your children grow you'll find yourself struggling with ever-increasing and conflicting demands, like party invites, visiting friends, sports and classes.

You'll soon find that if you don't allocate some time for family activities, then they won't happen. Plan time for your individual interests of course, but put your relationship before everything else. And include time alone as a couple in your schedule.

The secret is keeping everyone in the loop. Have a routine for how you'll spend each week, and set aside a few minutes every evening to talk through what you want to do the following day.

Discuss how you'll share the load between you. Agree areas of responsibility that mean you each do the jobs that are easiest or most enjoyable for you, and completely let go of the responsibilities your partner's taking on.

If you're both in full-time employment, research suggests that a successful family life benefits from sharing the chores equally, making decisions together, both being involved in child care, and for wives to resist the temptation to be controlling around issues involving the children.

Above all, never underestimate how much even just a few moments spent with your children means to them, even tiny babies. So even though organising enough time with your family can be tough, it really matters. Give it a very high priority.

All the best,
Chris



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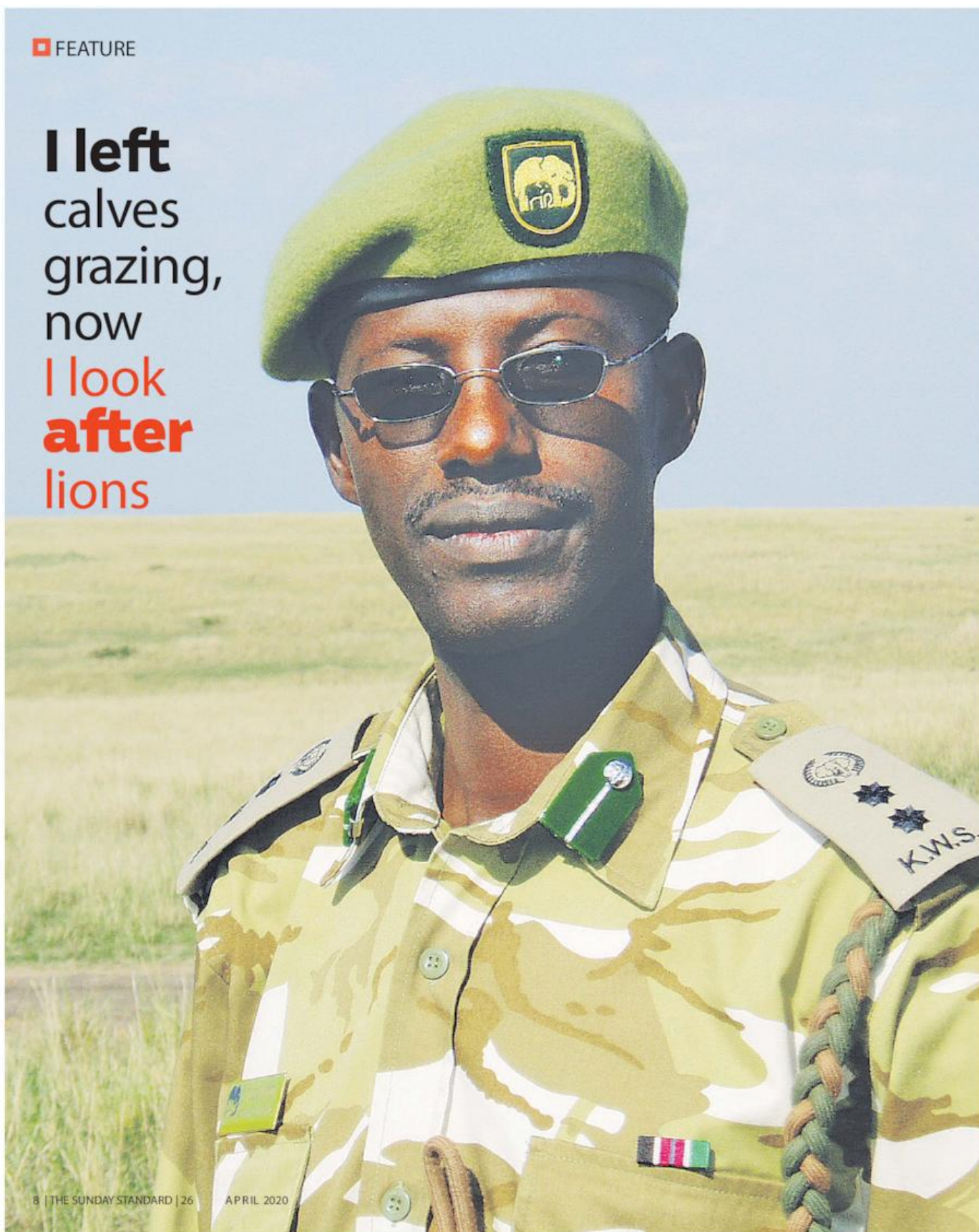


100
YEARS OF MEDIA
CHALLENGE



FEATURE

I left
calves
grazing,
now
I look
after
lions



Born into a nomadic family, Dr Tuqa Jirimo ran away from home, braving wild animals to get an education, today he takes care of the beasts that could have easily cut his dream short, writes Jeckonia Otieno

The conditions into which Dr Tuqa Jirimo was born into were less than ideal for academic success, but that did not stop him. "Where I was born and brought up we had no school and we would move around with livestock in search of pasture and water," begins Jirimo who is now 48 and holds a doctorate degree in conservation.

At one point, he ran away and had to endure a two-day trek to school, and only his passion for education and, maybe, sheer luck, saw him through, with his family terrified that something bad might have happened to him. This was back in Sololo, Moyale, where the ninth born lived a nomadic life with his family.

When he was eight, his family moved away from Sololo and settled in Golole, an area about 100 kilometres from their original home.

People from different places had settled in the area and a Catholic organisation set up a school in the area under a tree and children were enrolled – Jirimo was one of them.

He says: "Our parents were called and told about religion, health and education. Education struck a chord with my dad and he allowed only me to go to school."

Young Jirimo developed a lot of interest and the family stayed in the area for about a year until the school closed for the December holidays. It so happened that back in their home, the rains had come and the family had to relocate.

"I, however, kept the opening date in mind and kept reminding my dad even after we had gone back to Sololo but he seemingly did not take the matter seriously," narrates Jirimo.

With a just a week to schools reopening, Jirimo kept pestering his father until the day that schools reopened, but the dad never took it seriously. Realising that his father would never take him back to school, Jirimo hatched a plan.

