

***** EAST AFRICAN *****

BURUNDI :

Burundi – CE2020 4ème jour : 4.552 ex-CNL entrent au CNDD-FDD MUHANGA / KAYANZA

[<http://burundi-agnews.org/politique/burundi-ce2020-4eme-jour-4-552-ex-cnl-rentrent-dans-le-cndd-fdd-kayanza/#more-57581>]

POLITIQUE, ELECTIONS 2020 – KAYANZA (Commune MUHANGA), Jeudi 30 avril 2020 – Les sections provinciales et communales CNDD-FDD KAYANZA – MUHANGA ont annoncé 4.552 ex-CNL (Congrès Nationale pour la Liberté) qui sont devenus de nouveaux BAGUMYABANGA (nom des membres du CNDD-FDD). La Campagne Electorale 2020 (CE2020) bat son plein ...

Tout cela grâce au passage de la caravane CNDD-FDD pour la campagne électorale à MUHANGA. Les nouveaux membres ont été convaincus par le discours de G.M. NDAYISHIMIYE Evariste. Le CNDD-FDD a exposé son programme pour les 7 ans à venir. : http://burundi-agnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/bdi_burundi_septenat_cndd-fdd_2020_cnddfdd.pdf

Selon la Section Provinciale CNDD-FDD KAYANZA, la section communale CNDD-FDD MUHANGA a vraiment réussi son challenge.

Le CNDD-FDD, 1ère force politique du Burundi, avait mené la campagne du référendum constitutionnel, avec ses partenaires de coalitions – son ALLIANCE – en 2018 [<http://burundi-agnews.org/campagne-referendum-mai-2018/>]. A KAYANZA, ils avaient obtenu 81,93% . Soit près de 4/5 èmes des citoyens Burundi de KAYANZA étaient derrière le CNDD-FDD et ses alliés. Depuis 2005, ce parti politique burundais a entrepris : 1/ de décentraliser le pays, suite à la dictature militaire vécue entre 1965-66 à 2005 ; et 2/ de moderniser le système socio-économique des Burundi dont 2a) en modernisant le système éducatif; 2b) en encourageant le développement de l'esprit d'initiative (et l'utilisation des microcrédits) ; et 2c) en modernisant la gestion du territoire. Aujourd'hui, l'heure est au bilan. Et le CNDD-FDD est encouragé à poursuivre le développement de son projet : <http://burundi-agnews.org/philosophie.htm>

Entre 2020 à 2030, le Burundi va vivre une révolution industrielle électrique.

Le Burundi est entrain de vivre ses 4èmes élections démocratiques consécutives depuis 2005. Cela est le signe d'une très grande stabilité politique et institutionnelle dans cette région des grands lacs africains.

Le Candidat CNDD-FDD à la succession de S.E. NKURUNZIZA Pierre, le très populaire Président Africain du Burundi [<http://burundi-agnews.org/TDC> ; <http://burundi-agnews.org/inaugurations>] est G.M. NDAYISHIMIYE Evariste.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Dimanche 3 mai 2020 | photo : CNDD-FDD KAYANZA

Burundi / CE2020 – 6ème jour : Le CNDD-FDD était à NGOZI

<http://burundi-agnews.org/sports-and-games/burundi-ce2020-6eme-jour-le-cndd-fdd-etait-a-ngozi/>
ELECTIONS 2020, CAMPAGNE ELECTORALE 2020 – NGOZI (Commune KIREMBA), Samedi 2 mai 2020 – Comme pour faire un pied de nez à l'”Hon.” RWASA (CNL), originaire de cette localité, la section provinciale CNDD-FDD NGOZI, épaulée par S.E. NKURUNZIZA Pierre, le très populaire Président Africain du Burundi [<http://burundi-agnews.org/TDC> ; <http://burundi-agnews.org/inaugurations>], recevait la caravane CNDD-FDD pour les élections démocratiques

2020. Ce meeting avait pour objet la Campagne Electorale 2020 (CE2020) en cours. Plus de 100.000 personnes avaient répondu présents à ce rassemblement.

Cette foule plus que immense était venue recevoir le candidat CNDD-FDD aux Présidentielles 2020, G.M NDAYISHIMIYE Evariste, présent avec sa ravissante épouse Mme NDAYUBAHA Angeline.

Découvrez par vous – même cette journée inoubliable dans l’Histoire du Burundi. Elle se déroulait à NGOZI :

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enxfu-2mLbg>]

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6tuQPokf4zY>]

[<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=835oIRij1ak>]

G.M. NDAYISHIMIYE Evariste, Secrétaire Général du CNDD-FDD et candidat aux Présidentielles 2020 pour le CNDD-FDD, prenant la parole, a rappelé aux Burundi brièvement le programme du CNDD-FDD, résumé en 35 points, pour les 7 années à venir : http://burundi-agnews.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/bdi_burundi_septenat_cndd-fdd_2020_cnddfdd.pdf

Bravo à la section provinciale CNDD-FDD NGOZI, donc la section communale CNDD-FDD KIREMBA , qui ont plus que réussi leur pari ... Exceptionnelle et Historique journée !

Le CNDD-FDD, 1ère force politique du Burundi, avait mené la campagne du référendum constitutionnel, avec ses partenaires de coalitions – son ALLIANCE – en 2018 [<http://burundi-agnews.org/campagne-referendum-mai-2018/>]. A NGOZI, ils avaient obtenu 82,8% . Soit plus de 4/5 citoyens Burundi de NGOZI étaient derrière le CNDD-FDD et ses alliés.

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DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Dimanche 3 mai 2020 | Photo : CNDD-FDD, RTNB.BI, MASHARIKITV

TANZANIA :

Tanzanie : le barrage Julius Nyerere (2 115 MW) sera achevé en juin 2020 comme prévu, rassure le gouvernement

[<https://www.agenceecofin.com/hydroelectricite/0704-75501-tanzanie-le-barrage-julius-nyerere-2-115-mw-sera-acheve-en-juin-2020-comme-prevu-rassure-le-gouvernement>]

En Tanzanie, le gouvernement rassure sur l'achèvement à temps de la construction de la centrale hydroélectrique Julius Nyerere, prévu pour juin 2020. L'infrastructure a une capacité de 2 115 MW.

Elle est construite sur le fleuve Rufiji dans la région côtière par une coentreprise formée par les égyptiens Arab Contractors et El Sewedy Electric. Son coût de mise en place a été estimé à 3,6 milliards \$.

Medard Kalemani, le ministre de l'Énergie, a tenu à rassurer la population sur la continuité des travaux malgré les pluies. « Je voudrais rassurer les Tanzaniens sur le fait que la construction continue malgré la pluie. Le gouvernement est décidé à tout mettre en œuvre pour qu'elle soit achevée le 14 juin 2020 comme prévu dans le contrat », a-t-il affirmé.

Au nombre des efforts consentis par le gouvernement, il y a la rénovation de la voie ferroviaire de Tazara dans la région de Fuga, qui facilitera l'acheminement des différents équipements nécessaires au chantier.

Gwladys Johnson Akinocho

Tanzanie : une chèvre et une papaye testées positives au coronavirus, le Président prend une décision!

Le président de la Tanzanie a, lors d'un discours dimanche, remis en cause la fiabilité des données gouvernementales sur l'épidémie de Covid-19. Il a ordonné une enquête sur le laboratoire médical national car, selon lui « la situation n'est pas aussi mauvaise que le prétendent les alarmistes. »

Le président tanzanien, John Magufuli, a déclaré dimanche que des échantillons de papaye et de chèvre avaient été testés positifs au COVID-19 dans son pays.

M. Magufuli a donc mis en doute la qualité des kits de dépistage importés par son pays. Il a déclaré lors d'un événement à Chato, dans le nord-ouest de la Tanzanie, qu'il avait donné l'ordre aux forces de sécurité tanzaniennes de vérifier la qualité des kits. Officiellement, 480 cas y ont été détectés, dont 16 mortels. Des chiffres totalement niés par le président.

Selon lui, des agents du gouvernement auraient secrètement envoyé des prélèvements d'une chèvre, d'une caille et d'une papaye, tout en les faisant passer pour des prélèvements humains. Or, tous auraient été testés positifs au Covid-19. « Il est possible qu'il y ait des erreurs techniques ou que les réactifs importés aient des problèmes, a alors estimé le président tanzanien. Avant d'ajouter : Il est également probable que les techniciens soient payés pour induire en erreur. »

Les responsables de la santé avaient obtenu au hasard plusieurs échantillons non humains, dont ceux d'une papaye, d'une chèvre et d'un mouton, mais leur avaient attribué des noms et des âges humains.

Ces échantillons ont ensuite été envoyés dans un laboratoire tanzanien afin de tester la présence du coronavirus. Les techniciens de laboratoire n'avaient aucune idée sur l'origine de ces échantillons. Le président Magufuli a déclaré qu'il était possible que certaines personnes ont été testées positives alors qu'en réalité elles ne sont pas infectées.

« Il y a quelque chose qui se passe. J'ai dit auparavant que nous ne devrions pas croire que chaque aide que nous recevons est pour le bien de cette nation. »

Coronavirus : en Tanzanie, le président met en doute les statistiques et évoque des « sabotages »

https://www.lemonde.fr/afrique/article/2020/05/04/coronavirus-en-tanzanie-le-president-met-en-doute-les-statistiques-et-evoque-des-sabotages_6038564_3212.html

Le pays, qui compte officiellement 480 cas de Covid-19 dont seize morts, s'est contenté de fermer ses établissements scolaires.

Le Monde avec AFP Publié hier à 09h56, mis à jour hier à 10h03

Le président tanzanien, John Magufuli, a publiquement mis en doute, dimanche 3 mai, les données officielles du coronavirus dans son pays, appelant à enquêter sur des irrégularités présumées au laboratoire national.

Coronavirus en Tanzanie : le président s'étonne après des tests sur des animaux

Tanzania COVID-19 lab head suspended as president questions data

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2020/05/tanzania-covid-19-lab-head-suspended-president-questions-data-200505065136872.html>

Authorities launch probe but opposition, which accuses gov't of hiding coronavirus information, defends lab director.

Tanzania has suspended the head of its national health laboratory in charge of coronavirus testing, a day after President John Magufuli questioned the accuracy of the tests.

Magufuli, who has consistently downplayed the effect of the virus, said on Sunday he had secretly had animals, fruits and vehicle oil tested at the laboratory. A papaya, a quail and a goat had been found to be positive, according to the president.

More:

He cast doubt on the credibility of laboratory equipment and technicians and questioned official data on the pandemic.

The president called for an investigation in what he suspected is a "dirty game" in the laboratory, but did not say where the kits had been imported from.

"The equipment or people may be compromised and sometimes it can be sabotage," Magufuli said in a speech broadcast live through state-run Tanzania Broadcasting Corporation (TBC).

Opposition legislator Zitto Kabwe, head of the Alliance for Change and Transparency, defended Nyambura Moremi, the laboratory director.

"Don't get heartbroken by the way politics is interfering in technical issues," he wrote on Twitter. "I trust you did your job professionally and you will remain one of the best scientists in Tanzania."

Catherine Sungura, acting head of communications at the ministry of health, said in a statement on Monday the director of the laboratory and its quality assurance manager had been immediately suspended "to pave way for the investigation".

Sungura said a 10-person committee had been formed to investigate the laboratory's operations, including its process of collecting and testing samples.

On Sunday, Magufuli also fired the head of the government Medical Stores Department, which is in charge of distributing medical supplies and equipment to government hospitals, but gave no reason.

The East African country, which announced its first case on March 16, had recorded 480 cases of the virus and 16 deaths at its last update on Wednesday.

The opposition has accused the government of hiding information and failing to take the disease seriously.

Schools and universities have been shut but markets, bus stops and shops bustle as usual, with Magufuli urging citizens to continue working hard and not stop going to church or mosques.

COVID-19 infections and deaths reported across Africa have been relatively low compared with the United States, parts of Asia and Europe. But Africa also has extremely low levels of testing, with rates of only about 500 per a million people.

Herbal tonic

In neighbouring Kenya, a Senate body sought an explanation from the health ministry over the circumstances leading to the demotion of the head of the rapid response and team director in charge of the centre for virus research at the state-run Kenya Medical Research Institute.

READ MORE

WHO says Madagascar's herbal tonic against COVID-19 not a cure

"In relation to the above, the committee observes that the timing of the dismissal is wrong as it is likely to have a significant effect on the morale and motivation of the various staff that were working under him," the Senate Ad Hoc Committee on the COVID-19 situation in Kenya said in a report on April 28.

Meanwhile, several African countries have ordered a herbal tonic from Madagascar touted as a cure for COVID-19, even though the World Health Organization (WHO) has dismissed such claims and warned its effects have not been proven or even tested by scientists.

Guinea-Bissau and Equatorial Guinea have already received shipments of the tonic, which is produced from the artemisia plant used in malaria treatment, while Tanzania and the Republic of Congo have promised to import it.

SOURCE: Al Jazeera and news agencies

Tanzania eliminates 100 hectares of invasive plants from national park

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-05 18:41:36|Editor: huaxia
http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/05/c_139032486.htm

DAR ES SALAAM, May 5 (Xinhua) -- At least 100 hectares of invasive plants have been eliminated from Tanzania's Kitulo National Park, a protected area of montane grassland and montane forest on the Kitulo plateau in the southern highlands of Tanzania, an official said on Tuesday.

Susan Tesha, a conservation officer with the Kitulo National Park, said the removal of the invasive plants, including eucalyptus trees, was aimed at protecting water sources in the park, which is the first area in tropical Africa protected primarily for its floral significance.

The park covering an area of 412.9 square kilometers and located between Mbeya and Njombe regions in the southern highlands is administered by Tanzania National Parks Authority.

Known as the "Garden of God" by local people, this remote grassland is covered for six months of the year in wildflowers, balsams, honey-peas, bellflowers, irises, lilies, and scores of terrestrial orchids.

Tesha said before the park was established in 2005, farmers planted trees, including eucalyptus, for making timber but some of the tree species sucked water, drying up water sources.

She commended partners that helped in removing the invasive plants, including the New York-based Wildlife Conservation Society which had implemented a special program to remove the invasive plants between 2007 and 2017. Enditem

Tanzanie : l'opposition appelle ses élus à ne plus siéger après la mort de 3 députés suite au Covid-19

02.05.2020,

[https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-](https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-68192_tanzanie_l_opposition_appelle_ses_elus_a_ne_plus_sieger_apres_la_mort_de_3_deputes_suite_au_covid_19.html)

[68192_tanzanie_l_opposition_appelle_ses_elus_a_ne_plus_sieger_apres_la_mort_de_3_deputes_suite_au_covid_19.html](https://www.mediacongo.net/article-actualite-68192_tanzanie_l_opposition_appelle_ses_elus_a_ne_plus_sieger_apres_la_mort_de_3_deputes_suite_au_covid_19.html)

Le parti politique Chadema a demandé à ses élus de plus participer aux sessions parlementaires. Cette décision est consécutive au décès de trois députés en 11 jours suite au coronavirus.

Le dernier en date est le ministre tanzanien des Affaires constitutionnelles et juridiques, Augustine Mahiga, également député, qui est décédé ce vendredi. Il est décédé à l'âge de 74 ans et aucune explication n'a été donnée sur sa mort.

Pour le président de ce parti de l'opposition, Freeman Mbowe, le gouvernement qui cache l'ampleur de la pandémie, se contente d'annoncer les décès sans en préciser les causes.

« Nous regrettons de continuer à apprendre la mort de députés et d'autres Tanzaniens provoquée par le Covid-19 ». A affirmé M. Mbowe cité par VOA, dans un communiqué publié ce vendredi.

Le chef du Chadema a appelé le Parlement à suspendre ses travaux pour au moins 21 jours et à tester tous les élus et leurs familles.

« Nous croyons que des mesures plus strictes sont nécessaires pour protéger les députés et plus largement les Tanzaniens. Comme les autorités doivent encore prendre des décisions, nous souhaitons (en attendant) que nos députés soient en sécurité en se confinant immédiatement », a estimé M. Mbowe.

Le mois dernier, le Parlement avait annoncé qu'un de ses députés avait été testé positif au coronavirus, sans en donner le nom.

La Tanzanie est l'un des rares pays africains à ne pas avoir pris à ce jour de mesures contraignantes pour tenter d'enrayer l'épidémie de Covid-19. Son président est l'un des rares dirigeants dans le monde à minimiser la gravité du coronavirus.

« Je crois que Dieu nous permettra d’aller de l’avant », a déclaré John Magufuli dans un message du 1er mai aux fonctionnaires, les incitant à « continuer à travailler dur ». « Le coronavirus ne doit pas nous empêcher de servir les Tanzaniens », a-t-il ajouté

Il faut dire que le ministre de la santé annonçait des bilans réguliers jusqu’à ce que le président déclare le 22 avril qu’il s provoquaient « la panique » dans la population.

Le gouvernement a annoncé 480 cas de coronavirus, dont 16 décès, en neuf jours. Mais le président tanzanien a appelé ses concitoyens à continuer à travailler. Les églises et les mosquées restent ouvertes, seuls les écoles et université sont fermées. Les commerces étant rouverts.

Ce qui fait dire à Freeman Mbowe, que le président est dans « le déni ».

Thomas Uzima

MEDIA CONGO PRESS / Prunelle RDC

RWANDA :

Rwanda accuses Burundi of sending troops to DR Congo

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/rwanda-accuses-burundi-of-sending-troops-to-dr-congo/1821891>

ANKARA - Rwandan president rebuffs accusations of troop presence in eastern DR Congo, blames 'experts' of spreading 'lies,' 'rumors'
28.04.2020

The president of Rwanda accused Burundi of sending troops to fight in an armed conflict in both countries' western neighbor, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwandan local media reported.

Paul Kagame's remarks came in reaction to accusations raised since mid-March by Congolese opposition politicians and civil society groups that Rwandan troops were leading military operations in the eastern DR Congo's Rutshuru territory against the Rwandan Democratic Forces for the Liberation of Rwanda (FDLR) rebels, the local Chronicles news website reported Monday.

"There's not a single RDF [Rwanda Defense Force] soldier in that territory. I say it with authority," the Chronicles quoted Kagame as saying.

"Our intelligence connection actually tells us we have forces from Burundi, government forces operating from the region," he added.

Accusing "experts" -- thought to be referring to the UN mission MONUSCO -- of spreading "lies" and "rumors" of Rwandan military presence in the region, Kagame said: "The government of DRC [Democratic Republic of Congo] knows that not a single RDF soldier is there."

Kagame also lashed out at the media, saying that a recent FDLR attack that killed park rangers of DR Congo was not reported, with coverage instead making a "monster" of Rwanda.

On Friday, at least 13 park rangers and four civilians were killed by an unidentified armed group in an attack in the Virunga National Park in the northeast of the country.

The incident took place when a convoy of civilians protected by rangers was ambushed by suspected rebels operating in the park in Rutshuru, according to the Congolese Institute for the Conservation of Nature.

Rwanda reopens after 45-day coronavirus lockdown

<https://www.businessghana.com/site/news/politics/212176/Rwanda-reopens-after-45-day-coronavirus-lockdown>

11h ago | Source: BBC

Rwanda has loosened restrictions after 45 days of coronavirus lockdown, even though a nationwide night-time curfew will be enforced and movement in and out of the capital, Kigali, is prohibited.

On Monday, roads in Kigali were busy again, in a city considered to be a hotspot for infections. People are adhering to mandatory mask wearing and social distancing.

Many are happy that normal life has resumed but there is discontent that fares in public transport have been hiked after buses were ordered to carry half of their capacity to ensure social distancing.

Elise Mukamabano said the cost of a one-way 20km (12.4 miles) trip to Kigali, where she works in a restaurant, has doubled to 750 Rwandan francs (\$0.90).

“It is another burden after more than one month stuck home earning nothing,” she told the BBC.

Aimé François Nduwumwe said he is excited to reopen his computer-selling business “after 45 hard days at home”.

“I am very happy, being out and able to hustle again is what matters most to me,” he said.

Bars, sports facilities, schools and churches remain closed.

Rwanda has so far recorded 259 coronavirus cases and no fatalities.

Rwanda total debt hits \$4.9b amid lockdown

<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/business/Rwanda-total-debt-hits-usd4-billion-amid-lockdown/2560-5534424-3yolrhz/index.html>

Thursday April 30 2020

By IVAN R. MUGISHA More by this Author

Rwanda has borrowed extensively in the past month to mitigate against the adverse effects of the coronavirus pandemic, accruing an accumulated debt of close to \$200 million in March alone.

By the end of 2018, the country’s total debt was estimated at \$4.9 billion (most of which is concessional), representing 53.6 per cent of GDP, according to the Ministry of Finance.

The International Monetary Fund and World Bank both agree that the loan is manageable and below the debt distress alarm.

In this pandemic period, Rwanda has borrowed \$109 million from the IMF, \$14 million from the World Bank and \$1 million in the form of aid from the United States.

The EU also approved a grant of \$56 million, while the government can also tap into \$10 billion made available by the African Development Bank through its Covid-19 Response Facility for African states.

The government's austerity measures—such as the suspension of April salaries for majority of public officials—will help to ease government expenditure.

UGANDA :

Uganda's 2020/21 budget shoots to Shs 45.4trillion

<https://www.independent.co.ug/ugandas-2020-21-budget-shoots-to-shs-45-4trillion/>

JULIUS BUSINGE May 5, 2020

Kampala, Uganda | ISAAC KHISA AND JULIUS BUSINGE | Over the past six weeks, Uganda has been in a total lockdown. Shops, except pharmacies and agro vets, had been shut. Transport paralysed. Hotels switched to survival mood; sending away a section of their workers on forced leave to cut costs as government moved to implement a raft of measures to contain the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19).

But during the lockdown, parliament passed a whopping a Shs45.4trillion budget for the next Financial Year 2020/21 compared with the Shs 40.5trillion for this Financial Year ending June.30 amidst the ravaging coronavirus pandemic.

Surprisingly, the government had earlier proposed to lower the budget for the next financial year to Shs 39.6trillion.

The government plans to collect Shs 21.7trillion compared with Shs 20.4 trillion this current financial year through various taxes and the rest through domestic and external borrowings, aids and grants to finance the planned budget.

Some of the proposed measures include; excise duty of Shs 1,115 per litre on beer produced from barley grown and malted locally, excise duty of Shs 1,700 per litre on ready to drink spirits, Shs 2,050 per litre on malt beer, excise duty of Shs1, 350 per litre on gasoline, Shs300 per litre on kerosene, and Shs1, 030 per liter on gas and oil.

The other proposed measures are excise duty of Shs 2,300 per litre on wine made from locally produced raw materials, excise duty of Shs 1,500 per litre on undenatured spirits made from locally produced raw materials, excise duty of Shs 250 per litre on non-alcoholic beverages (Soda) not including fruit or vegetable juice and excise duty of Shs 100,000 on licenses for provision of professional services among others.

The government's move to propose an increase in the budget for the next financial year is in sharp contrast to other countries around the globe that have, instead, come up with a raft of economic stimulus packages including tax breaks to protect businesses and economies from coronavirus fallout.

This development comes at the time the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a severe contraction in economic activity due to a combination of global supply chain disruptions, travel restrictions, measures to limit contact between persons, and the sudden decline in demand.

Emmanuel Tumusiime-Mutebile, the governor Bank of Uganda said in his latest Monetary Policy Statement for April that as a result of the pandemic, the economy is projected to slow down drastically in the second half of Financial Year (FY) 2019/20, with GDP growth for the FY projected at 3 – 4 percent.

He said although GDP growth is projected to gradually recover in the second half of FY2020/21, the emerging output gap is projected to persist until 2022.

Uganda's Covid-19 cases rise to 97

<https://www.monitor.co.ug/News/National/Uganda-Covid19-cases-rise-to-97/688334-5542854-13pv5we/index.html>

Tuesday May 5 2020

By Faith Amongin

The Ministry of Health on Monday evening announced eight new cases of Covid-19 bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 97.

Six of the confirmed cases were out of the 2,061 samples from truck drivers while two are from the community.

Five of the truck drivers arrived from Malaba border post while one was from Mutukula border point of entry.

One community case is a resident of Kyotera district while the other is a Ugandan truck driver from Mutukula. These were confirmed out of the 185 samples from the Rapid Assessment Survey.

So far, the total number of recoveries that have henceforth been discharged is 55. No fatalities have been registered.

Despite the rising number of cases brought in by mostly truck drivers, President Yoweri Museveni still insists that cargo transportation must continue arguing that stopping them would have a very detrimental effect on the economy since they bring in "essential goods". "Stopping these people would be suicidal, cargo has to continue," Mr Museveni said in one of his recent addresses to the nation.

The President, however, put guidelines such as restricting the number of occupants in the vehicle and mandatory testing of truck drivers as a way of keeping the spread of the virus at bay. Truck drivers were also restricted from making unnecessary stopovers where they would easily come in contact with the community thus spreading the virus.

The President has also added another 14 day extension of the lockdown, having been under lockdown for approximately 44 days now, as medical experts continue to monitor the situation, especially now when there are some cases from the community.

He, however, allowed some 'crucial' sectors to resume work but under strict guidelines and must follow Standard Operating Procedures in place including compulsory wearing of masks while in public.

The partial opening up will see agriculture, construction, hardware shops, wood and metal workshops, vehicle garages, restaurants, wholesalers and warehouses allowed to operate.

Floods in western Uganda kill four, displace 5,000

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/floods-in-western-uganda-kill-four-displace-5-000/1827850>

Bodies of deceased buried in a 'scientific manner' due to fears over COVID-19, says local official Godfrey Olukya | 04.05.2020 KAMPALA, Uganda

Sweeping floods in western Uganda killed four people and displaced 5,000 as heavy rains continue to inundate the region, police said Sunday.

They said three others are also missing after the sub-counties of Kabuyanda, Mwizi and Birere in Isingiro District were hit with severe flooding.

A local official, Justus Byensi, confirmed the deaths, saying the bodies of the deceased were recovered and buried at their respective family homes.

"Heavy rainfall that lasted for several hours led to flooding that destroyed many homes and the deaths of some of our people. The deceased have been buried in a scientific manner due to fears over COVID-19. The deceased included two students --15-year-old Kyarikunda Asiimire and Mark Akandinda,13. The others were adults," Byensi said.

He said the three people who are missing are adult males who were cutting timber when the floods struck.

Alex Byarugaba Bakunda, a member of parliament for Isingiro County South, said they have recorded 5,000 people who have been displaced and he has called for emergency government support.

While eulogizing at the burial of one of the deceased, Bakunda appealed to all people living in valleys and other vulnerable areas to be extra careful when torrential rains fall to avoid such calamities.

The country is currently experiencing heavy rainfall which has led to the flooding of lakes and rivers.

KENYA :

Lake Victoria rises, leaving villagers homeless

<https://www.nation.co.ke/counties/kisumu/Lake-Victoria-rises--leaving-villagers-homeless/1954182-5535458-10gv9ll/index.html>

Monday April 27 2020 By CAROLINE WAFULA / VICTOR RABALLA

Residents call them the worst floods ever experienced in the region in many years, and they are now afraid that things could get worse, as heavy rains continue pounding the region and the backflow in Lake Victoria increases.

Lake Victoria has burst its shoreline and the impact of the ever rising water levels since late last year is bringing more trouble for residents of Kisumu, Siaya, Migori, Homa Bay and Busia.

According to a survey conducted by East African Community's Lake Victoria Basin Commission (LVBC), the prolonged rainfall has caused a drastic rise in Lake Victoria's water levels by more than two metres.

The commission's executive secretary, Dr Ali-Said Matano, states that the current bursting of the shoreline is only comparable to an occurrence in the 1960s, where the overflow rose by close to 2.5 metres between 1960 and 1964 (1,136.28 meters above mean sea level).

"At the moment, Kisumu is at 1132.11 metres above mean sea level, Jinja (Uganda) at 1135.8 metres, while Mwanza in Tanzania is at 1134.28 metres," he told the Nation.

The rising water level in Lake Victoria has been occasioned by a huge imbalance in the inflow and outflow from the fresh water lake.

Kenya should consider closing Tanzania border

<https://www.the-star.co.ke/opinion/leader/2020-05-05-kenya-should-consider-closing-tanzania-border/>

In Summary

- The Madagascar government believes that they have discovered a cure for Covid-19 based on the malaria drug artemisin

President John Pombe Magufuli has been demonstrating an increasingly erratic approach to Covid-19 in Tanzania.

He has dismissed positive tests by Tanzanian health technicians as "sabotage" and said that the virus cannot spread in mosques and churches because evil cannot live in the presence of God.

Now he is sending a plane to Madagascar to collect a shipment of Covid-Organics, a miracle cure touted by President Andry Rajoelina.

Magufuli was trained as a scientist and should know that the Madagascar medicine cannot be considered a cure because it has not undergone any clinical trials. He is giving the Tanzanian people false hope at a time when it has more Covid-19 cases than any other East African country.

Uganda and Rwanda have imposed the toughest lockdowns while Kenya is treading a middle road. Tanzania and Burundi are almost casual in their approach and Covid-19 is likely to explode there.

This poses a serious risk to Kenya. There is regular cross-border movement for cattle markets and other activities. If Tanzania cannot protect itself, it endangers Kenya and undermines our own protective measures. The government should consider closing the border with Tanzania.

Quote of the day: "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards."

Søren Kierkegaard

The Danish philosopher was born on May 5, 1813

- President John Magufuli has said he is sending a plane to Madagascar to collect a shipment to help Tanzanians

Kenya records 25 virus cases, total rises to 490

<https://www.the-star.co.ke/news/2020-05-04-kenya-records-25-virus-cases-total-rises-to-490/>

In Summary

- There have been six more discharges.
- A total of 1,012 samples were tested in the last 24 hours.

Kenya has recorded 25 new coronavirus cases, raising the total number to 490.

There have been six more discharges, raising to total to 163.

Health CAS Mercy Mwangangi on Monday said 15 of the new cases are from Nairobi, while 10 are from Mombasa.

Of the new cases, eight are from Eastleigh, two from Kawangware, 1 from Kariobangi South and two from Umoja.

"All the 25 are Kenyans and none has a history of travel," she said adding that a total of 1,012 samples were tested in the last 24 hours.

The youngest new case is six months, while the oldest is 60 years. Thirteen are male, while 12 are female.

"We are working with different health experts when handling Covid-19 cases. For children who are positive we we are collaborating with pediatricians," she said.

Mwangangi said the situation has not gone back to normal and told Kenyans to be responsible.

In terms of allowances for health workers, the CAS said, "There are no favourites."

"Teams are looking to ensure all health cadres are able to get their allowances. There is no favouritism hence all will be facilitated with welfare packages," she said.

This comes as Kenya National Union of Nurses issued a 14-day strike notice over what they described as unfairness in distribution of allowances.

She further applauded those who are doing research on finding a cure or vaccine for the pandemic.

"We have heard of different cures even from Africa. However evaluation of such drugs must be under strict protocols and guidelines," she said.

"While we encourage our people to continue researching on this matter it is important that this research be directed through the National Commission for Science Technology and Innovation...".

Doctor Patrick Amoth asked Parents to ensure that their children observe government directives.

"Ensure children observe preventive measures and limit their interactions. Today we have a six month old baby who has tested positive. Children are also spreaders. Face masks for children are available in the market," he said.

SOUTH SUDAN :

South Sudan Covid-19 cases rise to 49

<https://www.theeastafrican.co.ke/scienceandhealth/South-Sudan-Covid-19-cases-/3073694-5542240-924jqmz/index.html>

Monday May 4 2020 Juba,

South Sudan on Sunday confirmed three more Covid-19 cases, bringing the total to 49.

The High-Level Taskforce on Covid-19 said the three were tested in the capital Juba.

"In the last 24 hours, 137 samples were tested and results released. Of these, three tested positive of Covid-19. The new cases identified are all adult males from South Sudan," a statement from the Taskforce states.

The statement seen by The East African on Sunday add that the Taskforce is tracing 211 contacts of people who tested positive for the coronavirus.

The Taskforce also stated that three patients were in critical condition.

Currently, there is only one designated quarantine facility with 24 beds. But the government is upgrading it to a 100-bed facility.

There's currently no vaccine for Covid-19 and various countries have taken precautionary measures.

East African countries have instituted measures such as social distancing, curfews and lockdowns, encouraging citizens to work from home, encouraging hygiene practices such as washing hands frequently.

South Sudan: Fall in global oil prices hitting economy and peace

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/south-sudan-fall-in-global-oil-prices-hitting-economy-and-peace/1829202>

Experts believe since oil revenue finances country's 98% budget, commitments in peace deal will take a break

Benjamin Takpiny | 05.05.2020

JUBA, South Sudan

Even as the civil war in South Sudan ended a few months back, the sharp fall in global oil prices and coronavirus or COVID-19 pandemic has come as a double whammy for the country's fragile economy.

Experts believe that economic crises are also affecting various political commitments, the government that agreed to in a peace deal early this year.

The creation of a coalition government between South Sudanese President Salva Kiir and Riek Machar, the former deputy turned rebel in February was meant to end a deadly conflict that began in 2013.

The agreement had called for absorbing rebels in the regular army, paying salaries to troops, and accommodating various political factions, besides taking various economic measures like construction of dams, compensation for displaced people and road construction, etc.

The country was eyeing to generate finances by selling crude oil after the return of peace.

Lual Achuek Deng, an expert in economics and managing director at Ebony Centre estimated that over 90% of the country's budget is based on oil revenue.

According to Abraham Matoch, an economist and the vice-chancellor of Dr. John Garang Memorial University, the fall in prices will affect the country's current budget. He said when the budget was approved the cost of a barrel of crude oil was at \$10.