He recounts: "We would be left to look after the calves when the older children took the cattle to graze. I took this opportunity to escape from home and go back to school."

Without sharing his plan, Jirimo woke up like other children and as usual took the calves out. But on this day, he carried



BEING A CHILD, JIRIMO HAD UNDERESTIMATED THE DISTANCE BETWEEN HIS HOME AND THE SCHOOL AND THOUGHT HE WOULD JUST RUN AND GET THERE

his books as well. He left the children in the field and started the long walk back to school.

"I instructed the other children that they should take the calves back before darkness set in and set off on my journey in the quest for education," says Jirimo.

Being a child, Jirimo had underestimated the distance between his home and the school and thought he would just run and get there. He, however, ran and walked but had not reached the school by the time the sun was setting.

He says: "When darkness fell, I climbed an acacia tree and spent the night. All I could hear were hyenas and other wild animals howling in the darkness."

The following morning, Jirimo continued with his journey, which took him the whole day that by the time he arrived in Golole it was evening. He was exhausted from the two-day trek with nothing to eat.

Jirimo's teacher Gulicha Guyo was shocked to see a famished boy, whose home he knew was over 100km away, arrive just before school day ended. "Mr Guyo took me to his house, gave me two cups of milk which I gulped in quick succession as I was starving before I went to class to join other children," adds Jirimo.

But there was a hiccup, the school day ended and the boy had no place to spend the night so the teacher took him to the village where his sub-clan was traced and Jirimo was placed under foster care



From extreme left: Dr Tuqa Jirimo in 2016, then Meru National Park Senior Game Warden; Jirimo at Lewa Wildlife Conservancy where he is the chief operating officer and (above) in 2016 with residents of Kinna, Isiolo. [File]

in one of the families.

After three days, Jirimo's older siblings arrived in Golole with little hope of finding him; they had lost hope thinking that he had been killed somewhere along the way. The decision to trace him back to school was made after they failed to find his books on the day he disappeared. He says: "My elder brothers' plan was to take me back home but I refused and I remained in school. Catholic Relief Services initiated a project and I lived with one of the missionaries until the project ended by the time I was completing Class Three."

When he went back home, Jirimo was enrolled at Sololo Primary School in Class Four and he boarded at the school. In 1987 he completed primary education and joined Marsabit Boys Secondary School where he sat for KCSE exams in 1991.

"I was employed as a Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS) ranger in 1992 and trained at Manyani for nine months, after which I was posted to different areas as part of the anti-poaching squad," Jirimo says.

Jirimo was chosen for mid-level career training due to his performance and went to Tanzania College of African Wildlife Management in Moshi. On coming back, he was worked in Malindi Marine Park, Meru National Park and Samburu.

"In 2001, I went back to Tanzania for advanced diploma in wildlife

management after which I was given a study leave to pursue a bachelor in wildlife management at Moi University and as posted to Amboseli National Park as deputy senior warden in 2006." He narrates.

When the senior warden retired Jirimo took over but was transferred to Tsavo East National Park in 2008 as deputy senior warden and then to Masai Mara as a senior warden.

In 2009, at the height of Mau Forest restoration project, Jirimo was picked to head the multi-sectoral team to secure the forest in which illegal activities within the forest were stopped in six months. He adds: "The same year, I was proposed for a scholarship to study for a masters (degree) but due to the work in Mau, I could not be granted leave. I had to forego the opportunity but enrolled at the University of Nairobi in 2010."

Jirimo went back the Mau after completing his masters but landed a scholarship again to study for a PhD at the Leiden University in The Netherlands. He studied conservation biology and did his project in Amboseli focusing on human-wildlife conflict.

In 2016, Jirimo became the first uniformed KWS officer to earn a doctorate in conservation. He was posted to Meru National Park as the senior warden.

The father of three daughters and one son is now the chief operating officer at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy.

Five lessons to live by

Great men and women have a set of rules they live by or have followed to get where they are, we look at words of wisdom from five greats from different career paths



Denzel Washington: Make a difference

"We all have that unique gift, to touch people, to affect people. Understand that gift." Film superstar and Denzel Washington is widely seen as one of the most humble men in Hollywood, despite his status. He has touched the lives of many. This became even more apparent when it was known that the Black Panther star Chadwick Boseman and Denzel to thank for his success, or at least part of it for funding him to undertake a theatre program at the University of Oxford. "Denzel paid for me. I'm sure he has no idea... I've been waiting to meet him, so I can tell him," said Boseman. But this was not by chance, as the actor believes in making a difference, however small around us. He says that we all can change each other's lives in some way or the other.



Richard Branson: Follow your dreams

British billionaire Richard Branson has always talked about following his dreams, right into the world's richest list. He says this was something that he learnt from his father: "Dad didn't get to live out his dream to be an archaeologist; he followed in the footsteps of his father, a High Court judge. Dad struggled in his career as a barrister, but instead of mourning a life he could have lived, he made sure I learned from his mistakes, giving me remarkably free rein to find my own way, and live out my dreams. Even when I messed up, which I have done many times throughout my life, he always stood by me; knowing that by showing me unconditional love I would become the man I was meant to be."



Adele: Appreciate those around you

British songbird Adele awed the world of music when she won the Album of the Year at the 59th Grammy Awards in 2017. In her speech, instead of customary thanking her team and family, she shone the light on another artiste, Beyoncé. "But I can't possibly accept this award. And I'm very humbled and I'm very grateful and gracious. But my artist of my life is Beyoncé. And this album to me, the 'Lemonade' album, is just so monumental. Beyoncé, it's so monumental. And so well thought out, and so

beautiful and soul-baring and we all got to see another side to you that you don't always let us see. And we appreciate that. And all us artists here adore you. You are our light."

At the same time, Adele acknowledged her struggles as a mum: "And in my pregnancy and through becoming a mother I lost a lot of myself. And I've struggled, and I still do struggle being a mom. It's really hard. But tonight winning this kind of feels full-circle, and like a bit of me has come back to myself."



Kobe Bryant: Sacrifice, don't compromise

Earlier this year when an helicopter crash claimed the life of the basketball great, his daughter and seven others, tributes about the icon flowed from all over the world. He touched the lives of many and influenced the world of sport and business in a big way. His drive was seen on and off the court. In interviews and speeches during his lifetime, Bryant always emphasised the need to focus if you hoped to achieve your dreams, but also not sell your soul while at it. "Be willing to sacrifice anything, but compromise nothing in your quest to be your best." "If you want to be great at something, there's a choice you have to make. What I mean by that is, there are inherent sacrifices that come along with that. Family time, hanging out with friends, being a great friend, being a great son, nephew, whatever the case may be."