"The social life is going to be affected, we export oil if the people who are the consumers do not buy it, definitely we are going to have a crisis. We will have to revise budgetary estimates as well," he told Anadolu Agency.

He predicted that South Sudan will face many severe crises than the US.

“The peace process and security arrangement will also be at stake because we do not have finances to manage it, “he added.

Pandemic weakening diplomatic pressure

According to Alan Boswell, a senior analyst on South Sudan at the Brussels based International Crisis Group, the country will face a serious budget crisis if the price of oil does not recover.

“This severe shortfall will constrain the government's ability to pay its troops and accommodate all the political factions in the country. The pandemic is already weakening the regional diplomatic pressure that was required to push South Sudan's peace deal forward, “he said.

The Central Bank Governor Gamal Abdalla Wani said the sharp decline of the oil prices in the international market will undermine the prospects of positive economic growth.

Deng called upon the government to put in place measures to cushion the country in the wake of plummeting oil prices. Currently, oil accounts for 98 percent of the country’s foreign exchange revenue.

He said that one way of cushioning the imminent impact is to seek financial support from multinational institutions like the IMF and the World bank. He said that the country requires funds to survive the effects of oil prices for the remaining period of the current financial year.

Professor Marial Awou an economist and the vice-chancellor of Upper Nile University criticized the government for relying heavily on the oil sector while neglecting the agriculture, tourism, and mining sectors.

Vice President James Wani Igga said the country is already seeking alternative revenue sources to combat the losses from oil.

“We intend to find alternative ways of survival really and move away as much as possible from oil, so we have to boost the non-oil revenue, “he said.

Fighting Raises Tension Between Government, Rebel Force in South Sudan

<https://www.voanews.com/africa/south-sudan-focus/fighting-raises-tension-between-government-rebel-force-south-sudan>

By Dimo Silva Aurelio April 29, 2020 02:02 PM

JUBA, SOUTH SUDAN - New fighting in South Sudan's Central Equatoria state this week is putting a strain on the country's fragile peace agreements.

A spokesman for the rebel National Salvation Front (NAS) said a joint force composed of soldiers from the army and the former rebel SPLM-IO attacked NAS positions in Central Equatoria state beginning on Sunday.

"They went and attacked our bases in Senema, that is around Ombaci, and also in Mediba around Morobo, and in Kajo-Keji Kala 2. They also attacked our forces, and we responded," NAS spokesman Samuel Suba told VOA's South Sudan in Focus.

Two NAS soldiers were killed and three others wounded during the fighting, according to Suba. The casualty figure could not be verified by other sources.

Unity and Central Equatoria states, South Sudan

SPLM-IO deputy military spokesman Col. Lam Paul Gabriel, who is also the press secretary for South Sudan's defense minister, said the NAS forces were the aggressors who killed one government soldier and injured three others.

"We were attacked in Kiju (Kajo-Keji) by the forces of Thomas Cirilo. They killed two SPLM-IO soldiers and injured one. Then, our forces withdrew from Kiju and moved to Kala. On the 26th, they attacked us again in Kala coming from Kiju. By then, our forces were ready, so we were able to repulse them," Gabriel told South Sudan in Focus.

Gabriel denied that a joint operation was carried out against the NAS. He accused the rebel group instead of trying to disrupt the training and unification of forces.

"They came and attacked us in our own bases," he told VOA. "And up to now — I cannot lie to you — they overran our base in Kiju. And up to now, they are still there."

Peace deals

The government of President Salva Kiir and the SPLM-IO signed a peace deal in 2018 that recently led to the formation of a transitional unity government. The NAS signed a separate peace deal with the government in 2019.

The agreements have led to a reduction in fighting and some progress toward merging the various armed forces into a national army.

However, Suba said government forces adopted "a scorched-earth policy" by attacking civilians and looting their property in Lainya County's Mukaya Payam.

"They did it by burning houses, beating civilians and looting, and these led to this forced displacement of over 3,000 people," Samuel said.

Witness account

Resident Alemin Joseph said the fighting forced him to flee to Yei from his village in Mukaya. He said he saw government forces beating civilians.

"Government forces went and failed to get the rebels, so they stormed our village in (the) area of Mukaya interrogating civilians, beating and knifing them, saying we should tell them where Thomas Cirilo's (rebel leader of NAS) forces are," Joseph told South Sudan in Focus.

Maj. Gen. Lul Ruai Koang, spokesman for the South Sudan People's Defense Forces, said he has not received any information about clashes in Lainya County from government military commanders on the ground.

SUDAN :

Sudan appoints first ambassador to U.S. in decades

By CGTN Africa - <https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/05/05/sudan-appoints-first-ambassador-to-u-s-in-decades/>

Sudan has appointed its first ambassador to the United States for almost a quarter of a century, its foreign ministry said on Monday, in a move to normalize relations after decades of antagonism. Both countries pledged to improve ties after the fall of veteran Islamist ruler Omar al-Bashir in an uprising a year ago.

The Sudanese foreign ministry said it had chosen Nouredin Sati, a veteran diplomat, as ambassador in Washington and that U.S. authorities had approved his nomination.

A State Department representative declined to provide any insight on plans to appoint its own ambassador to Sudan and said it did not have specific information on the timing for that, but called the December decision to exchange ambassadors "a historic step."

Both countries had for almost a quarter of century appointed only charge d'affaires, a diplomatic rank under an ambassador, to run their embassies in Washington and Khartoum.

In December, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said the two countries would exchange ambassadors. The U.S. ambassador would be nominated by President Donald Trump and needs to be confirmed by the U.S. Senate.

The U.S. government added Sudan to its list of state sponsors of terrorism in 1993 over allegations that Bashir's Islamist government was supporting Islamist militant groups, leaving Sudan ineligible for badly needed debt relief and financing from the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

Last year, a senior State Department official said the United States might remove Sudan from the list but the U.S. Congress needed to ratify such a move.

The State Department representative declined to comment on internal U.S. government deliberations on where the talks are about Sudan being removed from the list but added that the two countries remain engaged in active discussions.

“Compensation for the victims of terrorism remains a priority for the U.S. government. The United States and Sudan continue to engage regarding certain terrorism-related claims,” the spokesperson said.

Sudanese minister infected with COVID-19

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/latest-on-coronavirus-outbreak/sudanese-minister-infected-with-covid-19/1827851>

Minister of state in Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation diagnosed with virus last week

Mohammed Amin | 04.05.2020

KHARTOUM, SUDAN

Sudan’s minister of state in the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation has been infected with the novel coronavirus, the Council of Ministers said Sunday.

The council said in a press release that Hashim Ibn Auf, who also chairs a subcommittee under the Higher Committee for Health Emergencies to combat the coronavirus, has been under home quarantine since last week after testing positive.

“The minister of state in the ministry of infrastructure and transportation, Hashim Ibn Auf, tested positive for the coronavirus last week after interacting with one of his relatives who has COVID-19,” it said.

“The minister is in stable condition and recovering well. He has even participated in meetings of the higher committee on fighting the coronavirus through teleconferencing.”

Sudan has witnessed a sharp rise in coronavirus cases in the past few days. The country has 592 cases, 41 deaths and 52 recoveries, according to data from US-based Johns Hopkins University.

ETHIOPIA :

Ethiopian, Pakistani leaders talk over phone

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/ethiopian-pakistani-leaders-talk-over-phone/1828434>

Leaders recognize need for debt relief for developing countries to withstand COVID-19

Addis Getachew | 04.05.2020 ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia

Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said Monday he held a discussion with his Pakistani counterpart on ways to withstand the economic fallout of COVID-19.

“In a phone call with PM @ImranKhanPTI we both agreed on the importance of debt relief for developing countries to withstand the #COVID19 challenges as well as to quickly absorb & recover from economic shocks. We will work together to ensure the progression of our economies,” Abiy tweeted.

In March, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa urged the G20 countries to “[...] support and encourage open trade corridors, especially for pharmaceuticals and other health supplies as well as support the upgrade of health systems infrastructure.”

The commission also called on G20 leaders to “deliver an immediate emergency economic stimulus to African governments in their efforts to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.” It urged them to also “implement emergency measures to protect 20 million jobs immediately at risk across the continent, particularly in the tourism and airline sectors.” Abiy urged the International Monetary Fund to relieve African countries of their debt and also to make additional funding to help them to cope with the effects of COVID-19. In April, the African heads of state and government held a virtual conference and called on the international community to raise \$150 billion in COVID-19 funding for Africa.

Eritrean president on visit to Ethiopia

COVID-19 cooperation to take center stage during bilateral discussions

Addis Getachew | 03.05.2020

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia

Eritrean President Isaias Afewerki arrived in Addis Ababa on Sunday for a two-day official visit. Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed and other senior government officials welcomed Afewerki upon arrival.

The presidential entourage includes Foreign Minister Osman Saleh and Yemane Gebreab, adviser to the president.

The two leaders are expected to discuss on ways of strengthening the efforts in fight against the COVID-19 pandemic and desert locust infestation, which have become a regional threat, the state-owned news agency ENA, said.

The Eritrean–Ethiopian diplomatic relations revived when premier Abiy in June 2018 extended an olive branch to his counterpart, ending two decades of tensions.

Between 1998 and 2000, the two countries fought a bloody war in which an estimated 70,000 people died.

Eritrea’s Isaias Afwerki makes surprise visit to Ethiopia

<https://www.nation.co.ke/news/africa/Eritrea-s-Isaias-Afwerki-makes-surprise-Ethiopia-visit/1066-5542928-qe6th3/index.html>

Tuesday May 5 2020 By TESFA-ALEM TEKLE

Eritrean president Isaias Afwerki on Sunday made an unexpected visit to Ethiopia, ending curiosity and wild speculation over the whereabouts of the reclusive long-time leader.

Upon arrival at Bole International Airport, President Afwerki -- accompanied by Foreign Minister Osman Saleh and Presidential Advisor Yemane Ghebream -- was received by Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

The leaders subsequently discussed bilateral ties and regional concerns of common interest. Ethiopian President Sahle-Work Zewde hosted a luncheon for the visiting Eritrean leader and his delegation. The event was held at a public park in the capital Addis Ababa.

“It was a renewed pleasure to join our PM Abiy Ahmed Ali in welcoming President Isaias Afwerki who is on a two-day visit to Ethiopia. We hosted him in the stunning park coming up on Entoto Mountain, a truly amazing place to relax and unwind,” said president Zewde in a tweet.

The two leaders also inaugurated an irrigation project located outside the capital in Oromia regional state.

IMF Executive Board Approves US\$411 Million in Emergency Assistance to Ethiopia to Address the COVID-19 Pandemic

<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/04/30/pr20199-ethiopia-imf-executive-board-approves-emergency-assistance-to-address-the-covid-19-pandemic>

April 30, 2020

Ethiopia is facing a pronounced economic slowdown and an urgent balance of payments need owing to the COVID-19 pandemic.

To address this urgent need, the IMF approved US\$411 million emergency assistance for Ethiopia under the Rapid Financing Instrument. The country will also benefit from IMF debt service relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust.

The authorities have taken swift and decisive action to contain the impact of COVID-19 by strengthening the health system, adopting a state of emergency to limit the spread of the virus, and implementing measures to support the economy.

The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) approved today a purchase under the Rapid Financing Instrument (RFI) equivalent to SDR 300.7 million (about US\$411 million, 100 percent of quota) to help Ethiopia meet the urgent balance of payment needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Board also approved a rephrasing of disbursements under the Extended Credit Facility (ECF) and Extended Financing Facility (EFF) arrangements that have been supporting Ethiopia's economic reform program since December 2019, and a reduction in access under the EFF arrangement, to maximize financial support under the RFI.

In addition, Ethiopia will benefit from the IMF Executive Board decision of April 13, 2020 to provide debt service relief to the poorest and most vulnerable countries that are eligible for grant assistance under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust (CCRT). As a result, the Board today approved Ethiopia's request for relief under the CCRT on debt service falling due to the IMF until October 13, 2020 of about US\$12 million. This relief could be extended up to April 13, 2022, subject to the availability of resources under the CCRT.

The COVID-19 pandemic has created severe health risks and weighed heavily on the Ethiopian economy. If the pandemic is not contained, it will put severe pressure on the health system with devastating social consequences. On the economic front, a fall in demand for exports, combined with domestic containment measures will slow growth and weaken external and fiscal accounts.

The authorities have taken strong actions to contain the health impact by implementing a mandatory 14-day quarantine for travelers entering the country, improving testing and containment capacity, strengthening epidemic response coordination and adopting a state of emergency to limit movement and gatherings and facilitate social distancing. Implementation of expenditures to strengthen the health system and address food security challenges are welcome and will help contain the spread of the virus and support the poor and most vulnerable.

The IMF continues to monitor Ethiopia's situation closely and stands ready to provide policy advice and financial support as needed.

Following the Executive Board's discussion on Ethiopia, Mr. Tao Zhang, Deputy Managing Director and Chair, issued the following statement:

"Ethiopia showed good progress under the extended arrangements with the Fund, which aim to address external vulnerabilities and transition to a private sector-led growth model. The authorities remain committed to the reform program. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant adverse impact on the economy and created urgent fiscal and balance of payments needs. The authorities have moved decisively to contain the spread of the virus and manage the economic fallout from the global downturn and the needed health-related measures.

"A temporary widening of the budget deficit is appropriate. The immediate priority is to increase spending on health care and provide emergency assistance, including food assistance. The authorities are committed to full transparency on the spending for the emergency response and aim to conduct an ex-post audit of crisis-related spending once the crisis abates. Fiscal consolidation will need to resume after the crisis, with a focus on strengthening debt sustainability and domestic revenue mobilization.

“The National Bank of Ethiopia (NBE) has appropriately provided liquidity to banks to maintain financial stability. Once the crisis abates, monetary policy will need to be tightened significantly to achieve the single-digit inflation objective. Strong efforts are needed to address the real overvaluation of the exchange rate, allowing the exchange rate to act as a shock absorber. “Fund emergency support under the Rapid Financing Instrument and debt relief under the Catastrophe Containment and Relief Trust would help address balance of payments pressures and create fiscal space for essential pandemic-related expenditures. Participation in the G20 debt relief initiative could provide additional resources to respond to the pandemic.”

Germany announces €120mln covid-19 fund for Ethiopia

Monday, 04 May 2020 15:34

(Ecofin Agency) - Germany announced a €120 million support package to help Ethiopia face the impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The information was revealed on April 30 by the Ethiopian News Agency (ENA).

The program is aimed at supporting the African country’s macroeconomic stability and safeguarding jobs in the textile industry. Part of the money will also be used to purchase medical products, in collaboration with the World Health Organization.

According to the German Embassy in Ethiopia, the investment falls within the partnership signed in December 2019 between the two countries to support Ethiopia’s ambitious economic reform program. The partnership targets the sectors of infrastructure investment, agriculture, and energy. The International Monetary Fund saw Ethiopia’s growth at 3.2% in 2019-20 due to the pandemic, after 9% in 2018-19. The latest official data from May 3, reported a total of 133 covid-19 cases in Ethiopia, with 3 deaths and 69 recovered patients.

André Chadrak

SOMALIE :

Six al-Shabab militants killed in southern Somalia

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-05 20:56:20|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/05/c_139032745.htm

MOGADISHU, May 5 (Xinhua) -- Somali national forces on Monday night killed members of al-Shabab militants in a fierce fighting in Lower Shabelle region, an official confirmed on Tuesday. Abdi Ahmed Yusuf, deputy governor of Lower Shabelle region for security, told journalists that al-Shabab militants launched an attack in a base run by the Somali army and African Union forces in Qoryoley town.

"The militants suffered severe casualties during clashes between the army and the attackers, and we killed six of them," Yusuf said.

He added that the army is now controlling the area since the militants have fled to the forest.

The latest incident came barely a day after government forces killed 10 al-Shabab militants in clashes between the army and the militants in El-Salini and Barire towns in the same region. Government forces have intensified operations against al-Shabab militants in the southern regions, but the militants still hold swathes of rural areas in those regions conducting ambushes and planting land mines. Enditem

3rd shipment of Turkish medical aid arrives in Somalia

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/3rd-shipment-of-turkish-medical-aid-arrives-in-somalia/1829007>

'We can't thank Turkey enough' for aid to fight coronavirus, says Somali foreign minister

Mohammed Dhaysane | 05.05.2020

MOGADISHU, Somalia

Two Turkish military airplanes carrying a third batch of medical supplies to help Somalia fight coronavirus arrived in the capital Mogadishu on Monday.

The shipment followed two previous batches of medical aid, including new Turkish-made ventilators last week.

On Twitter, the Turkish Embassy in Mogadishu confirmed the supplies' arrival at Aden Adde international airport, saying: "Today additional batches of medical supplies, third after Corona outbreak, with two military cargo planes arrived at Mogadishu Airport from Turkey to help Somalia fight against Covid-19 and handed over to the @MoH_Somalia. Turkey always stands with Somalia."

"We can't thank you enough," said Somali Foreign Minister Ahmed Awad. "We are profoundly indebted to our brothers and sisters of Turkey."