Jack Ma: Learn how to fail

The Alibaba Group business magnate says people fail because they give up. He has talked variously about how much he has failed in his life, but that did not stop him from pursuing his goal. "I failed a key primary school test two times, I failed the middle school test three times, I failed the college entrance exam two times. I was rejected for all the 30 jobs I applied for after college, was rejected by Harvard University 10 times and even KFC rejected me." He says there were 24 applicants for the KFC job when the fast food chain went to China, 23 were taken and he was the only one who did not get in. "It really stung, but I didn't give up at any point. If you don't give up, you still have a chance."

"Spanish Influenza – what it is and how it should be treated," read the reassuringly factual headline to an advert for Vick's VapoRub back in 1918. The text beneath included nuggets of wisdom such as "stay quiet" and "take a laxative". Oh, and to apply their ointment liberally, of course.

The 1918 flu pandemic was the most lethal in recorded history, infecting up to 500 million people (a quarter of the world's population at the time) and killing tens of millions worldwide. But with crisis comes opportunity, and the – sometimes literal – snake oil salesmen were out in force.

Fast-forward to 2020, and not much has changed. Though the Covid-19 pandemic is separated from the Spanish flu by over a century of scientific discoveries, there are still plenty of questionable medicinal concoctions and folk remedies floating around.

This time, the theme is "boosting" the immune system. Of the rumours currently circulating on social media, one of the more bizarre is the idea that you can raise your white blood cell count by masturbating more. And as always, nutritional advice abounds.

This time, we're being encouraged to seek out foods rich in antioxidants and vitamin C (back in 1918, the public were told to eat more onions), while pseudoscientists are peddling trendy products such as kombucha and probiotics. According to one source, cayenne pepper and green tea can provide better protection against Covid-19 than face masks – a bold and highly dubious claim, considering that some face masks reduce your risk of contracting respiratory viruses by a factor of five.

Boosted immunity as a myth

Unfortunately, the idea that pills, trendy superfoods or wellness habits can provide a shortcut to a healthy immune system is a myth. In fact, the concept of "boosting" your immune system doesn't hold any scientific meaning whatsoever.

"There are three different components to immunity," says Akiko Iwasaki, an immunologist at Yale University. "There's things like skin, the airways and the mucus membranes that are there to begin with, and they provide a barrier to infection. But once the virus gets past these defences, then you have to induce the 'innate' immune response." This consists of chemicals and cells which can rapidly raise the alert and begin fighting off any intruder.

"When that is not enough, then we kick in the adaptive immune system," she says. Most infections will trigger adaptive immunity eventually. But there's another way to get it going, and that's vaccination.

The concept of "boosting" a person's immune system would, presumably, involve making these responses more active, or stronger.

In actuality, you wouldn't want to do this.

Take the symptoms of a cold – body aches, a fever, brain fog, copious amounts of snot and phlegm. Most of these problems aren't actually caused by the virus itself. Instead, they're triggered by your own body, on purpose: they're part of the innate immune response.

But the process is exhausting, so you wouldn't want to have it turned up to 11 all the time.

Making the other aspect of immunity – the adaptive immune system – generally more active could also be extremely unpleasant.

But let's give those saying you can "boost" your immune system the benefit of the doubt and assume they mean that certain products can improve the immune response in a useful way – rather than literally "boost" it.

"The problem is that many of these claims have no grounding in evidence," Iwasaki says. So what are they based on – and is there anything that can help?

If you're healthy, forget supplements – except vitamin D. Many multivitamins claim to provide "immune support" or to help "maintain healthy immune function". But as BBC Future reported in 2016, vitamin supplements generally don't work in already healthy people – and some may even be harmful.

Take vitamin C. The health effects of this antioxidant have been steeped in mythology ever since the two-time Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling became obsessed with its ability to fight the common cold. However, there is little evidence to support vitamin C's mighty reputation for helping us to fight off colds and other respiratory infections.

A 2013 review by Cochrane – an organisation renowned for its unbiased research – found that in adults "trials of high doses of vitamin C administered therapeutically, starting after the onset of symptoms, showed no consistent effect on the duration or severity of common cold symptoms".

Are calls to boost your immunity steeped in myth?



APPROACHES YOU CAN TAKE

Wellness products aside, there are some approaches you can take to help support your immune system. They aren't especially sexy, and you won't see many wellness influencers selling them in a bottle.

They are, however, proven to work – and they don't require shelling out your hard-earned cash: get enough sleep, exercise, eat a balanced diet, and try not to be stressed.

The vitamin C racket

In fact, many experts consider the vitamin C market to be a bit of a racket, as most people in the developed world get enough from their diets already. "Vitamin supplements aren't beneficial to your immune system unless you are deficient," says Iwasaki. Several studies have linked low vitamin D levels to a higher risk of respiratory infections, and more severe symptoms when they develop. They've also been implicated in the development of autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis.

In fact, many immune cells can actively recognise vitamin D, and it's thought to play an important role in both the innate and acquired immune response – though exactly how remains a mystery.

But crucially – and unusually – vitamin D deficiencies are endemic in many countries, even wealthy ones. As of 2012, it was estimated that about a billion people worldwide weren't getting enough. And with more and more people urged to stay indoors, it's easy to see how even less sunlight exposure could lead to more deficiencies.

No, masturbation won't help either

After years of being held in suspicion, the tables have turned, and recent research has shown that masturbation comes with some surprising health benefits. In men, for example, it's thought to help keep sperm healthy and may reduce a person's risk of developing prostate cancer.

But any claims that masturbation can improve your immunity or protect you from Covid-19 are overblown. It's true that one study found that men had higher white blood cell counts when they were sexually aroused, and during orgasm. However, there is no evidence that this translates into protection from infections.

There is one way that the practice might protect you – by keeping away from other people.

Antioxidant pills

The question of whether antioxidants can help is slightly more complicated. As part of the inflammatory response, white blood cells release toxic oxygen compounds. These are something of a double-edged sword. On the one hand, they can kill bacteria and viruses and stop them from being able to make more copies of themselves. On the other, they can damage healthy cells, leading to cancer and ageing – and wearing out the immune system.

To stop this from happening, the body relies on antioxidants. These help to control those unruly oxygen compounds and keep our cells safe. And we get some of our reserves of these compounds from our diets. Brightly coloured fruits, vegetables and spices tend to contain the most, because antioxidants are often pigmented: they give carrots, blueberries, aubergines, red kale, turmeric, and strawberries their hues.