On Monday, Somalia recorded 34 new coronavirus cases and three deaths, bringing the total cases in the Horn of African country to 756 as total deaths reached 35.

Somalia, UNHCR airlift supplies to 8,100 flood victims in Somalia

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-06 00:58:33|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/06/c_139033038.htm

MOGADISHU, May 5 (Xinhua) -- Somalia and the UN refugee agency said Tuesday they have airlifted vital humanitarian assistance to some 8,100 flood victims in three regional states in the past week.

The UNHCR said the emergency kits that include jerry cans, soap, blankets, sleeping mats, kitchen sets and plastic sheets were airlifted to Baidoa, Bardheere and Qardho areas.

Johann Siffointe, UNHCR's representative in Somalia, said they are witnessing multiple emergencies in Somalia, with a rise of COVID-19, Gu flash floods and riverine flooding.

"These emergencies must be understood as mutually compounding, requiring ongoing strong cooperation between the international community and governments at the national and sub-national levels," Siffointe said in a statement issued in Mogadishu.

According to the UN, the 2020 riverine flooding and flash floods caused by Gu season rains are giving every indication that they will adversely impact Somalia at similar levels to the Deyr rains of 2019 when more than 400,000 people were forcibly displaced.

The UN agency said the regions that have been hit hardest so far include Bari, Banadir, Hiraan, and Middle Shabelle.

"The current multiple emergencies are exacerbating the living conditions of Somalia's 2.6 million internally displaced persons who are among the country's most vulnerable groups," UNHCR said. During the first phase of the airlift, the government provided a cargo plane to deliver essential items from the UNHCR warehouses in Mogadishu to Garowe (destined for Qardho) and Bardheere, while UNHCR airlifted the supplies to Baidoa.

The UNHCR said the second phase of the airlift will commence later this week and target 17,000 people in affected areas including Qardho, Bardheere, Beletweyn, and Berdale.

The UN response to the latest flooding came amid the rising number of COVID-19 cases in Somalia which reached 835 on Tuesday.

The UN refugee agency said it is mobilizing additional resources for non-food items and emergency shelter to respond to the ongoing needs. Enditem

***** CENTRAL AFRICA COMMUNITY *****

RDC CONGO :

Le dossier Kamerhe s'invite à l'entretien Félix Tshisekedi-Joseph Kabila

<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5ea07b8fcd2a770017cf957e/>

Kinshasa 22-04-2020 Politique - Une rencontre à un haut niveau a eu lieu, mardi 21 avril au début de la soirée à N'sele, entre les deux têtes d'affiche de la coalition au pouvoir, le FCC et CACH. Selon les informations en notre possession, le Président honoraire et sénateur à vie, Joseph Kabila, qui est entré seul dans ce site présidentiel laissant ses gardes du corps à l'entrée, a été accueilli par Félix Tshisekedi qu'accompagnait le conseiller spécial en matière de sécurité, François Beya. Rien n'a filtré de cet entretien officiellement axé sur la riposte contre le covid-19. Mais pour les initiés de ce genre de rencontre, l'entretien est allé au-delà de ce sujet. La présence du conseiller spécial est un indice qui conforte cette thèse.

L'affaire Kamerhe qui croupit en prison dans le cadre de l'utilisation des fonds alloués aux travaux de 100 jours ne pouvait qu'être évoquée au regard des implications qui en découlent sur la cohésion de la coalition. Les avocats de Vital Kamerhe augmentent la pression sur les fronts médiatique et de la justice pour obtenir sa liberté provisoire, le délai prévu pour sa détention préventive étant arrivé à terme. St Théodore Ngangu Ilenda

Bruits de bottes de troupes étrangères en RDC, une enquête du gouvernement est en cours

<https://www.digitalcongo.net/article/5ea9bd7b376d2700179e22e0/>

Kinshasa 29-04-2020 Politique - Dans une conférence de presse, le président rwandais Paul Kagame a fait état de la présence des troupes burundaises en RDC.

Le gouvernement central a diligenté une enquête après la sortie médiatique de l'homme fort de Kigali, Paul Kagame, qui a dénoncé la présence des éléments de troupes burundaises à l'intérieur des frontières congolaises.

Cette information a été aussitôt démentie par le ministre de la Communication et des médias, porte parole du gouvernement, Jolino Makelele. En effet, ce dernier a soutenu sur Top Congo qu'il n'y a pas de troupes étrangères en RDC organisées en armée régulière. Cependant, a-t-il reconnu, on signale ici et là la présence des groupes armés négatifs non autrement identifiés.

Jolino Makelele a rappelé l'existence d'un mécanisme qui permet l'échange des renseignements entre les services de sécurité et chefs d'état major de pays de la région de grands lacs.

A propos de l'insécurité qui sévit à l'est, le coordonnateur de la société civile de la province de Haut Uele a signalé la présence des rebelles sud soudanais dans le territoire de Faradje. Ce groupe armé sème la terreur, pille et incendie des maisons, obligeant la population à l'errance. Il a lancé un appel au gouvernement central. Pour sa part, le gouverneur de cette province a indiqué avoir informé Kinshasa. St Théo Ngangu

CONGO :

Denis Sassou Nguesso prolonge jusqu'au 15 mai le confinement du Congo-Brazzaville

<https://www.voafrique.com/a/le-congo-prolonge-son-confinement-jusqu-au-15-mai-/5400739.html>

Le président de la République du Congo, Denis Sassou Nguesso, a annoncé jeudi soir la prolongation jusqu'au 15 mai du confinement pour enrayer la propagation du coronavirus. Le Congo-Brazzaville (environ cinq millions d'habitants, 220 cas officiellement déclarés dont neuf décès et 19 guérisons) était initialement en confinement total depuis le 31 mars et jusqu'à ce 30 avril.

"Le confinement actuel s'étendra du 1er au 15 mai 2020. Durant cette période, nous évaluerons l'efficacité de sa mise en œuvre", a déclaré le président Sassou Nguesso dans un message radiotélévisé.

L'état d'urgence est prolongé jusqu'au 10 mai, a-t-il ajouté.

"Au cas où les résultats observés se révéleraient au fur et à mesure encourageants, le gouvernement pourrait alors étudier, au même moment, un plan de déconfinement ordonné, applicable par paliers à partir du 16 mai 2020", a-t-il ajouté.

Le président a également décidé "la mise en œuvre, à grande échelle, du test de dépistage" et le "port obligatoire du masque pour toute personne présente dans les espaces publics fermés ou ouverts".

Le gouvernement a commandé 1,5 million de masques "chez nos artisans", a ajouté le président, souhaitant un prix de vente "n'excédant pas 1.000 Francs CFA (environ 1,5 euros)".

M. Sassou a par ailleurs fustigé le comportement de ses concitoyens qui ne respectent pas les mesures barrières.

"Dans certains quartiers de nos villes, les jeunes continuent à pratiquer des sports collectifs, au mépris des mesures de protection édictées dans le cadre de la lutte contre le COVID-19", a-t-il dénoncé.

CAMEROUN :

Cameroun - Mise au point: Le porte-parole de Maurice Kamto dénonce des «attaques personnelles haineuses, abjectes, dirigées contre le MINSANTE, Manaouda Malachie»

Par Fred BIHINA | Cameroon-Info.Net

YAOUNDE - 05-May-2020 - <http://www.cameroon-info.net/article/cameroun-mise-au-point-le-porte-parole-de-maurice-kamto-denonce-des-attaques-personnelles-haineuses-371139.html>

Il appelle les militants et sympathisants du MRC à éviter le piège du tribalisme.

Olivier Bibou Nissack a publié son communiqué dans la nuit du 4 mai 2020. Il commence d'abord par déplorer le refus par le patron de la Santé Publique, du don du leader du MRC (Mouvement pour la Renaissance du Cameroun), offert dans le cadre de la lutte contre le Coronavirus.

«C'est avec étonnement que Maurice Kamto a découvert, comme d'autres, le refus par le MINSANTE d'accueillir les dons de SCSI pour des motifs incompréhensibles. Dons pourtant forts utiles en particulier pour le personnel soignant des formations sanitaires du pays. "L'hôpital qui se moque de la charité", comme dirait l'adage», indique-t-il.

Le porte-parole de l'opposant Kamto regrette ensuite que cela ait donné lieu à des attaques contre le ministre de la Santé Publique.

«Cependant, cette attitude anti républicaine ne peut, et ne saurait en aucun cas donner lieu à de quelconques attaques personnelles haineuses, abjectes, dirigées contre le MINSANTE, monsieur Manaouda Malachie, que ce soit sur une base ethnique ou tribale, ou sur toute autre base contraire aux règles du débat public républicain».

S'il se dit convaincu que ces attaques sont des manœuvres du régime, qui aurait créé de faux profils sur les réseaux sociaux, Bibou Nissack invite les militants et sympathisants du MRC à «ne surtout pas tomber dans cette dérive où des agents à la solde du régime illégitime veulent les entraîner. Les attaques à caractère tribal ou religieux, ou portant sur la vie privée des personnes sont inacceptables et n'entrent en aucune manière dans l'éthique de Maurice Kamto, ni celle du MRC».

Ces manœuvres, croit-il savoir, sont employées pour voiler les difficultés que le pouvoir de Yaoundé éprouve à faire face au COVID-19 à travers une stratégie claire et à mettre un terme à la guerre en zone anglophone.

Voici le Communiqué:

BUREAU DU PORTE-PAROLE DE MAURICE KAMTO

COMMUNIQUE DE PRESSE

Il y a quelques jours, le Président élu Maurice KAMTO, en l'occurrence en sa qualité de citoyen ordinaire, a procédé à la remise d'un don personnel important à l'initiative Survie-Cameroon-Survival Initiative (SCSI). Au terme de son allocution de circonstance lors de la cérémonie de remise de ce don au Président du Comité de gestion de SCSI, Maurice KAMTO a pris note avec appréciation que le Président du Comité de Gestion de SCSI, monsieur Christian PENDA EKOKA, se disposait à remettre, sans délais, le don reçu au Ministre de la Santé Publique (MINSANTÉ), et allait engager aussitôt les démarches en ce sens une fois la cérémonie de réception du don terminée.

C'est avec étonnement que Maurice KAMTO a découvert, comme d'autres, le refus par le MINSANTÉ d'accueillir les dons de SCSI pour des motifs incompréhensibles. Dons pourtant forts utiles en particulier pour le personnel soignant des formations sanitaires du pays. «L'hôpital qui se moque de la charité», comme dirait l'adage.

Le bureau du Porte-parole de Maurice KAMTO tient à informer l'opinion publique que l'attitude du MINSANTÉ constitue, certes, une grave faute morale et politique, en particulier au regard de l'expansion de la pandémie dans notre pays, de la détresse des populations et particulièrement du personnel de santé qui paie un tribut important sur le front de la lutte contre le Covid-19.

Cependant, cette attitude anti républicaine ne peut, et ne saurait en aucun cas donner lieu à de quelconques attaques personnelles haineuses, abjectes, dirigées contre le MINSANTÉ, monsieur MANAOUDA Malachie, que ce soit sur une base ethnique ou tribale, ou sur toute autre base contraire aux règles du débat public républicain.

Il est établi que des faux profils ont été mis à contribution pour mener de telles attaques intolérables dans le but d'en faire endosser faussement la responsabilité à la Résistance Nationale Pacifique et son leader le Président élu Maurice KAMTO. Une telle manœuvre éhontée, menée par des officines qu'on avait déjà vu à l'œuvre pendant la campagne électorale pour la présidentielle de 2018, ne prospérera pas, car le peuple camerounais n'est pas dupe.

En effet, les mêmes avaient utilisés des méthodes identiques pour propager un mensonge indigne selon lequel Maurice KAMTO aurait refusé naguère d'aller enseigner dans le septentrion du Cameroun parce qu'il n'enseigne pas les «moutons», lui qui fut pourtant un de ceux qui ont ouvert la Faculté des Sciences Juridiques et Politiques de l'Université de Ngaoundéré. Il s'agissait donc d'un grossier mensonge; car le Professeur Maurice KAMTO a vécu à Ngaoundéré et enseigné dans ladite Université de 1993 à 1995. Bien plus, il n'a jamais traité ses compatriotes, frères et sœurs du Septentrion de «moutons».

Comment le pourrait-il, lui dont on connaît l'amour profond et sincère pour tous les Camerounais ? Les étudiants qu'il a contribué à former à Ngaoundéré occupent diverses fonctions parfois très élevées dans notre pays et il en est très fier. Des individus animés par une haine aveugle ont répandu ce mensonge dans le seul but de discréditer Maurice KAMTO en le couvrant injustement d'opprobre. C'est peine perdue.

Le Porte-parole tient donc à appeler à la vigilance tous ceux qui se réclament de la cause défendue par le Président élu Maurice KAMTO, les militants du Mouvement pour la

Renaissance du Cameroun (MRC), les sympathisants, à ne surtout pas tomber dans cette dérive où des agents à la solde du régime illégitime veulent les entraîner. Les attaques à caractère tribal ou religieux, ou portant sur la vie privée des personnes sont inacceptables et n'entrent en aucune manière dans l'éthique de Maurice KAMTO, ni celle du MRC. Elles sont clairement en opposition avec les idéaux républicains promus, défendus et incarnés dans ses actes quotidiens, par le Président élu Maurice KAMTO.

Le régime illégitime qui se cache derrière de telles manœuvres, fondées sur des discours haineux, espère ainsi:

- Noyer son incompétence, ses manquements et ses faiblesses dans la riposte au Covid-19 et faire, contre toutes attentes, du Président élu Maurice KAMTO, le principal problème du pays, y compris en ce qui concerne la lutte contre cette pandémie;
- Entacher les initiatives et actions mises en place par le citoyen Maurice KAMTO en vue de contribuer activement à la riposte nationale solidaire contre le Covid-19;
- Distraire l'opinion suite aux surfacturations scandaleuses observées dans des marchés publics totalement opaques passés notamment au Ministère de la santé dans le cadre de la riposte anti Covid-19;
- Masquer qu'il y a à peine quelques heures, un mouvement d'humeur des EIR (Équipes d'Intervention Rapides) du MINSANTÉ a mis à jour leurs impayés. Les EIR constituant la première barrière sanitaire des personnels en charge du dépistage des cas suspects de Covid-19, il est proprement inconcevable qu'elles soient ainsi négligées là où les fonds manquent pourtant le moins;
- Éclipser la persistance d'un conflit absurde créé et entretenu par le régime illégitime dans le NOSO (Nord-Ouest et Sud-Ouest), et faire oublier notamment le fiasco du mensonge d'État découvert au sujet du massacre de Ngarbuh;
- Faire passer sous silence l'absurdité de la décision d'autoriser l'ouverture des débits de boisson et lieux de détente nocturnes sans limitations dans le temps, qui constitue un véritable désarmement de la vigilance vis-à-vis du Covid-19 aux conséquences potentiellement catastrophiques. Le but inavouable est de détourner les Camerounais des problèmes politiques, économiques, sociaux et sécuritaires du pays en les noyant dans l'alcool, en plus de la perspective de contracter le mortel coronavirus;
- Occulter la contradiction entre cette autorisation d'ouverture des débits de boisson et autres lieux de détente nocturne où se rassemblent des foules compactes sans respect d'aucune mesure-barrière, et la décision d'annulation de la célébration officielle de la fête nationale du 20 mai 2020 dont il y a dès lors lieu de penser qu'elle a pour seul but de couvrir la disparition de l'espace public et de la

vue des Camerounais, du Chef d'Etat en fonction. En sorte qu'il y a lieu de se demander: Que cherche-t-on ainsi à cacher aux Camerounais ?

Malgré cette démarche boiteuse et alambiquée, personne dans ce régime illégitime ne fera oublier le malaise réel du personnel médical démuni en cette période de crise sanitaire. On aura beau s'en défendre au sein du régime illégitime de Yaoundé, le fait est que la cohérence est ce qui manque le plus dans sa "stratégie anti Covid-19".

Ainsi donc, tandis qu'une approche nationale inclusive est appliquée dans les autres pays en vue de donner une riposte appropriée et efficace au Convid-19 avant d'envisager le «déconfinement», le régime en place opte pour la division et la désunion. Cela est d'autant plus choquant que les caisses de l'Etat sont quasi-vides, pillées à l'occasion de l'organisation foireuse d'une CAN 2019 n'ayant finalement jamais eu lieu dans notre pays.

Le Cameroun en est donc réduit à des expédients, à demander aux entreprises de faire des dons en argent plutôt qu'en nature, à se précipiter vers la Banque Mondiale, le FMI et quelques partenaires bilatéraux pour quémander des bouées de sauvetage. C'est une triste ironie pour un régime qui fait croire aux Camerounais qu'il défend la souveraineté nationale, alors qu'il est à plat devant le moindre donateur étranger.

Les cabales montées à la hâte sous de fausses bannières par le régime illégitime qui veut ternir par tous les moyens l'image de l'adversaire politique certes, mais républicain pugnace, efficace et clairvoyant qu'est le Président élu Maurice KAMTO, sont vouées à l'échec. Le régime illégitime ferait mieux de s'occuper des problèmes du pays au lieu de s'occuper à faire le décompte du nombre de chauves-souris dans le ciel tandis que sur terre les Camerounais succombent au Covid-19 dont le rythme de propagation fait légitimement craindre le pire.

Yaoundé, le 4 mai 2020

Le Porte-parole

BIBOU NISSACK Olivier

CENTRAFRIQUE :

Après quatre jours d'interdiction, la Minusca autorise à nouveau l'entrée des camionneurs camerounais en RCA

<https://www.agenceecofin.com/gestion-publique/0405-76262-covid-19-la-centrafrique-refuse-l-acces-a-son-territoire-aux-routiers-camerounais>

(Agence Ecofin) - Le 1er mai 2020, Milan Trojanovic, directeur de l'appui à la Mission multidimensionnelle intégrée des Nations unies pour la stabilisation en Centrafrique (Minusca), a rendu public un nouveau communiqué dans lequel il annonce implicitement que les camionneurs camerounais sont à nouveau autorisés à entrer sur le territoire centrafricain.

Cette décision annule donc celle prise le 28 avril 2020 par la Minusca, et qui interdisait aux camionneurs camerounais d'entrer en RCA. « En raison de la situation d'urgence due à la pandémie du Convid-19, à compter de ce jour, aucun chauffeur ou tout autre passager en provenance du Cameroun ne sera permis d'entrer en République centrafricaine », avait annoncé la Minusca.

Dans le même temps, cette mission onusienne invitait les camionneurs camerounais à organiser leurs livraisons de cargo de sorte que les chauffeurs du côté de la Centrafrique puissent prendre le relais à la frontière entre le Cameroun et la RCA, pour acheminer le cargo à Bangui.

Cependant, cette décision, selon les termes du communiqué du 1er mai 2020, semblait concerner uniquement « le transport de marchandises de la Minusca par les entrepreneurs ». Mais, elle a fait le lit de « malentendus flagrants », selon Milan Trojanovic, au point d'être étendue à toutes les marchandises entrant en RCA à partir du Cameroun.

Aussi, le 1er mai, la Minusca a-t-elle été obligée d'annoncer l'annulation de ladite décision. « Toutes les questions qui y sont soulevées sont nulles et non avenues », écrit le directeur de l'appui à la Minusca dans le communiqué y relatif.

Et ce dernier de poursuivre : « en ce qui concerne le transport de marchandises de la Minusca, vous vous conformerez aux procédures, règles et règlements en vigueur convenus bilatéralement entre les gouvernements du Cameroun et de la République centrafricaine, pour la gestion des mouvements du secteur des transports à travers la frontière. Toute modification des procédures existantes émanera des deux gouvernements ».

Pour rappel, le corridor Douala (Cameroun)-Bangui (RCA) est desservi par un peu plus de 5 000 camions. L'accord entre les deux pays prévoit 60% de camionneurs camerounais et 40% de camionneurs centrafricains. Cependant, indique la Banque africaine de développement (BAD) dans une étude publiée en 2019, seulement cinq transporteurs centrafricains ont été comptabilisés. Ce qui signifie qu'il y a 4995 camionneurs de nationalité camerounaise qui ravitaillent le pays voisin en marchandises et autres denrées.

Selon les statistiques de la douane camerounaise, en dehors de la logistique de la mission de sécurisation de l'ONU, environ 55 milliards de FCFA de marchandises centrafricaines transitent par le Cameroun chaque année.

Brice R. Mbodiam

TCHAD :

Tchad : L'armée Tchadienne déstabilise la France

<https://agencedepressepanafricaine.com/tchad-larmee-tchadienne-destabilise-la-france/>

By APP - 3 mai 2020

(Agence de presse panafricaine) -Un événement s'est déroulé le 17 Avril 2020 au Tchad. Un événement-incident passé inaperçu dans les media occidentaux et surtout Africains. 'Un avion Français tire 'par erreur' sur une concession à N'Djamena et fait plusieurs morts.' Avait titré Benin WebNewsTv. 'L'obus était parti d'un avion militaire qui s'apprêtait à décoller de la base militaire Adjé Kossé à N'Djamena.' Expliqua Abakar Abdelkarim Daoud, Général de Corps d'Armée, Chef d'Etat-Major des Armées du Tchad. La roquette 'échappée' de cet engin de guerre s'était abattu et réduit en miettes la résidence du Général Mahamat Salah Brahim, Commandant 1er Adjoint de la Garde Présidentielle. Bilan! Au moins 5 morts dont trois enfants et plusieurs blessés.

Victoire de l'Opération 'Colère de Bohoma'

Cet accident(?)s'est passé quelques jours après la victoire de l'Opération 'Colère de Bohoma' lancée en Mars 2020. Opération planifiée, commandée et pilotée pendant 17 jours par le Président

Idriss Deby dans les zones insulaires du Lac Tchad contre Boko Haram. De retour à N'Djamena, le 9 Avril 2020, le Chef d'Etat Tchadien—reçu par le Ministre d'Etat, Ministre Secrétaire Général de la Présidence de la République, Kalzeubé Payimi Deubet, le Directeur de Cabinet civil de la Présidence de la République, Abdoulaye Sabre Fadoul, et quelques officiels—, déclara. 'Je suis de retour dans la capitale. Je remercie très sincèrement toutes les Tchadiennes et tous les Tchadiens, ainsi que les frères et sœurs Africains pour le soutien apporté à nos Forces de Défense et de Sécurité. La paix, la sécurité et la stabilité sont des valeurs sacrées.' Cette Opération avait permis de décimer 90 à 95% de la secte terroriste de Abubacar Shekau. Elle coûta également la vie à 52 soldats patriotes Tchadiens. Information donnée le 9 Avril par le colonel Azem Bernandoua Agouna, porte-parole de l'Armée Nationale Tchadienne (ANT)—Link Vidéo, <https://youtu.be/xd3dPjGmxII>, "Colère de Bohoma": Terrible combat de l'Armée Tchadienne contre Boko Haram'

Dans la formule judiciaire consacrée à de tels événements, le procureur de la République Youssouf Tom annonça qu'une enquête est en cours pour déterminer les circonstances de cet incident.' Les faits avant toute investigation approfondie instruisaient que la roquette partie d'un Su-25, de fabrication Russe, appartenant à l'armée de l'Air Tchadienne, avait d'abord heurté un Camion-pétrolier vide. Ensuite, cet obstacle dévia le projectile de sa trajectoire. Et lui évita de faire sauter un C-130 Français stationné dans les parages.

'Barkhane,' déploiement impressionnant mais improductif

La base aérienne Sergent-Chef Adjé Kossé d'où le drame est parti, sert aussi de Quartier Général(QG) Tchadien de 'l'Opération Barkhane,' dirigée par les Français avec une force militaire d'environ 4500 soldats. Effectif réparti entre le Mali, le Burkina Faso, le Niger et le Tchad, selon le Conseil Européen des Relations Etrangères. 'L'Opération Barkhane,' a pour mission d' 'aider' le G5-Sahel(Mali, Burkina Faso, Mauritanie, Niger et Tchad)à combattre les Djihadistes dans le Sahel. Ses actions sur le terrain sont multiples et diversifiées. Elles vont des patrouilles de combat aux côtés des forces du G5, en passant par la collecte de renseignements, la formation, aux activités de développement local. Ce dernier mandat permet à Barkhane de se substituer à un gouvernement là où il est absent pour étalement administratif insuffisant ou suite à une attaque des Djihadistes. Son budget est de près de 600 millions d'euros par an. Son équipement comprend quelques 3 drones. 7 avions. 21 hélicoptères. 6 à 10 avions de transport tactique et stratégique. 260 véhicules blindés lourds. 360 véhicules logistiques. 210 véhicules blindés légers.

Malgré ce déploiement monstrueux en effectif et logistique, soutenu par un gros budget, et qui fait de 'Barkhane' la plus grande opération à l'étranger de la France, les attaques terroristes Djihadistes ne baissent presque pas d'intensité. Pourtant, dès le lancement de L' 'Opération Serval,' ancêtre de 'Barkhane,' ses premières actions rassurent. Elle stoppe l'avancée des terroristes. Mais ce n'est qu'une illusion. L'inefficacité entretenue de 'Serval' conduira les régimes dictatoriaux-terroristes Français à lancer 'Barkhane.'

D'une opération à l'autre, la France ne prouve rien en termes de méthode et d'efficacité pour vaincre le terrorisme. Les Maliens l'accusent d'être de connivence avec les terroristes du Nord et de trahir les positions de Forces Armées Maliennes. Faisant de ces dernières la cible privilégiée des attaques terroristes. Acculée, la France cherche hypocritement à se racheter. Elle organise une campagne de séduction pour lancer l' 'Opération Takuba' qui laisse les Maliens de marbre.

Les victoires qui dérangent la France

Pendant que les soldats Français tergiversaient, l'ANT avec quelques 2 400 soldats était déployée dans le Nord-Ouest Malien. Le Président Tchadien Idriss Déby expliqua. 'Le Tchad entend assumer sur le terrain sa responsabilité avec toute la rigueur qu'exige une telle mission.' Sous le commandement du Général Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, fils du Président Deby, l'ANT occupa la première ligne de la 'seconde phase' de 'l'Opération Serval.' Elle constituait de par cette position un rempart pour la soldatesque Française et contre le terrorisme dans les zones difficiles et sensibles de Kidal, Tessalit, et Aguelhok, dans ce pays situé à 2 000 km de ses frontières.

Cette armée spécialiste des zones désertiques, furtive et rapide dans l'assaut, adepte des raids et de la guérilla, redoutée dans tout le sahel, en plus de sa longue tradition de guerre, son expérience dans la guerre des Toyota, son aisance mobilité dans le désert, sa capacité à s'adapter à la nouvelle donne, son intelligence de situation, lui donnèrent une victoire incontestable sur les Djihadistes au Mali. La France humiliée monta au créneau. Mit en marche sa diplomatie belliqueuse. Alluma ses mediamensonges. Organisa son opposition-suiviste. Tout ce ramdam pour une campagne de dénigrement de la valeureuse armée Tchadienne. Suite à cette propagande et autres raisons, l'ANT se retira du Mali.

Victoire Tchadienne de trop

Le coup se répète après que l'ANT en Avril 2020 ait détruit cinq camps de Boko Haram installés au Tchad, Nigeria, et Niger. Tuant la majorité de leurs occupants-terroristes et éparpillant les rescapés —Une poignée. Le journal Chrétien(?)Catholique La Croix, n'est pas content. Sous la plume coloniale et négationniste de Laurent Larcher, il titre. 'Contre Boko Haram, le Tchad revendique un triomphe invérifiable.' Puis argumente. 'L'opération conduite par l'armée Tchadienne contre Boko Haram, depuis le 31 Mars, aurait tué un millier de Djihadistes. Un résultat invérifiable, qui tombe à point nommé après l'humiliante et terrible attaque de la base de Bohoma, le 23 Mars, dans laquelle, officiellement, une centaine de soldats Tchadiens sont tombés.'

Le discours négationniste de ce journal, et la précipitation avec laquelle les différents segments de 'Barkhane' sont intervenus 'pour un déblaiement rapide de la zone touchée,' selon l'Ambassade de France à N'Djamena, creusent la curiosité. Ils indiquent à travers ces prêches que les victoires militaires de l'ANT ne sont pas du goût des régimes dictato-criminels Français. Et expliqueraient en autres, les raisons de la tragédie partie de la base militaire Adji Kossei—QG de 'l'Opération Barkhane.'

Mise à l'écart des valeurs de solidarité pour ses intérêts

La sévère correction des soldats du Président Deby à Boko Haram dans l'Opération 'Colère de Bohoma' avait été donnée avec la participation fort probable des Su-25. Alors, rien ne dit que les soldats Français de 'Barkhane' basés à Adji Kossei sont innocents. Rien ne prouve qu'ils n'auraient pas détraqué le système de projection des roquettes d'un de ces formidables avions d'attaque au sol —équivalent Russe de l'A-10 Américain—, pour se venger de l'Administration Deby et sauver sa part de marché(?). Le Général de Gaulle à propos, en paraphasant Lord Palmerston, 'L'Angleterre n'a pas d'amis ou d'ennemis permanents; elle n'a que des intérêts permanents,' rappelait que, d'une façon plus générale, 'les Etats n'ont pas d'amis; ils n'ont que des intérêts.' Cette vision impérialiste occidentale est celle de la France en Afrique. 'Défendre ses intérêts, fût-ce au prix d'une mise à l'écart des valeurs de solidarité et de coopération mondiales.' Ecrivait Jacques André Troesch, président d'ARRI(Association Réalités et Relations internationales).

Sur cette base, rien n'étonnerait, si la France, spécialiste de la déstabilisation et des coups d'Etat, prête à tout pour protéger ses intérêts, aurait tenté ce coup d'un avion de combat qui crache ses obus sans être actionné. La roquette du 17 serait donc une réponse aux victoires Tchadiennes qui brisent le plan Français de s'éterniser—sous-couvert de combattre les terroristes—dans des régions ciblées d'Afrique, pour mieux la piller. Comme cela avait été le cas en RCA où des images ont montré la soldatesque-pilleuse Française en train de voler les minerais dans une zone qu'elle disait protéger.

Chasseuse hypocrite de terroristes

Le vent Africaniste monte. La France prédatrice a peur du vol à ciel ouvert autrefois pratiqué. Elle s'est mue en chasseur de terroristes. Pour ce faire, elle 'cultive' ses tueurs-massacreurs. Les exporte sur le Continent pour la déposséder de ses richesses—Dépouiller le Niger de son l'uranium. Braquer le pétrole Libyen. Dévaliser l'or Malien et les richesses cachées du Burkina Faso. Protéger ses pions comme en Côte d'Ivoire, où les richesses naturelles sont depuis longtemps dans sa sauce sous Alassane Ouattara.

Feumba Samen (cp) pour (App)

**** L'AFRIQUE DU SUD ****

SOUTH AFRICA :

AIIM exits two South African renewable energy projects

Anna Lyudvig May 5, 2020, 2:07 p.m.

<https://www.africaglobalfunds.com/news/private-equity/exits/aiim-exits-two-south-african-renewable-energy-projects/>

African Infrastructure Investment Managers (AIIM), a member of Old Mutual Alternative Investments, has announced the successful divestment of AIIF2's 14% stake in Cookhouse, a 139MW wind farm, and 34% stake in REISA, a 75MW solar PV facility.

African Infrastructure Investment Managers (AIIM), a member of Old Mutual Alternative Investments, has announced the successful divestment of AIIF2's 14% stake in Cookhouse, a 139MW wind farm, and 34% stake in REISA, a 75MW solar PV facility.

The exits are concluded through sales to AIIM's IDEAS Managed Fund, one of the largest equity investors in South African renewables with more than \$500m invested in the sector.

Paul Frankish, Investment Director at AIIM, said: "We are immensely proud to have played a role in these projects and believe the above-target returns achieved support our strategy of investing in first mover projects where we are able to take advantage of our experience across similar projects in the region. The exits mark a long involvement in these projects for AIIM, starting at the inception of the renewables market in South Africa."

"Through its holding period, the AIIM team led the project through a challenging construction period, oversaw the renegotiation of Operation and Maintenance agreements and established community trust and operations structures which have been used as a blueprint for the industry and resulted in long term investment in the projects' host communities," he added.

Based in South Africa's Eastern and Northern Cape respectively, Cookhouse and REISA reached financial close in 2012 as part of the round one bidding window of South Africa's Renewable Energy IPP Procurement (REIPPP) programme, which has gone on to raise in excess of \$10.6bn of private funding for South Africa's renewable generation capacity.

These were the largest wind and solar PV projects completed in the first bidding round and, until last year, Cookhouse was the largest operational windfarm in sub-Saharan Africa.

Since commencing operations in 2014, Cookhouse has generated an average of 327GWh of clean power per year – saving 315k tCO₂e and providing enough electricity to power 104,000 households.

REISA has generated an average of 181GWh of clean power per year over the last five years of operations – saving 179k tCO₂e and providing enough electricity to power 57,000 households.

Vuyo Ntoi, Investment Director and IDEAS portfolio manager, said: "IDEAS is a co-shareholder in both Cookhouse and REISA and has been a significant investor in both projects since financial close. With around \$1bn in assets under management, IDEAS is also one of the leading investors in the South African REIPPP program and holds interests in 27 projects across rounds 1 to 4 of the program."

"This deal aligns well with our strategy of investing in infrastructure projects that are vital for economic growth, produce tangible social and environmental benefits, and are capable of delivering strong long-term returns to investors. We're very much looking forward to continuing the great work of our AIIM colleagues in supporting Cookhouse and REISA in providing the country with clean, renewable energy."