However, despite decades of research, not a single placebo-controlled, peer-reviewed study on humans has ever shown that high doses of antioxidants can "boost" the immune system, or treat or prevent viral infections in humans.

Probiotics may or may not help

There is no evidence that any kind of probiotic can protect you from Covid-19. One 2015 review found that probiotics – beneficial microorganisms which are concentrated in foods, drinks, or pills – significantly reduced the number of upper respiratory tract infections and made them less severe. They also slightly reduced the use of antibiotics and led to fewer school absences.

What has been proven to work?

Iwasaki says most of these myths are relatively innocuous – but the danger is that falling for them will give you a false sense of security. "One thing I do warn against is when people feel like they're protected. They shouldn't feel empowered to go out there and, you know, start having parties," she says. Wellness products aside, there are some approaches you can take to help support your immune system. They aren't especially sexy, and you won't see many wellness influencers selling them in a bottle.

They are, however, proven to work – and they don't require shelling out your hard-earned cash: get enough sleep, exercise, eat a balanced diet, and try not to be stressed. [BBC]



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Working from home: How to remain productive

The ordinary workplace has been disrupted and rearranged thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic. Most organisations have sent their employees to work remotely. The fact that no one saw it coming, and we also do not know how long it will take to go back to "normal", we had to quickly readjust.

Many managers found themselves with the job of leading remote teams, a first time for some. Employees had to work and be productive without direct supervision.

Managing yourself when in quarantine is not as easy as it sounds.

A work day without the usual face-to-face human interaction, working with your kids around and your bed within reach is on its own a daunting task. If you are in leadership, your role becomes magnified and more complicated.

As the pandemic continues to bite, with county isolations and more restrictive measures, work conditions have been made harder by pressurised conditions, uncertainty and some sense of dislocation.

How do we adjust and adopt to the new way of getting work done?

Re-evaluate your expectations

We usually have standardised ways of handling duties in our places of work. Being accustomed to a synchronised routine makes the workplace "normal".

During this time, we are better off focusing on the results. We have been thrown to be flexible and accomplish

our responsibilities in what seems like our own terms. We have to accept the new normal and get work done anyway.

Keep in touch

One way of building and sustaining morale at the workplace is to communicate as often as possible. Most employees are now working in shifts to avoid overcrowding. Instant messaging, or WhatsApp chatting can be used to get the entire team up to speed with the goings on at the office. Thanks to video conferencing and group call Apps, meetings can still happen and progressive decision making can be done.

This is also the time for "old school" folks to get accustomed to technology tools. If you're in leadership, regularly initiating conversations on communication platforms can get pretty exhausting. Assign more responsibilities to your team members to provide that extra boost in leadership support to guard against emotional isolation.

Learn to interpret emotional cues

It is difficult to interpret tone from text messages. You cannot rely on body language to gauge tone and emotions of your coworkers. Written communication needs a keen articulation to notice the pattern, volume and pitch of what is being put across.

If you know your coworker well enough, you can detect their emotions in their written communication and provide the support they need.



THIS IS THE TIME TO BRING ON BOARD OUT-OF-THE-BOX IDEAS TO IMPROVE YOUR CLIENT SERVICE, ADVERTISING, PRODUCTION AND WAYS YOU CAN STILL MAKE YOUR WORK IMPACTFUL.

HOW MANAGERS CAN MEASURE EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY

■ "The best way you can find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them," Ernest Hemingway said. This advice comes in handy during this time when managers cannot directly supervise or monitor their teams. They have to equip their employees with the right material and tasks and rely on them to actually do the work.

It has been theorised that whether supervised or not, employees can be divided into three groups. For every 100 employees, there are 20 employees who are exceptional performers; 60 who take work seriously but they also value family and other interests; and 20 who work just to pay the bills; they will give just enough effort to keep their jobs.

■ This analysis by Rajeev Peshawaria, a leadership guru, and author is based on the age old Pareto (80:20) principle which explains that the top 20 per cent are responsible for 80 per cent of the results a company obtains. With this in mind, Peshawaria advises that employees should have individualised contracts for performance, which will also be the basis for payment. It will also mean that high performers get to take home much more than their peers and vice versa.

■ Here, employees have the choice to either work hard or slack but with corresponding repercussions. Employees have the freedom to decide what kind of worker they will be. Peshawaria adds: "While most managers seek to maximize control, my experience has shown me that freedom produces better results."

Be patient

Even with modern technology, there are bound to be interruptions and inevitable delays in communication platforms. When there is just a handful of you in the office, probably due to working in shifts, you do not have the privilege to walk into someone's office to find real time solutions. Your emails may not get a prompt response, but patience is paramount in helping businesses survive.

Maintain transparency

Update your manager on a regular basis. Share with your coworkers any information that will be useful on the tasks at hand. Keeping information to yourself only creates information vacuum in your team and fuels uncertainty and fear.

It should feel safe to learn, contribute, and challenge the status quo without fear of facing punishment at the workplace. Transparency communicates good faith and genuine concern for your colleagues.

Stay optimistic and stay safe

One way to maintain confidence at work is to stay hopeful that the future will be better. You will continue to find meaning and purpose in work when kick fear and anxiety away. Optimism is contagious.

Finding ways to stay psyched up even during the constraints of quarantine and social distancing could spark in you new ideas for implementation at your place of work.

This is the time to bring on board out-of-the-box ideas to improve your client service, advertising, production and ways you can still make your work impactful. Practice social distancing, sanitize and consider all precautionary measures to keep you safe.



How **boredom pushed** prisoner to escape, climb Mt Kenya

While held in a prisoner of war camp in 1942, **Felice Benuzzi** hatched a plan to successfully break out and climb Mt Kenya, writes BBC's Erin Craig

It was 1942, and Felice Benuzzi was bored out of his mind. A year in a POW camp in British Kenya had drained the Italian civil servant and amateur mountaineer's sense of purpose.

So, he hatched a plan that would become one of the purest adventure tales in history: break out of camp, climb Mt Kenya, and break back in again.

Bonkers? Absolutely. Dangerous? Insanely so. Yet it became one of the most fulfilling challenges of Benuzzi's life. Boredom is like that; it inspires crazy, perilous, wonderful things.

Humans can't stand being bored. Studies show we'll do just about anything to avoid it, from compulsive smartphone scrolling right up to giving ourselves electric shocks.