Turkish A400Ms deliver medical supplies to South Africa, return with munitions

<https://www.defenceweb.co.za/featured/turkish-a400ms-deliver-medical-supplies-to-south-africa-return-with-munitions/>

Written by defenceWeb - 5th May 2020

Turkish Air Force A400M Atlas transport aircraft have been flying to and from South Africa over the last several days, delivering donated medical equipment and returning with munitions from Rheinmetall Denel Munition (RDM).

The first Turkish A400M arrived in Cape Town on 30 April, bringing with it 100 000 surgical masks, 100 N95 masks, 500 protective overalls, 500 face shields, 500 medical safety goggles, 200 litres of hand sanitiser and one disinfectant tunnel.

Turkey's Ambassador to South Africa Elif Ulgen said the donation is part of a cooperation agreement between the two countries.

The Turkish Air Force A400M was followed into Cape Town by a second A400M, this time empty as both aircraft made the return trip with cargo destined for Turkey. Daily Maverick quoted Ulgen as saying the aircraft were in South Africa to pickup "some kind of military ammunition" purchased from Rheinmetall Denel Munition, which has factories in the Western Cape, including Somerset West. Most of it would be 'for practice and exercises by the Turkish military.'

Another two Turkish A400Ms arrived in South Africa on Saturday 2 May, and flight tracking data showed another two arriving on Monday 4 May. One of the A400Ms stopped in Somalia where it unloaded humanitarian aid and medical equipment.

This is not the first time Turkish Air Force A400M aircraft have been to South Africa. The first was in July 2018, in support of the visit of the President of Turkish Republic on the occasion of the BRICS Summit.

Turkey has had contracts with RDM for some years. When contacted for comment, RDM said that "due to the nature of our business we may not disclose any information regarding our customers or orders."

BOTSWANA :

Botswana to slowly end lockdown

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/06/c_139033004.htm

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-06 00:18:17|Editor: huaxia

GABORONE, May 5 (Xinhua) -- Botswana has intentions to slowly open up the economy following a five weeks lockdown, ending on Thursday, to fight COVID-19 pandemic.

The country's legislators will convene an emergency parliament meeting on Wednesday to discuss new regulations expected to usher in opening of businesses and schools, under strict supervision.

According to proposed regulations, presented by President Mokgweetsi Masisi to parliament on Tuesday, the Southern Africa country wants to gradual allow businesses, traders or school to operate after satisfying Health Services Director or any authorized official that they will prevent the spread of COVID-19.

"From 8th May, 2020 until 20th May, 2020 at midnight during this phase of the lockdown and for the remainder of the state of public emergency, a trade, business or school may operate where it has satisfied the Director of Health Services, or any person authorized by the Director for that purpose, of its ability to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including the following," said the planned regulation.

Some of the proposed interventions that institutions and entrepreneurs are expected to put in place include checking of body temperature of all persons accessing the trade business or school, and where a person's body temperature is 37.4 degrees Celsius.

The new regulations will demand any person with body temperature above the stipulated level shall not be allowed to access the trade, business or school premises and the person shall be referred to the Health Services Director.

In addition, government wants regular disinfecting of the trade, business or school premises, under the supervision of the Health Service Director. Enditem

ZIMBABWE :

Zimbabwe ruling party calls for deployment of troops to Mozambique

<https://www.thezimbabwemail.com/zimbabwe/zimbabwe-ruling-party-calls-for-deployment-of-troops-to-mozambique/>

May 5, 2020 Staff Reporter Zimbabwe

Ruling ZANU PF party has used its Twitter information portal @zanupf_patriots to call for the deployment of the Zimbabwe Defense Forces to Mozambique where Islamic insurgents are wreaking havoc.

When questioned whom they will be helping in Mozambique, the party said, “We are not helping anyone, we are doing it for Zimbabwe. After Mozambique, which country is next?”

President Emmerson Mnangagwa’s government recently refuted allegations that Harare has deployed its soldiers to wage war in the eastern African country.

Information Permanent Secretary Nick Mangwana, recently told media that, “Zimbabwe has not deployed any troops to Mozambique, at all. There is no troop deployment, there is no plan.”

However, Mangwana did not completely rule out the prospect of a future deployment. “If at all at some point something will need to happen we will always fall under SADC (Southern African Development Community) and anything that would happen will happen under the auspices of SADC.

But at the moment and as a nation we have no troops in Mozambique. We have not deployed any troops in Mozambique and we have no intention of bilaterally deploying troops into Mozambique.” Mnangagwa’s business partner Retired Colonel Lionel Dyke is currently contracted by Maputo to wage war against the Islamic rebels.

Dyke is one of the former enforcers of the Gukurahundi genocide that killed more than 20 000 citizens of Matabeleland and Midlands.

ZAMBIA :

Zambia reports 13 new COVID-19 cases, total now at 137

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-04 20:43:12|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/04/c_139030086.htm

LUSAKA, May 4 (Xinhua) -- Zambia on Monday reported 13 new COVID-19 cases, bringing the total of confirmed cases to 137.

The new cases have been picked from 811 tests conducted in the last 24 hours, Health Minister Chitalu Chilufya said.

Zambia has also reported three deaths related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Enditem

Zambia, Japan seek more trade

<http://www.daily-mail.co.zm/zambia-japan-seek-more-trade/>

May 5, 2020 MWAPE MWENYA, Lusaka

THE Japanese economy is a highly developed free-market economy. It is the third largest in the world by nominal gross domestic product and the fourth largest by purchasing power parity (PPP). Most Zambians associate Japan with the importation of second-hand motor vehicles, but there has been a lot of trade and developmental engagements between Zambia and Japan.

Zambia has benefited a lot from the bilateral relations with Japan through support to various sectors of the economy, which includes health, infrastructure, agriculture, education, and water and sanitation.

To cement the ties between the two countries, the Zambian mission has intensified efforts to attract more investment and tourists through various interventions.

Zambia currently trades with Japan through the Japanese Initiative, which provides Zambia with preferential market access, allowing selected goods to enter the Japanese market duty-free and quota-free.

MALAWI :

IMF Executive Board Approves a US\$91 Million Disbursement under the Rapid Credit Facility for Malawi

<https://www.imf.org/en/News/Articles/2020/05/01/pr20200-malawi-imf-executive-board-approves-us-million-disbursement-under-rapid-credit-facility>

May 1, 2020

The International Monetary Fund approved a disbursement of US\$91 million under the Rapid Credit Facility to help Malawi meet the urgent balance of payment (BOP) needs stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic is expected to have a significant impact on Malawi including affecting the near-term economic outlook, which has deteriorated significantly.

The authorities have proactively responded to the pandemic with a national response plan—supported by the World Health Organization and other development partners—and measures to preserve macroeconomic stability while protecting the vulnerable...

NAMIBIA :

Namibia to fine or imprison citizens not wearing masks in public places

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-05 20:52:47|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/05/c_139032741.htm

WINDHOEK, May 5 (Xinhua) -- The Namibia government will fine or imprison those who do not wear a mask in public places following the commencement of the country's stage 2 of the COVID-19 lockdown exit plan on Tuesday.

The government in further updates to lockdown stage 2 requirements and guidelines on Tuesday said during the specified period every person must wear a mask in a public place.

"An authorized officer may instruct a person who is not wearing a mask to wear a mask or to leave the public place," the directive said.

According to the updates, a person who refuses to comply with an instruction commits an offense and on conviction is liable to a fine not exceeding 2000 Namibia dollars (about 111 U.S. dollars) or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six months or to both such fine and such imprisonment.

Meanwhile, the country's lockdown exit plan will be rolled out over four phases to allow the economy to function without compromising health of the public. Enditem

ANGOLA :

Angola Oil & Gas 2020 to take place 14-15 Oct

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/article/business/1036943-angola-oil-gas-2020-to-take-place-14-15-oct>

Under the theme 'New Era of Growth and Prosperity in Angola,' the Ministry of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas aims to promote and attract foreign direct investment in what is one of Africa's biggest economies.

Devdiscourse News Desk | Luanda | Updated: 05-05-2020 15:45 IST | Created: 05-05-2020 15:45 IST

The Angola Oil & Gas (AOG) Conference & Exhibition 2020 will take place October 14-15, 2020 in Luanda for its second year, as the focal point of an international investment drive; The Angolan government has reiterated its confidence in the country's energy sector, despite the global COVID-19 pandemic; AOG 2020 is the focal point of an international investment drive aimed at bringing new deals to the table and signing up new entrants to Angola's oil and gas industry.

The second edition of the Angola Oil & Gas (AOG) Conference & Exhibition 2020 will officially take place on October 14-15, 2020. The new dates come after Angola's Ministry of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas, together with the event organizer, Africa Oil & Power (AOP), took vigilant action to keep delegates, speakers and participants safe during the COVID-19 pandemic and postponed the event.

"We have been monitoring the global COVID-19 pandemic closely and felt that it would be in everyone's best interest to push the dates of the conference to the end of the year. Despite COVID-19's impact on the global energy industry, confidence in Angola's oil and gas sector remains on an upward trajectory," says James Chester, Acting CEO of AOP.

The reappointment of H.E. Diamantino Pedro Azevedo as Minister of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas by Angolan President H.E. João Lourenço, coupled with the work that has been put into reviving Angola's energy sector over the last few years, represents a continued vote of confidence in the country's oil and gas sector.

The Minister has implemented a series of reforms that have streamlined investment in Angola's oil and gas sector, adopting new rules and procedures for public tenders involving oil and gas contracts, establishing a formal field abandonment process, incentivizing marginal field development, revising natural gas statutes and expanding existing development zones.

"With new projects coming on stream, an upcoming licensing round and the launch of gas monetization initiatives, to name a few, confidence in Angola's energy sector is at an all-time high, spearheaded by government's initiatives to continually progress the industry," Chester adds.

Under the theme 'New Era of Growth and Prosperity in Angola,' the Ministry of Mineral Resources, Petroleum and Gas aims to promote and attract foreign direct investment in what is one of Africa's biggest economies.

AOG 2020 will also feature key industry players such as ENI, who is currently developing the Agogo field in Block 15 / 06, offshore Angola with partners Sonangol P&P and SSI Fifteen Limited. Production currently stands at approximately 10,000 barrels of oil per day (bpd) and is expected to increase to 20,000 bpd in the near future.

Angola's national oil company Sonangol, which is currently undergoing a restructuring phase, will also be in attendance.

Major international companies including Total, Baker Hughes, Equinor, Certex, Bureau Veritas, Pluspetrol, Angola Cables, Poliedro Oil Corporation and MikaMedical have already signed on as sponsors.

Companies active in Angola's investment, health, energy and telecommunication sectors including Prezioso Angola, Brimont, FMCH Group, Huawei, Vista Waste Management, Welltec, NCR Angola, International SOS, Total, Angola Cables, BIC Seguros and Teleservice, have already

secured exhibition space, and the event organizers expect even more diversified companies to come on board.(With Inputs from APO)

MOZAMBIQUE :

Mozambique extends lockdown for another 30 days

President Nyusi had imposed restrictions on April 1 to stem the spread of COVID-19 pandemic
Hiba Sait | 30.04.2020

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/mozambique-extends-lockdown-for-another-30-days/1824358>

Mozambique has extended lockdown by another 30 days to stem the spread of COVID-19 or coronavirus pandemic, Africa News Network (ANN) reported on Thursday. The nationwide restrictions had been imposed on April 1.

Mozambique's President Filipe Nyusi said the lockdown was being extended as the measure has shown positive results in containing the virus.

The president called people to observe restrictions to combat the COVID-19. He said that some people were still going out of homes for non-essential reasons, according to the report.

The southern African nation has so far reported 76 COVID-19 cases, with no deaths, according to data compiled by the US-based Johns Hopkins Coronavirus Resource Centre.

MADAGASCAR :

Madagascar: Use of COVID Organics expands

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/madagascar-use-of-covid-organics-expands/1829601>

Collaboration is underway with foreign doctors, researchers, says Malagasy President Andry Rajoelina

Felix Tih | 05.05.2020

ANKARA

In addition to the COVID Organics (CVO), already marketed in the form of herbal tea, a new injectable solution of the same product is under clinical trials in Madagascar, according to the country's president.

Andry Rajoelina said on Monday his government was already collaborating with foreign doctors and researchers on the matter, looking at alternative research possibilities but still on the trail of the Artemisia plant -- the main component of CVO.

"A pharmaceutical factory will be set up within a month to increase the production capacity of COVID Organics. It will be administered in other forms such as injections," Rajoelina said on Twitter.

Last month, Rajoelina officially launched the CVO, a herbal concoction claiming that it can prevent and cure patients suffering from the novel coronavirus. The drug was developed by the Malagasy Institute of Applied Research.

But, the World Health Organization (WHO) has warned against any self-medication and said that it has not recommended any medicine as a cure for the COVID-19.

Known under the scientific name of Artemisia Annu, the plant of Chinese origin was first imported to Madagascar in the 1970s to treat malaria.

According to Rajoelina, Madagascar produces 3,000 tons of Artemisia every year.

No exports

"From now on, we will no longer export Artemisia. But, we will proceed with the transformation of this plant on our own territory," he said.

The new form of CVO will easily reach other countries in Europe and on other continents, according to Rajoelina.

Meanwhile, CVO in the form of herbal tea continues to be distributed in Madagascar.

"I encourage Malagasy farmers to cultivate Artemisia in order to increase our production capacity amounting to 3,000 tons per year. The value in tonnes of Artemisia is \$3,000 vs \$350 for rice," Rajoelina said.

Madagascar has donated CVO, which is claimed to cure the COVID-19 to several African countries.

The country has confirmed 149 COVID-19 cases so far, with no deaths and 99 recoveries, according to figures compiled by the US-based Johns Hopkins University.

Rajoelina has also extended a state of emergency in the country put in place against the virus.

66 million-year-old mammal fossil from dinosaur era unearthed in Madagascar

by Anadolu Agency ISTANBUL Science Apr 30, 2020 7:51 pm GMT+3

<https://www.dailysabah.com/life/science/66-million-year-old-mammal-fossil-from-dinosaur-era-unearthed-in-madagascar>

Scientists discovered a fossil belonging to a mammal that lived 66 million years ago in Madagascar, an East African nation.

In an article written by scientists from different parts of the world and published Wednesday in the journal Nature, the skeleton of a mammal that was found in the north of Madagascar and lived in the age of dinosaurs, was examined.

"Here we report the discovery of an articulated and very well-preserved skeleton of a gondwanatherian of the latest age (72.1-66 million years ago) of the Cretaceous period from Madagascar that we assign to a new genus and species, Adalatherium hui," the article read.

Gondwanatherian is an extinct group of mammaliaforms, which includes mammals and their closest relatives, which lived in the southern hemisphere.

It also noted that it was the most complete skeleton of a gondwanatherian that has been found.

The skeleton of *Adalatherium hui* (crazy beast) exhibits "many unique features in combination with features that are convergent on those of therian mammals," the article added.

It also included "the only postcranial material and ascending ramus of the dentary known for any gondwanatherian."

****** AFRIQUE DU NORD ******

EGYPTE :

Egypt Sends Medical Aid to Sudan

<https://aawsat.com/english/home/article/2268116/egypt-sends-medical-aid-sudan>

Tuesday, 5 May, 2020 - 06:45

The Egyptian government sent Monday medical supplies to the Sudanese capital of Khartoum to help the Sudanese people amid the current pandemic.

Following Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi directives, the armed forces dispatched four military airplanes carrying urgent medical supplies to Sudan.

According to the Egyptian presidency, the supplies included masks, sterilizers, ventilators, and other items used to limit the spread of the infectious virus.

During his reception of the convoy, Deputy Chairman of the Supreme Committee for Health Emergencies Siddig Tawer emphasized that such a step confirms the strong and timeless relations between Sudan and Egypt.

Tawer described the step as a “noble” gesture from the Egyptian people that confirms the Egyptian continual support for Sudan during tough times.

For his part, Egyptian ambassador to Sudan Hossam Issa said that the support shown to Sudan aims to preserve its key resource: the Sudanese people.

Egypt releases US citizen who 'criticised' Sisi's government on Facebook

<https://www.middleeasteye.net/news/egypt-releases-us-citizen-reem-desouky-301-days-prison>

Reem Desouky, an art teacher, was detained for 301 days for sharing posts on social and economic conditions in Egypt

An American citizen who was detained at Cairo airport last August for allegedly criticising the Egyptian government on Facebook has been released, a rights group said.

Reem Desouky, an Egyptian-American art teacher who lives in Pennsylvania, was detained for 301 days after arriving in Cairo on 7 July 2019 with her son.

Egyptian authorities never disclosed which Facebook posts led to her arrest, but according to reports, she was charged with administering social media accounts deemed critical of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's government.

The Freedom Initiative said in a statement on Monday that it was "ecstatic" about Desouky's release and hoped it would be "built on for the release of others".

Her release comes two weeks after US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo urged his Egyptian counterpart to keep American citizens in Egyptian prisons safe during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Last month, a bipartisan group of US senators wrote a letter to Pompeo, urging him to press for the release of Americans detained in several countries, citing the risk from the virus. Desouky's name was on the list of US citizens mentioned in the letter.