And as emotions go, boredom is incredibly good at parting us from our money – we'll even try to buy our way out of the feeling with distractions like impulse shopping.

"People will pay more to avoid boredom than other negative emotions like sadness, and will pay as much to avoid boredom as they would to experience love," said Heather Lench, professor and head of the Psychological & Brain Sciences Department at Texas A&M University in the US.

It was love that brought Felice Benuzzi to Africa in the first place. He married Stefania, a fiery young Jewish woman, days before Italy's 1938 racial laws made such unions illegal. They immediately left for the colonies where the laws didn't yet

reach. In 1941, Italian colonial Africa fell to Britain, and Stefania and their baby daughter were detained in Ethiopia. Benuzzi was sent to British-held Kenya.

Gloomy conditions

Conditions in Camp 354 were not dire, but they were soul-crushingly dull. Each waking moment was shared with hundreds of gloomy, worried men. Prisoners had no privacy, no agency and no way of knowing how long the situation would last.

That uncertainty was especially hard. According to Lench, "When people feel like they cannot escape boredom, it can have very bad consequences leading to apathy and disengagement and possibly to depression."



Benuzzi was well on the way; listless and downhearted. Then one morning he glimpsed a tremendous mountain through the clouds – Mt Kenya, the second highest peak in Africa. His heart lurched.

"For hours afterward I remained spellbound," he later wrote. "I had definitely fallen in love."

Boredom is a powerful motivator, making us reach for something, anything, new. New isn't necessarily better, though; boredom can prompt all kinds of unhealthy behaviours, from overeating to drug use.

Lench's research suggests we tend to choose distractions with the opposite emotional context to whatever bored us in the first place.

Negatively boring situations – say

being trapped in a POW camp or stuck home during a virulent pandemic – can encourage us to seek out positive distractions. They can also make us go a little over-the-top. Risky, outsized ideas are more appealing when we're bored. And Benuzzi's jailbreak ascent was very risky indeed.

"It was a mad adventure from start to finish," said Rory Steele, author of *The Heart and the Abyss: The Life of Felice Benuzzi*.

Steele first encountered Benuzzi's story on the bookshelf of his family's rented villa as an adventure-hungry boy aged 10. Steele never got over the climber's audacious certainty. "He became obsessed with the idea. He saw that mountain and knew he had to climb it."

Benuzzi was an experienced mountaineer, but Mt Kenya (5,199m) outstripped anything he'd encountered in the Julian Alps back home. He was undernourished and undertrained, not to mention ill-equipped, with no access to climbing gear.

Then there were the dangers: altitude sickness; hypothermia; wild animals (all of Africa's Big Five roamed the landscape between camp and peak); and the very real possibility of getting shot.

Evading guards

Especially since he'd have to brave the camp guards twice – sneaking out of the camp and back in again.

(Note: Escape was a non-starter; neutral Mozambique was more than 1,000km away through British and lion-held territory. Anyway, that wasn't the point. This was art for art's sake.)

Well, Benuzzi decided, he'd just have to figure it out. After all, he had plenty of time.

In the popular imagination, great adventures involve dashing out the door to take on the world.

In fact, large-scale adventure requires a whole lot of groundwork. Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay didn't just show up to Everest one bank holiday; their 1953 summit took years of preparation and, by Hillary's count, the combined efforts of 700 people.

Fortunately, from our brain's point of view, preparing for a goal is just as fulfilling as achieving it, perhaps better.

"After we attain a goal, our response to it fades pretty quickly," said Lench. "When we are pursuing a goal, that goal focuses our effort, emotions and thinking in a way that promotes positive states sometimes called 'flow states'."

Most of us have experienced flow states: getting so wrapped up in a project that we glance up to find hours have passed. Flow states are associated with feelings of happiness as well as increased productivity and creativity.

All this was good news for Benuzzi, as every task between him and Mt



Kenya was a creative challenge. And he loved every fiddling logistical problem.

His checklist would be familiar to a modern traveller: planning the route, getting in shape, acquiring equipment, and some serious budgeting (though in his case it was of calories, not cash).

Yet half a century away from map apps and Amazon delivery, everything had to be done the hard way: crafting crampons from scrap metal and making climbing ropes from sisal bed nets (the same twine used on cat scratching posts).

Tinlabel as map

Benuzzi's sketches of Mt Kenya plus a tin can label with a picture of the mountain served as maps. Anything he couldn't make was bartered for with cigarettes.

It took eight months to prepare everything – a period of purpose and relative happiness. But not for one minute did it escape Benuzzi that the whole endeavour was completely nuts.

"He became quite proud of it," Steele laughed. But even a madman couldn't do it alone. "He knew because he was an accomplished mountaineer that he would need at least two people to go with him – two more madmen."

It just so happened the perfect guys were right there in Camp 354: Giàn Balletto and Enzo Barsotti, who were just as bored as Benuzzi was. On the night of 24 January 1943, with the aid of a skilfully copied key and some deceptive costuming, the three found themselves outside the

barbed wire and on their way to Mt Kenya.

Goals are adaptable; sometimes we get to chase them travelling through the world and sometimes we have to continue from a desk.

After a triumphant return to the prison camp 17 days later, Benuzzi prolonged the escapade by writing a book, published in English as *No Picnic on Mount Kenya*. (And if you're itching to find out what happened up there, it's a great read.)

Four more years would pass before he was reunited with his family in Italy, but Benuzzi's outlook had changed for the better.

"I do not consider the five years I spent as a prisoner of war as the sweetest of my life," he wrote with characteristic drollness. "But I can at least bear witness to the difference between my mental state in the years 'before Mt Kenya' and those years 'after Mt Kenya', when I was busy writing these lines."

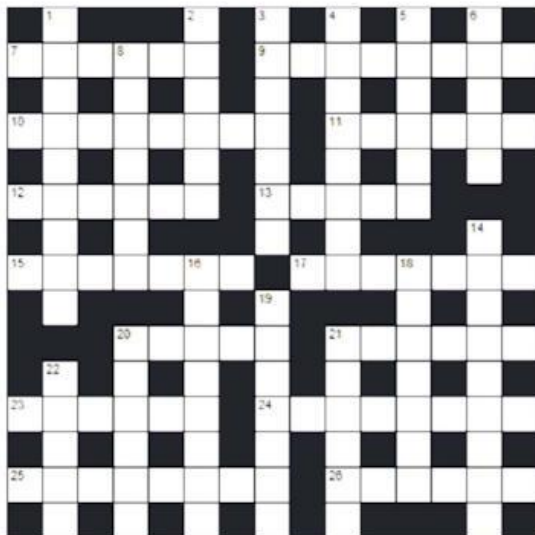
By Lench's criteria, the Mt Kenya climb was the perfect long-term boredom fix – not because it was epic, but because it was deeply personal.

"It should be something interesting and meaningful, tied to their personal identity," Lench suggests, "something they always wanted to do and never seemed to have time for."

So, if you're an adventurer stuck at home, now's the time to dream big. Find some madmen to join you (how about the family?). Then get started on the groundwork that will make that dream possible. After all, we have plenty of time. [BBC]

“HALF A CENTURY AWAY FROM MAP APPS AND AMAZON DELIVERY, EVERYTHING HAD TO BE DONE THE HARD WAY: CRAFTING CRAMPONS FROM SCRAP METAL AND MAKING CLIMBING ROPES FROM SISAL BED NETS

CROSSWORD



Across

- 7 Wager (6)
 9 Examined and determined (8)
 10 Mishap, crash, undesirable event (8)
 11 Official enumeration of the population (6)
 12 Alleges (6)
 13 Fortunate (5)
 15 Word formed by rearranging the letters from another word (7)
 17 (& 22 Down) Sporting event held every four years (7,5) (7)
 20 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 1924 (5)
 21 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 2012 (6)
 23 Dwindling, dimming (6)
 24 Investor's concern (8)
 25 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 1952 (8)
 26 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 2004 (6)

Down

- 1 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 1992 (9)
 2 Alcove (6)
 3 Speedily, carelessly (7)
 4 Absurd, ludicrous (8)
 5 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 2000 (6)
 6 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 1988 (5)
 8 Where the 17 Across/22 Down were held in 2008 (7)
 14 Large, luxurious car driven by a chauffeur (9)
 16 Imperious, overbearing, supercilious (8)
 18 Sovereign head of state (7)
 19 Drug used to lower fever and to thin blood (7)
 20 Clergyman (6)
 21 Deadly (6)
 22 See 17 Across.



Last week's solution

Across: 7 Algebra, 8 Arguing, 10 False alarm, 11 Amen, 12 Nazareth, 14 Tables, 15 Rigor mortis, 19 Rushes, 20 Toboggan, 22 Oboe, 23 Successful, 25 Arbitrator, 26 Pandora.

Down: 1 Almanac, 2 Pews, 3 Create, 4 Prompter, 5 Human being, 6 Integer, 9 Mathematics, 13 Arithmetic, 16 Obsessed, 17 Numbers, 18 January, 21 Bylaw, 24 Soda.

HOROSCOPE



TAURUS

21 April-21 May You have played by the rules in recent weeks but with the Sun so close to rebellious Uranus in your sign you'll feel an overpowering urge to buck the system over the next few days. Just remember that being a law unto yourself can cause problems with the real law.



GEMINI

22 May-21 June Anyone who thinks and speaks faster than a Gemini should be applauded but don't be intimidated just because they're quick and confident: it doesn't mean they know what they are talking about. You are moving at just the right pace. Don't change a thing.



CANCER

22 June-23 July Today's Sun-Uranus link makes this a week for enjoyment even if it means just a change of attitude to your work and chores. Happiness is a state of mind and how you approach the day can make all the difference between it being a pleasure or a pain.



LEO

24 July-23 Aug You may wish you could get rid of someone who has caused you grief but deep down you know such an extreme reaction will only make matters worse. If your reputation means anything to you you must be fair to your rivals, even if they have never been fair to you.



VIRGO

24 Aug-23 Sept If your priorities have been tested in recent weeks, cosmic activity in the most enlightening angle of your solar chart is now giving you the chance to reassess them, as well as some of your most ingrained attitudes and beliefs. Take advantage of it.



LIBRA

24 Sept-23 Oct With the Sun forming a close alliance with Uranus, planet of disruption and changes, you are being encouraged to think outside the box this week. If you can reason and act in unorthodox ways - and you know that you can - almost anything is possible.



SCORPIO

24 Oct-22 Nov You may not agree with the way the world is going but you are wise enough to realise that time doesn't stand still: those who pretend it does invariably get left behind. Open your eyes to the new ways and you may be surprised how much you enjoy them.



SAGITTARIUS

23 Nov-21 Dec Just working harder won't get you far this week. With the Sun linked to ingenious Uranus you should look for ways to cut corners, streamline your schedule, delegate your workload. Anything that makes your energy go further is to be commended.



CAPRICORN

22 Dec-20 Jan Planetary activity in the most dynamic area of your chart urges you to think the unthinkable and ask the impossible of yourself. If you have any creative or artistic leanings this is the time to encourage them. Affairs of the heart are also particularly well-starred.



AQUARIUS

21 Jan-19 Feb The most important thing this week is that you don't let yourself be rushed, especially by those whose sense of time differs from yours. Let them battle to beat the clock: the only clock that matters to you is your inner clock and that says it's time to wind down.



PISCES

20 Feb-20 March You may think twice before speaking your mind this week but it's unlikely. You may be patient with those who move slower than you but few would beat you. There is a distinct lack of tact in your chart just now. Try not to upset too many people.

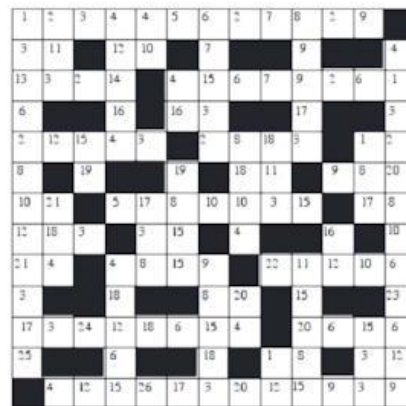


ARIES

21 March-20 April If you are involved in business or worried about money be ready for major changes over the next few days. With the Sun close to Uranus there is no telling what might happen. All you can do is be ready to take advantage of unexpected events.

sallybrompton.com

CODEWORD

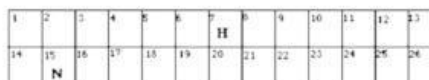


Using all the letters in the alphabet, fill in the grid. To help you, there are three crossword-style clues:

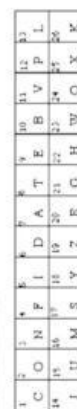
Top line: Reporters first to make advances. (5,7)
Middle line: Floor on which Apartment X is found. (7)
Bottom line: Determined not to get married? (6-6)

By Rosy Russell

To start you off, here is one of the letters.