Her release also comes months after another dual Egyptian-US citizen, Moustafa Kassem, died while detained in Egypt's maximum security Tora prison. His death was deemed "avoidable" by the US State Department.

Kassem had said he had been wrongfully detained by Egyptian soldiers when he happened to be at a shopping centre near Cairo's Rabaa al-Adawiya square.

After spending more than five years in pretrial detention, he was later sentenced to 15 years in jail in a mass trial involving hundreds of defendants.

He wrote letters to both US President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence asking them to secure his freedom, but died after a series of hunger strikes.

Democratic US senators said Kassem's death was due to the failures of the Trump administration.

Human rights groups estimate that Sisi's government has jailed as many as 60,000 dissidents since a 2013 coup against Egypt's first democratically elected president, Mohamed Morsi.

Morsi himself died in jail last June, after enduring almost six years in solitary confinement.

ALGERIE :

Algerian envoy: China-Africa cooperation has aroused envy

Updated 22:13, 02-May-2020

<https://news.cgtn.com/news/2020-05-02/Algerian-envoy-China-Africa-cooperation-has-aroused-envy-QaDU2VrKU0/index.html>

Cooperation between China and Africa, which has seen remarkable progress over the past years, has aroused "admiration and envy" in the world, Algerian Ambassador to China Ahcene Boukhelfa said in a recent interview with CGTN.

Commenting on media reports alleging mistreatment of African people in the southern Chinese city of Guangzhou amid the COVID-19 pandemic, Boukhelfa said those reports were probably aimed at causing differences between Africans and Chinese and damaging relations on the two sides.

"We have noticed that what was reported was wrong ... in the sense that measures taken by provincial authorities were misunderstood by some media, or exaggerated to cause differences between Africans and Chinese," the ambassador said.

Chinese authorities have denied discrimination against Africans in Guangzhou, stressing that the country treats all foreign nationals equally in its coronavirus response.

Workers unload medical supplies donated by China at Algiers International Airport in Algiers, Algeria, April 15, 2020. /Xinhua

"There is no doubt that China-Africa cooperation, whether bilateral between China and individual members, or multilateral cooperation based on the China-Africa forum (Forum on China-Africa Cooperation), has aroused a lot of admiration and envy," Boukhelfa told CGTN.

"The purpose of those media reports was probably to damage China-Africa relations," he said, adding that their ties are "solid and stable" and will achieve further development in the future.

The diplomat hailed mutual assistance between China and Algeria in fighting the pandemic. In early February, Algeria sent medical donations to help China combat the coronavirus, soon after the outbreak started in the central province of Hubei.

"For us, Hubei is very important," Boukhelfa noted. "We had a very special relationship with the province. In 1963, the first Chinese medical delegation to Algeria was from Hubei."

Men wearing face masks walk in Algiers, Algeria, April 29, 2020. /AP

In March and April, China sent several batches of medical donations to the North African nation, including surgical masks, N95 masks, medical protective outfits, face shields, as well as respirators for intensive care use.

"China has helped us a lot. The central government, provincial governments, local authorities, Chinese enterprises and even individuals have helped Algeria a lot. The materials and medical equipment provided by China are very valuable," said the ambassador.

The total number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Algeria had surged to 4,154 by Friday, with a death toll of 453.

Boukhelfa also called on the international community to work together to deal with the pandemic.

"The international community should work together to become a real community, give the word 'community' a real meaning, and ensure that all humankind is one group," he said, adding that this is the only way to address the situation.

MAROC :

Coronavirus : 100 nouveaux cas confirmés au Maroc, 5.153 au total, mardi à 10h challenge · 5 mai 2020

<https://www.challenge.ma/coronavirus-100-nouveaux-cas-confirmes-au-maroc-5-153-au-total-mardi-a-10h-139512/>

Cent cas supplémentaires d'infection au nouveau coronavirus (Covid-19) ont été confirmés au Maroc jusqu'à mardi à 10h00, portant à 5.153 le nombre total des cas de contamination, annonce le ministère de la Santé.

Le nombre de cas guéris s'élève à 1.799 avec 146 nouvelles guérisons, alors que le nombre de décès passe à 180 cas, précise le ministère sur le portail « www.covidmaroc.ma ».

Par ailleurs, le nombre des cas exclus après des résultats négatifs d'analyses effectuées au laboratoire est de 42.684, selon la même source.

Le ministère invite les citoyens à respecter les règles d'hygiène et de sécurité sanitaire, ainsi que les mesures préventives prises par les autorités marocaines en faisant preuve de responsabilité et de patriotisme.

TUNISIE :

5 nouveaux cas, 1018 contaminations au coronavirus en Tunisie, dont 466 dans le Grand-Tunis 05-05-2020

<https://news.gnet.tn/5-nouveaux-cas-1018-contaminations-au-coronavirus-en-tunisie-dont-466-dans-le-grand-tunis/>

Le ministère de la Santé annonce que 35 personnes ont été testées positives au Covid-19 à la date du 3 mai, dont 30 cas de contamination antérieure, et 5 nouveaux cas, sur un total de 447 analyses en laboratoire.

Le bilan total des personnes infectées par le coronavirus en Tunisie s'élève ainsi à 1018, sur 24853 analyses effectuées en laboratoire, dont 569 cas sont encore porteurs du virus.

Le ministère fait état également de 43 décès, et de 406 guérisons.

Le Grand-Tunis totalise, à lui seul, 466 cas confirmés dont 229 à Tunis, 99 à l'Ariana, 97 à Ben Arous, et 41 à la Manouba.

Les gouvernorats de Sousse, Médenine et Kébili restent très touchés avec respectivement 82, 88, et 104 cas.

La prévalence du virus reste faible à Jendouba (1), Béjà (3), Zaghouan (3), Siliana (4), Sidi Bouzid (5), Tozeur (5), le Kef (7), Kairouan (8) et Kasserine (9).

47 personnes sont actuellement hospitalisées, compte non tenu des 18 malades admis en réanimation.

LYBIA :

Libyan military strikes vehicles of Haftar militias

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/libyan-military-strikes-vehicles-of-haftar-militias/1829086>
Aydogan Kalabalik | 05.05.2020 TRIPOLI, Libya

The Libyan military targeted two vehicles belonging to militias loyal to renegade commander Khalifa Haftar in an airstrike.

Muhammed Kununu, the military spokesman for the government, said in a statement Tuesday that Libyan government forces carried out an air operation in the Gariyat region about 270 kilometers (167 miles) south of the capital Tripoli and hit a vehicle carrying militias and a supply truck. No information was given on the casualties.

Government forces carried out three different operations Friday against Haftar militias. Following the ouster of late ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, Libya's government was founded in 2015 under a UN-led political deal. Since April 2019, the government has been under attack by Haftar's forces, based in eastern Libya, and more than 1,000 people have been killed in the violence.

Russia forced Haftar to declare truce in Libya: Saleh

<https://www.middleeastmonitor.com/20200503-russia-forced-haftar-to-declare-truce-in-libya-saleh/>
May 3, 2020 at 11:43 am | Published in: Africa, Europe & Russia, Libya, News, Russia
Eastern Libya-based renegade General Khalifa Haftar announced a truce upon the “command of Russia” as he suffered great losses against the UN-recognised Libyan government, according to pro-Haftar parliament speaker.

Discussions between the Libyan House of Representatives Speaker Aguila Saleh and tribal leaders in eastern Libya were aired on social media, where Saleh said Russia, a key foreign supporter of Haftar, prepared a report on the situation on the ground.

According to this report, Haftar militias were in a hard situation in front of the Libyan army, Saleh said, and the militia in Tarhuna, southeast of Tripoli, were “like on the edge of the cliff” as the refueling supply sent for Haftar militia was hit from the air.

He said the report also included that the internal war will evolve into a new phase against the Haftar militia, and added: “Russians wanted Haftar to declare ceasefire as the situation in clashing zones was getting worse.”

The Libyan National Army (LNA) under renegade General Khalifa Haftar on Friday declared a ceasefire in his conflict with the UN-backed Government of National Accord (GNA) during the holy month of Ramadan.

Read: UAE condemns Turkey’s military intervention in Libya, reiterates support for Haftar ‘Statement should be in line with Berlin Conference’

Saleh claimed the Russians made a written request to Haftar to make a statement on the “re-formation of the Presidency Council” and they wanted the statement to be in line with the decisions of the Berlin Conference on a call for cease-fire in Tripoli and the formation of a new Presidency Council.

“According to the Russia’s report, [it will be] in the meantime, may be this week, it will be certain at the United Nations that the Libyan government is the legitimate representative of the country,” he said.

Since the ouster of late ruler Muammar Gaddafi in 2011, two seats of power have emerged in Libya: military commander Haftar in eastern Libya, supported mainly by Egypt and the UAE, and the Government of National Accord in Tripoli, which enjoys the UN and international recognition.

Haftar unilaterally declared himself the ruler Monday, claiming that he “accepted the mandate of the Libyan people” and termed the 2015 UN-brokered Skhirat agreement for a unified government in the country “a thing of the past.”

But this coup attempt by Haftar was condemned by the international actors and regional allies.

**** AFRIQUE DE L'OUEST ****

GUINEE-BISSAU :

Guinea-Bissau premier, 3 ministers contract COVID-19

<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/africa/guinea-bissau-premier-3-ministers-contract-covid-19/1823380>
Officials immediately quarantined at hotel in capital, says country's top doctor
Felix Tih and James Tasamba | 29.04.2020

Guinea-Bissau's premier announced on Wednesday that he tested positive for the novel coronavirus. "I have tested positive for the novel coronavirus, I am at home and I feel well," Prime Minister Nuno Gomes Na Biam said on Facebook.

Three government ministers were also reported to have tested positive for COVID-19, with Na Biam admitting that multiple members of an inter-ministerial coronavirus committee were also infected by the virus after getting exposed "at the forefront" of the fight against the pandemic. Na Biam and the trio of ministers, including Interior Minister Botche Cande, Secretary of State for Regional Planning and Integration Monica Buaro and Secretary of State for Public Order Mario Fambe, were immediately quarantined at a hotel in the capital of Bissau, Health Minister Antonio Deuna said, adding that Na Biam's infection was a community transmission case.

Deuna and Na Biam separately invited the country to respect COVID-19 preventive measures and said the situation is becoming more serious.

The news came days after President Umaro Sissoco Embaló placed a major order for COVID-organics from Madagascar. Organic concoction is said to cure virus-infected patients.

Guinea-Bissau news site odemocratagb.com reported that as of Wednesday, the country had recorded more than 131 cases of infection of the new coronavirus.

In total, there are 205 positive cases registered, including 19 recoveries and one death, it said, citing data from the Emergency Health Operations Center.

The country recorded its first COVID-19 death last Saturday, causing the president to extend a nationwide state of emergency to May 11. Officials announced the country's only death was the following day, after which several ministers and government officials were tested and are awaiting the results.

The government shut the country's borders and public places, including restaurants, places of worship and schools, and imposed a night-time curfew as part of efforts to contain the virus.

The number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Africa reached 34,915 on Wednesday as the death toll hit 1,521, according to the Africa Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Africa CDC).

GUINEA :

Guinée: le Gouvernement prend de nouvelles dispositions et met en garde...

<https://www.africaguinee.com/articles/2020/05/05/guinee-le-gouvernement-prend-de-nouvelles-dispositions-et-met-en-garde>

CONAKRY- Alors que l'épidémie de Coronavirus échappe à tout contrôle, le gouvernement guinéen a pris de nouvelles dispositions ce lundi 04 mai 2020 pour freiner sa progression. Il a en même temps mis en garde les contrevenants.

En application des mesures de l'état d'urgence sanitaire relatives au régime de la circulation des personnes et des marchandises à l'intérieur du territoire national, le Gouvernement informe que les

mouvements de véhicules de transport de marchandises, au départ de Conakry pour les localités de l'intérieur du pays, sont soumis à de nouvelles dispositions.

Désormais l'équipage du véhicule de transport composé de trois (3) personnes (le conducteur et deux (2) apprentis) doit obligatoirement effectuer, avant le voyage, un test de dépistage du COVID19 dont le résultat est négatif. Le centre de dépistage du COVID19 dédié à cet effet est établi au Camp Kwamé N'Krumah sis au KM36. La durée de validité du résultat du test est de quatorze (14) jours à compter de la date du test de dépistage.

Le Gouvernement met en garde les propriétaires et les conducteurs de véhicules de transport de marchandises, appréhendés dans le cadre de la violation des présentes dispositions, ou transportant à leur bord des passagers clandestins, ou encore pratiquant une voie clandestine pour échapper aux différents points de contrôle.

Sans préjudice de poursuites judiciaires, les propriétaires et conducteurs de ces véhicules, seront soumis au paiement d'une forte amende et à la saisie de leurs véhicules.

En ce qui concerne, les conducteurs de motos et de mototaxis de Conakry, il leur est formellement interdit de franchir les limites géographiques des carrefours du KM36 (Coyah) et de Kagbélen (Dubréka), précise la note conjointe signée des Ministres de la Santé Col. Rémy LAMAH et de l'Hygiène Publique et des Transports, Aboubacar SYLLA.

Les conducteurs de motos ou de mototaxis appréhendés dans le cadre de la violation de cette interdiction et, en particulier, ceux qui pratiqueraient une voie de contournement des barrages et des postes de contrôle, seront immédiatement interpellés et leurs engins saisis.

Le Gouvernement précise que les barrages routiers et autres postes de contrôle établis à Bawa sur l'Axe Conakry-Boké, à Wonkifong sur l'axe Conakry-Forécariah et à Kouria sur l'axe Conakry-Kindia sont chargés de veiller à l'application stricte des présentes dispositions. Ces barrages et postes de contrôle de Bawa, de Wonkifong et de Kouria sont également chargés de veiller au respect, par tous les citoyens, y compris les piétons, de l'interdiction stricte de sortir de Conakry. Le Gouvernement instruit l'ensemble des éléments des services de défense et de sécurité déployés à ces différents barrages et points de contrôle à la responsabilité et à la vigilance dans le respect scrupuleux des présentes dispositions, sous peines de sanctions administratives, disciplinaires ou pénales.

Troisième pays le plus touché en Afrique de l'Ouest par le nouveau coronavirus derrière le Nigeria et le Ghana, la Guinée a enregistré à ce jour, un total de 1710 cas confirmés de Covid-19 dont 9 morts et 450 guéris. A suivre... Africaguinee.com

CÔTE D'IVOIRE :

Côte d'Ivoire presidential hopeful Guillaume Soro sentenced to 20 years in jail

<https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/04/28/cote-divoire-presidential-hopeful-guillaume-soro-sentenced-to-20-years-in-jail/>

By David Ochieng Mbewa - April 28, 2020

Côte d'Ivoire presidential candidate Guillaume Soro was on Tuesday sentenced to 20 years in jail by a court for embezzlement and money laundering.

In addition to the jail sentence, the court also ordered that Soro be stripped of his civic rights for seven years.

Soro was convicted in absentia following a trial that lasted just a few hours and one which his lawyers snubbed.

"Guillaume Kigbafori Soro is condemned to 20 years in prison for embezzling funds and laundering public resources," the presiding judge, Cissoko Amouroulaye, said.

Soro, 47, who appears likely to be excluded from October's presidential election, has denied the charges and claims it is a move to stop him contesting against Prime Minister Amadou Gon Coulibaly, President Alassane Ouattara's favoured successor.

In December 2019, authorities issued a warrant of arrest against Soro following his failed attempt to return to the country after a six-month absence. According to the state prosecutor Richard Adou then, Soro was accused of an attempt against the state authority, which authorities had proof was going to be executed soon.

Soro is expected to face another trial over the coup allegations.

Soro led rebels who failed to oust then-president Laurent Gbagbo in 2002. Soro's forces installed President Alassane Ouattara during a civil war that followed the 2010 election, in which both Gbagbo and Ouattara claimed victory.

Soro was once an ally of President Ouattara but they allegedly fell out over the former's presidential ambitions.

Chinese medical team arrives in Cote d'Ivoire to help fight against COVID-19

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-02 16:17:10|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/02/c_139025915.htm

A Chinese medical team member is welcomed upon her arrival in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, on April 30, 2020. The Chinese medical team arrived in Cote d'Ivoire on Thursday to help the country fight against the COVID-19 pandemic. (Xinhua/Zheng Yangzi)

SENEGAL :

Senegal reports 89 new confirmed cases of COVID-19

Source: Xinhua| 2020-05-04 19:03:54|Editor: huaxia

http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-05/04/c_139029926.htm

DAKAR, May 4 (Xinhua) -- Senegalese Ministry of Health and Social Action announced on Monday 89 new confirmed cases of COVID-19, bringing the total number of confirmed cases to 1,271 in the country.

Out of 807 tests carried out in the past 24 hours, 89 returned positive, the ministry said in a press release, adding that 86 are follow-up contact cases and three are community transmission cases.

A total of 43 patients are declared negative after receiving treatments, while six patients are now in intensive care units.

Senegal also confirmed earlier this morning another death due to COVID-19, a 58 years old male.