Last week's answers



FOR THE YOUNG AND GROWING
GenNe
Sunday, April 26, 2020 Pullout Section B



Dungaree fever

STYLE LAB P.5

twinkle

BACK COVER: HOW TO MAKE A FROG & BABU

Editorial

What's Up?

Willy and the fish



Over lunch hour while at School, Willy the Whale ate a little fish that got trapped between her teeth. She tried removing the fish without success. Her mother had told her on numerous occasions to eat slowly to avoid meat getting stuck in her teeth, but she barely listened.

With time, with the fish stuck in her teeth, her mouth started smelling terribly. This problem embarrassed Willy so much that she didn't dare to speak to anyone. Many thought that she was the most unpleasant whale in the world, and they started ignoring her.

When her friend realised this, she offered to help, but Willy didn't want to bother her with her bad breath. "You know, our classmates don't think you've got bad breath, they think you're unpleasant, boring, and ungrateful, and that you hate everyone. Do you think that's better?"

Willy realised that her pride - her exaggerated shyness, and not letting anyone help - had created an even greater problem. Full of regret, she asked her friend to remove the remains of the fish in her mouth.

Rose Kwamboka

Silent destroyers

Termites are social insects that live in colonies. Termites look like ants, but they are more closely related to cockroaches.

They are rich in iron, calcium, fatty and amino acids, and proteins, making them highly nutritious. You can cook and eat them!

Termites never sleep. They build their colonies 24 hours a day, every day, until they die.

They are extremely hygienic insects. Colonies spend a great deal of time grooming one another to prevent disease.

Termites use vibrations to communicate with one another. When a soldier sense a threat, they tap or bang their heads against the colony's tunnel walls, creating vibrations to warn the rest of the colony.

There are a lot more termites than people on earth, can you believe that? Some termite species' queens can lay 15 to 25 eggs per minute and over 40,000 eggs per day.

Termite queens have the longest lifespan of any insect in the world. Some may live between 30 and 50 years, reproducing every year.

Each

termite colony has a queen and king termite (or several), plus workers and soldiers.

Queen and king termites develop wings and fly away and they shed them once they have found a good place to build a nest.

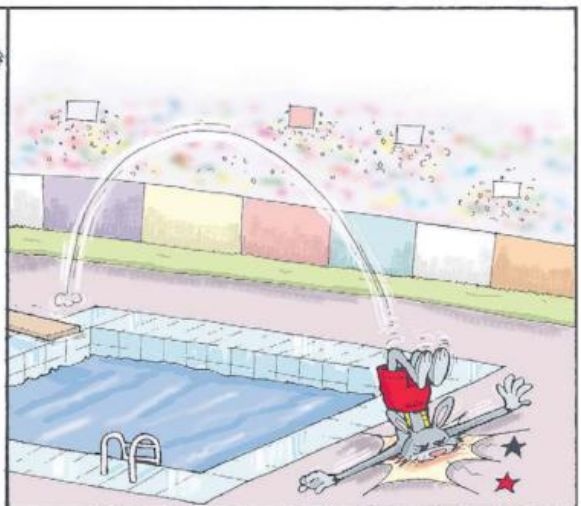
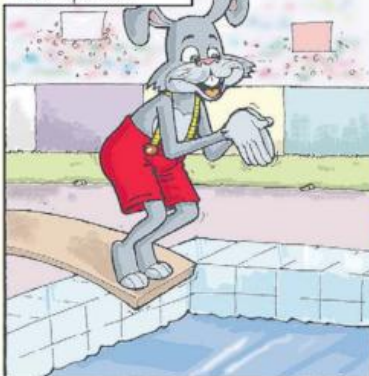
Termite workers and soldiers are almost always blind. They don't need functional eyes since they work all their lives in dark, damp nests. But those that fly can see.

Termites are known as "silent destroyers" because they can chew through wood, flooring and even wallpaper undetected. How? they have a gut full of microorganisms that help them break down plant fibers.

Before they start consuming wood, they need to eat poop of other termites to equip their intestines with the bacteria.



SARAH NYANGWESO



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Adventure Time

Snapshot Story

A Thwarted Dream



BY PRECIOUS GLORIA OTIENO

Age: Nine
School: St Teresa's Girls Yaia Primary School
Grade: Four
Ambition: Journalist
Hobbies: Reading story books

I got home from school on Friday 13th March, 2020, knowing as usual that I would be going back the following week, only to be told that I wouldn't be back to school on Monday because of a pandemic disease known as Covid-19. I was happy as a king and then I realized that I was a candidate who was going to sit for KCPE. I was told by my parents that this was not just a holiday, but a breakout of Covid-19 which is the most feared disease globally. I knew that next year I was going to join form 1 at a school of my choice – Alliance Girls High School, which has been the school of my dreams; that is why I would always read and revise tirelessly so as to realise my dream.

My parents had always agreed to the idea of my homeschooling. I always go into my study room to study in the same way I do while at school. After studying, I go out and play with my friends, since study without play makes Jack a dull boy.

One day when I went to play, my friends asked me to take them to the forest to fetch firewood. I told them I couldn't go with them because I had to revise for my forthcoming examination. So I went back to the house to study and found my father with a dark-skinned gentleman who had a big belly. My father called me and introduced me to the man. That is

when I discovered that man was a teacher. My father then told me that from now henceforth I was going to be coached. I was as happy as a lark when I heard that.

The next day, the man came back and asked me how many subjects I normally took at school. I replied and named the six subjects: Mathematics, English, Kiswahili,

Science, Social Studies and Christian Religious Education. We then made a studying timetable together and then he left.

The following week, I began my study with the tuition teacher. It was so enjoyable that I knew I would now join the school of my choice. I really appreciated my dad and my mum for employing a teacher to teach me during this difficult time of Covid-19. I also appreciated the teacher for his dedication.

Suddenly, after doing the tuition for a period of two weeks, the teacher who was coaching me tested positive for Covid-19. We had to stop the tuition and that is when I realized my dream was thwarted indefinitely! I lost hope in

education since I now had no one to guide me in my studies.

As a candidate for the year 2020, Covid-19 has done more harm than good to me.

If you are 13 years and below, write a creative story of about 500 words based on the photo below. Submit it to mynapshotstory@gmail.com for a chance to get published. Include your name, age, photo, school, class, ambition and hobbies. Add a phone number.



Compiled by Eric Wainaina

Oh, My Word!



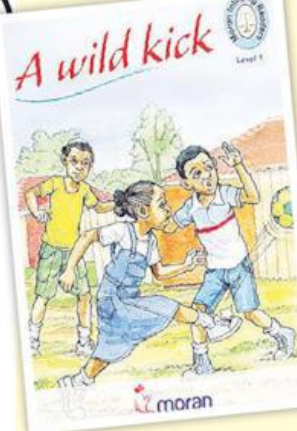
Come up with a funny or creative caption for the photo on the side for a chance to get published. Submit it to ohmywordssunday@gmail.com. Include your name and age.

"Aki hii mvua ya leo ni kali sana!"
Tyler Kiptarus, 12

Wacha nisongesonge huko kidogo na kiti yangu. Wueh...Social distancing kabsaa!"
Aisha Omar, 14



BOOK REVIEW



BOOK: A Wild Kick
AUTHOR: Diane Omondi
Every now and again people make mistakes. Often, people of weak character will tend to be defensive but individuals of strong character will own up to their mistakes and ask for forgiveness. Sam, the boy whose story is told in this book to highlight the importance of accepting one's mistakes, is a keen football player. At one time he invites two of his friends to play with him. Since the boy lives in an environment where there is no adequate playground, they decide to play next to a neighbour's house which has an open place for play. They start the game at a high tempo. Soon Sam gets carried away, thinks that he is at an expansive football pitch and gives the ball such a might kick that it lands right at the neighbour's window. Startled, Mrs Otin, the house owner rushes out and finds his window broken. On seeing Mrs Otin, Sam, goes on his knees, acknowledges his mistake and begs for forgiveness. When did you last emulate Sam?
-GEORGE OLWALO

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style lab

Let's Talk

How are you studying while at home during this pandemic?

GEOFFREY ODHIAMBO



ARNOLD MENGE, 9

My mother gives me some tests to do every week.

RACHAELAWUOR, 13

Our neighbour helps me with revision papers that are published in newspapers since we cannot afford to buy the newspaper daily.



GRACE JOY, 8

My parents made me a personal study time table that I follow. Some days I just draw and paint together with my sisters.



MERCY KATE, 13

I follow lessons from different television stations and newspapers.



ANGEL PURE, 9

I read my books when not watching my favourite television programs.



Dungaree diva



Overalls are back and more stylish than ever. **BRENDA ONONO** shares ways you can wear your dungaree to look not only stylish but comfortable as well.





Full Name: _____ Age: _____
Name of School: _____ County: _____
Teacher's Name: _____
Teacher's Contact: _____

There is an old Swahili adage that says that those who praise a child for his/her hard work, always find that he/she has done well.

One day, our teacher came and told us that the president had closed all the schools and we would not be coming back for a while. She told us that this was because of a new disease called Corona-virus that was making people sick all over the world.

Calling on all Parents

your school of choice can receive a total of 88 newspapers over 4 weeks? 22 newspapers will be delivered to the school every Tuesday, for 4 weeks. This will help boost the pupils' language & comprehension skills, and improve their exam results.

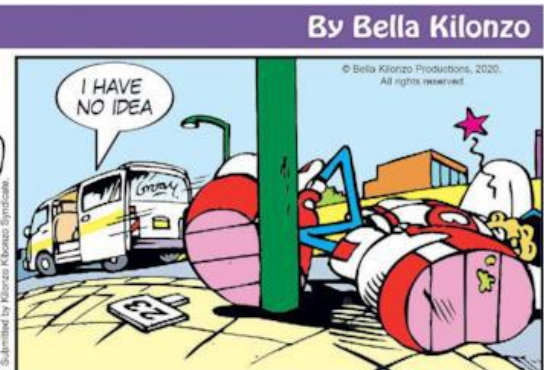
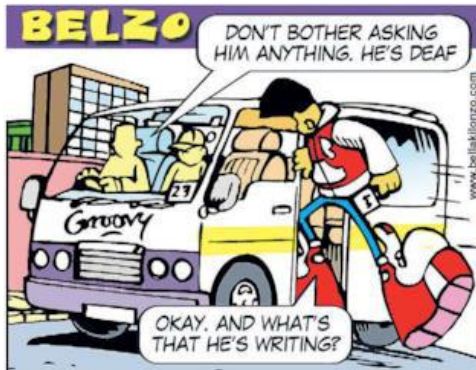
The Standard

Hide and seek



Find 9 hidden musical instruments in the picture

BELZO

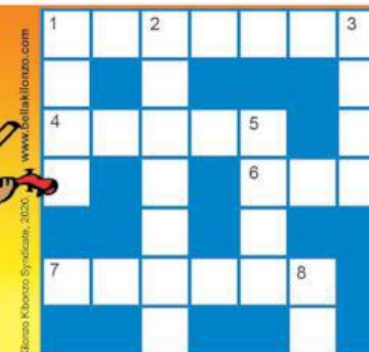


By Bella Kilonzo

Find the correct shadow of the visible image



Answer: 4



Solution: 1. Coin 2. Culture 3. Truck 4. Milk 5. AU 6. Haraka 7. Baraka 8. Inik

CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 A person who rides a bicycle
- 4 Religion of the Muslims
- 6 "Wino" in English
- 7 Haraka haraka haina

DOWN

- 1 A round piece of metal used as money
- 2 Way of life of people
- 3 Tooth of an elephant
- 5 White liquid food
- 8 Abbreviation for African Union

ACROSS: 1. Cyclist 4. Islam 5. Inik 7. Baraka 8. AU

twinkle

Art Attack with Agnes Mwandawiro

Materials Needed

Green & red paper
Circle template
Scissors

Glue
Marker pen

How to Make a Frog



1. Draw a circle on the green paper and cut it out.



2. Draw frog limbs as shown in the picture and cut them out.



3. Cut out two oval shapes and colour them in as shown.



4. Stick these respective parts onto the circle (the frog's body).

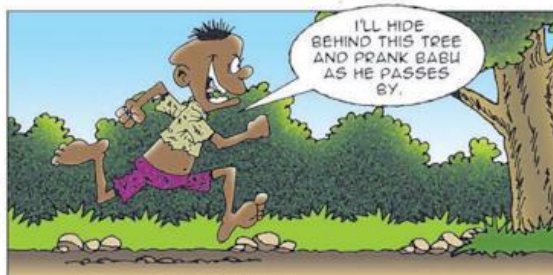


5. With your marker pen, draw and shade in two small nostrils below the eyes and a big mouth as shown.



6. Cut out a long, red rectangular strip and curl it. This will be your tongue. Stick it at the centre of the mouth to complete your project.

BABU



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