Senegalese President Macky Sall decided on Saturday night to extend the state of emergency and the curfew from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., declared on March 24, until June 2, as part of the measures taken against COVID-19.

In order to contain the spread of the pandemic, Senegalese health authorities have decided to strengthen the active search for cases of COVID-19.

Among the confirmed cases in the country, 1,061 are follow-up contact cases, 86 are imported cases and 124 are community transmission cases. Senegal has reported 10 deaths and 415 recovery cases since March 2. Enditem

BURKINA FASO :

1,700 Nigerien Gold Miners Stranded in Burkina Faso, IOM to Assist their Return Amid Border Closures

<https://reliefweb.int/report/burkina-faso/1700-nigerien-gold-miners-stranded-burkina-faso-iom-assist-their-return-amid>

Source IOM Posted 1 May 2020

Ouagadougou – Over 1,700 Nigeriens are currently stranded in Burkina Faso after fleeing clashes in Diebouougou, a gold mining region in that country's south. Lacking means to use public transportation, due to national travel restrictions. and with no resources to pursue their journey, the cohort left the mining zone by foot, with a few on bicycles, hoping to reach Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso's capital, before continuing on to Niamey, the Nigerien capital.

After two days, several hundred Nigeriens reached Ouagadougou, others got as far as Kokologho, a city located about 45 km from the Burkina capital.

Reached by Niger's Consulate in Ouagadougou and the Burkinabè Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) has been asked to assist these stranded migrants, including with voluntary return to Niger

Meanwhile, some 210 Nigeriens, already arrived in Burkina Faso's capital, are being sheltered by the Nigerien community there. Over 1,300 continue to wait in Kokologho.

Today (1 May), IOM will begin assisting those who expressed their wish to go back to Niger.

IOM regional spokesperson Florence Kim said this week the reasons these migrants fled Diebouougou remain unclear. "One Nigerien fought with a Burkinabe over gold," she said. "The authorities had to close the site."

IOM staff in Burkina Faso have spoken to those who fled.

Said Nouredine, a Nigerien gold miner: "We had to flee the gold sites because we were afraid of reprisals. When we arrived in Kokologho, IOM has provided us with food and medical aid."

This man added: "We have been told how to protect ourselves from the coronavirus but because we are so many, measures such as physical distancing are difficult to apply."

According to local authorities, no positive case of COVID-19 contagion has yet been confirmed in gold mining zones. IOM has started to screen and register migrants on site. However, preventive measures such as physical distancing are hard to follow.

Through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration, the European Union has released additional funding to assist these stranded migrants. IOM's Kim explained.

“The decision to open the border and allow for the safe return of these stranded Nigeriens is such a relief particularly in these very trying times,” said Abibatou Wane, IOM Chief of Mission in Burkina Faso.

“This shows how solidarity between countries is needed to help the most vulnerable migrants stranded across the region and who are not necessarily taken into account in national response plans,” Wane added.

The Organisation is also providing food assistance to the stranded Nigeriens in Kokologho as the Burkinabè Red Cross distributed hygiene kits in Ouagadougou and Kokologho. The Red Cross also provided food assistance to those who have already arrived in Ouagadougou. The Niger Consulate will issue travel laissez-passer cards for those who are undocumented.

Upon arrival in Niger, the migrants will observe a 14-day quarantine period on a site identified by the Government of Niger outside the capital. The government of Niger also will provide transportation from the site to the miners' communities of origin.

With support of the EU and other donors, IOM in Niger is currently finalizing coordination for the miners' return with the Ministries of Humanitarian Action, Interior, Public Health and Foreign Affairs and other partners.

This assistance was made possible thanks to the European Union Emergency Trust Fund for Africa through the EU-IOM Joint Initiative for Migrant Protection and Reintegration. Since 2017, 2,243 Burkinabè have received reintegration assistance and 624 persons were assisted to return from Burkina Faso.

For more information please contact Florence Kim at IOM regional Office for West and Central Africa: Email: fkim@iom.int. Tel: +221 78 620 6213.

International Organization for Migration

BENIN :

Bénin : La pandémie fait baisser l'indice du chiffre des affaires du mois de mars de 1,8% par rapport au mois précédent

<http://french.peopledaily.com.cn/Afrique/n3/2020/0505/c96852-9686921.html> Xinhua | 05.05.2020

Le nouveau coronavirus a impacté négativement l'indice du chiffre des affaires (ICA) du Bénin, qui s'est replié de 1,8% au mois de mars 2020 par rapport au mois précédent, révèle le bulletin de synthèse conjoncturelle du mois de mars 2020, publié lundi à Cotonou.

Selon ce bulletin réalisé par la direction générale des Affaires économiques du ministère béninois de l'Economie et des Finances, cette baisse est principalement portée par les branches "transports, activités des auxiliaires de transport et communications (-15,0%)"; "Banques (-38,6 %)" , "hôtels et restaurants (-24%)" et "activités de fabrication (-10,4%)".

"Cette tendance baissière de l'activité s'expliquerait entre autres, par les effets négatifs de la pandémie de coronavirus sur l'économie béninoise", précise la même source.

Selon le site officiel du gouvernement béninois mis en place dans le cadre de la gestion de la pandémie dans le pays, le Bénin comptait depuis dimanche, un total de 96 cas confirmés positifs dont 50 personnes sont totalement guéries, 44 autres sont sous traitement et deux sont décédées.

Pour contenir la propagation du COVID-19 dans le pays, le gouvernement a pris une série de mesures dont l'instauration d'un cordon sanitaire autour des 15 villes du sud du pays les plus exposées à la pandémie, à compter du 30 mars et jusqu'au 10 mai prochain à minuit.

Outre cette mesure, l'exécutif béninois a mis à la disposition de la population plus de 23 millions de masques dont le port est obligatoire.

De même, le gouvernement béninois a ordonné depuis quelques jours le dépistage systématique des communautés à risque notamment, le personnel médical et paramédical, le personnel des forces de sécurité et de défense, la communauté pénitentiaire, en vue d'une meilleure appréciation du niveau réel de contamination du COVID -19.

(Rédacteurs :Yishuang Liu)

NIGERIA :

Nigeria records over N416 billion gain from solid minerals in 12 years

<http://venturesafrica.com/bolt-resumes-nigeria-operations-with-guidelines-for-riders/>

An analysis by the Premium Times, Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ), and Centre for Democracy and Development (CD), reveals that the federal government earned N416.32 billion from the Nigeria's solid materials sector between 2007 and 2018.

According to the report, over half of the amount earned was between 2015 and 2018. The figures emerged from data analysis, industry review, and review of documents from the Nigeria Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (NEITI).

Although the figure pales in comparison to what Nigeria recorded over the same period from the oil and gas sector, experts and operators in the mining sector have said its huge potential means much more would accrue if Nigeria properly harnesses its vast solid mineral resources.

“Nigeria has published eight cycles of solid minerals audit reports since it signed up to the EITI. The sector has contributed N416.32 billion in revenues to the federation in 12 years. Over half of this figure or (N279.0 billion) was earned between 2015 and 2018,” the NEITI report said.

The study shows a remarkable increase in revenues generated by the Federation from the solid minerals sector over the years. In 2018, the total contribution by the sector to the revenue of government was N69.47 billion, up from the 2017’s total contribution of N52.76 billion. While the contribution in 2016 was 43.2 billion and N64.5 billion in 2015.

In 2014, Nigeria earned N49.1 billion as revenue from the sector and in 2013, it was N30.2 billion. N25.5 billion was earned in 2012 and 2011, the total was N27 billion. The breakdown analysis indicated that the solid mineral sector contributed N17 billion in 2010, N19.1 billion in 2009, N10.5 billion in 2008, and N7.5 billion in 2007.

In the just-released NEITI report, it exposed the fluctuations in revenue earnings from the sector during the 12 years. For instance, in 2015, N64.46 billion accrued to the federation, while in 2016, the earnings dipped to N43.22 billion. It will be recalled 2016 was the year Nigeria experienced a recession.

The contribution of 2018 with N69.47 billion was reported the highest since NEITI commenced the reconciliation of payments in the sector. The figure shows an increase of N16.71 billion, representing 31.67 percent, over the 2017 revenue of N52.76 billion. The 2018 earnings of N69.47 billion accounted for 16.69 percent of the total revenues (416,3 billion) from the sector from 2007 to 2018.

The Nigerian economy is ranked as the largest in Africa and the 30th in the world, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of approximately \$400 billion (US dollars) in 2018. Nigeria is a highly-populated emerging market with a rapidly growing manufacturing, and services sectors. Unfortunately, the economy is still very much dependent on the oil and gas sector which contributes about 40 percent of the nominal GDP and over 90 percent of export earnings and 75 percent of gross revenues.

Though Nigeria’s economy is highly dependent on oil as the main source of revenue, the country has over 50 natural resources deposited in commercial quantity across its 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory. These include limestone, gold, coal, gypsum, kaolin, sapphire, granite, copper, iron ore, sand, among others. According to a report, the natural resources sector of Nigeria loses N50 trillion annually to untapped resources.

Earlier this year, the Minister of Mines and Steel Development, Olamilekan Adegbite was quoted to have said that one of the most critical factors towards creating an enabling environment for exploration and mining would be to improve investor perception. He, however, lamented that the undue interference by communities and state governments outside the provisions of the law/regulations would cripple investments and development of the mining sector.

Similarly, the President of Miners Association of Nigeria (MAN), Kabiru Mohammed, in an interview with Premium Times said solid minerals can help the government in diversifying the economy, lamenting that the federal government did not appear to realize the huge potential in the sector.

In light of recent events, the government may want to better explore the solid minerals sector as a means of attracting investors. This would go a long way during these critical times and also ensure that the country’s economy stays afloat even after the pandemic.

By Ahmed Iyanda.

Forty percent of Nigerians live in poverty ~stats office

<https://africa.cgtn.com/2020/05/04/forty-percent-of-nigerians-live-in-poverty-stats-office/>

By Sarah Mukabana - 19 hours ag

Forty percent of people in Nigeria live in poverty, figures published by the statistics office on Monday showed, highlighting the low levels of wealth in a country that has Africa's biggest economy.

The National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), in a report about poverty and inequality from September 2018 to October 2019, said 40% of people in the continent's most populous country lived below its poverty line of 137,430 naira (\$381.75) per year. It said that represents 82.9 million people.

Nigeria is the top oil exporter in Africa, which has helped to create wealth related to crude sales that account for more than half of government revenue. But a failure to diversify the economy and build much needed transport and power infrastructure has stymied growth and the spread of wealth beyond a rich elite.

Rapid population growth outstrips economic growth, which stands at around 2%. The United Nations estimates that Nigeria will have a population of 400 million by 2050.

Nigeria was already struggling to shake off the impact of a 2016 recession before the new coronavirus pandemic hit economies worldwide.

"In Nigeria 40.1 percent of total population were classified as poor. In other words, on average 4 out of 10 individuals in Nigeria has real per capita expenditures below 137,430 Naira per year," it said.

The statistics office said it did not include Borno, the state worst hit by the decade-long Boko Haram insurgency, because many areas there were not safe to reach.

A total of nearly 8 million people need humanitarian assistance across Borno and two neighbouring states affected by the insurgency, according to the United Nations.

The NBS said it had changed its methodology for its study, so the figures could not be compared with previous reports on the same subject covering 2003-2004 and 2009-2010.

"The 2019 study is accordingly treated as a base study and any comparisons with previous poverty studies should be treated with caution," stated the report.

The statistics office said 52% of people in rural areas live in poverty, compared with 18% in urban parts of the country.

It said the highest poverty levels were in the northwestern state of Sokoto, where 87.7% of people lived under the poverty line compared with 4.5% in commercial hub Lagos state which had the lowest rate.

GHANA :

Ghana's coronavirus cases now at 2,169 with 1 more death

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghana-s-coronavirus-cases-now-at-2169-with-1-more-death-940276>

Ghana's Coronavirus case count has risen to 2,169 with 229 recoveries and a death toll of 18.

The new cases were updated by the Ghana Health Service on May 2, 2020.

The update means that Ghana has recorded 95 additional cases of COVID-19 since April 28, when the case count was at 2074.

The latest update comes from the results of 3,552 samples that were tested by the various testing centers across the country.

18 more people have recovered since the last update.

Regional breakdown

The Greater Accra region remains the area with the highest number of confirmed cases followed by the Ashanti Region and the Eastern Region.

Greater Accra Region – 1,852

Ashanti Region – 117

Eastern Region – 87

Central Region – 21

Oti Region – 19

Upper East Region – 19

Volta Region – 16

Northern Region – 13

Upper West Region – 10

Western Region – 9

Western North Region – 4

North East Region – 2

Ghana Armed Forces support to civil authority in the fight against COVID-19

<https://www.ghanaweb.com/GhanaHomePage/NewsArchive/Ghana-Armed-Forces-support-to-civil-authority-in-the-fight-against-COVID-19-939778>

The Ghana Armed Forces (GAF), comprising the Ghana Army, Ghana Navy and the Ghana Air Force has been supporting the Civil Authority in the fight against COVID-19 in several ways.

Prior to the Restriction of Movement in Greater Accra and Greater Kumasi and Contiguous Districts/Municipalities, GAF was at the forefront in the fumigation of markets; a national exercise to disinfect markets across the country and also clean-up exercises to rid the markets of filth.

Other assistance to Civil Authority included operations to ensure compliance of the partial lockdown (OPERATION COVID SAFETY), deploying Naval vessels geared towards stopping intruders who use the sea corridor into the country, air reconnaissance both over land and sea, airlift of VVIPs and medical logistics and airlift of COVID-19 samples for testing. These and many others are the tasks the GAF has been engaged in during this period of COVID-19.

GHANA ARMY

At the service level, the Ghana Army in coordination with the Local Government Authorities provided security during a national exercise to disinfect markets and clean-up exercises to clean markets of filth across the country.

The Ghana Army also dominated population centres before and during the partial lockdown, by way of securing key points and vulnerable points. The Ghana Army also conducted operations to ensure compliance of the partial lockdown and assisted Ghana Police Service to arrest persons who flouted the Restrictions of Movement Order by the President of the Republic.

The Army also gave transport support for distribution of essential logistics and personnel and additionally assisted in providing emergency medical supplies in various hospitals across the country. In partnership with the United States of America, GAF is at the forefront of combating COVID-19 in Ghana with the deployment of a state-of-the-art Mobile Level II Hospital at El-Wak Sports Stadium.

The Ghana Army Engineer Corps in collaboration with the COVID Safety Private Sector Fund and the Ministry of Health is constructing a 100-Bed infectious disease isolation and treatment facility at Ga East Municipal Hospital.

Similarly, the Engineer Corps fenced an isolation centre at the Ghanaman Soccer Centre of Excellence in Prampram. The Ghana Army is also providing security at the isolation centres at the Pentecost Convention Centre at Gomoa Fetteh and at Tamale. The Army supplied water to deprived communities in the La-Dadekotopon Municipality; over 7000 individuals were provided with water. This is in response to the government of Ghana's desire to serve the people of Ghana.

GHANA NAVY

Next, the Ghana Navy in support to the Ghana Army in the fight against COVID-19, attached troops to Southern Command of the Army to assist in enforcing Restriction on Movement measures on land. Naval personnel were deployed at Tema, Motorway Roundabout, Kpone, Tsopoli, and Asutsuari. Other areas included Achimota, Amasaman, Kwame Nkrumah Interchange and Accra Central whilst the rest were in Kasoa, Ofankor, Nyanyanu and Gomoa Buduburum.

The Navy also committed vessels to OPERATION COVID SAFETY and these included 2 Patrol Boats, 2 Defender Class Boats and a Port Security Boat at Western Naval Command. At Eastern Naval Command, the Ghana Navy committed 2 Patrol Boats, a Defender Class Boat, and 2 Port Security Boats.

All the deployed vessels were geared towards preventing intruders who use the sea corridor into the country. The Western Naval Command had a patrol boat at sea at each point in time (between Winneba and Newtown) at the Western border. The Eastern Naval Command had a patrol boat at sea at each point in time (between Winneba and Aflao) at the Eastern border.

The Western and Eastern Naval Commands also sailed ships on several occasions to investigate alleged ferrying of foreigners into Ghana by sea and along the coast.

Both Commands sailed a ship each to investigate alleged ferrying of persons from Cote d'Ivoire to Ghana in the general area of Apam, Winneba, Senya Beraku and Nyanyanu. The Commands had personnel deployed along the entire coastal stretch for beach combing, patrols and sensitization of the coastal communities. The Navy also joined in Air reconnaissance in collaboration with the Ghana Air Force and held interactions with District Chief Executives in some communities to aid information sharing in relation to suspicious activities by fishermen who were using canoes..

GHANA AIR FORCE

Lastly, the Ghana Air Force in support of OPERATION COVID SAFETY attached troops to Southern Command of the Army. Additionally, the Air Force dominated the country's airspace and provided air transport to distribute essential logistics and personnel deployment nationwide. Accordingly, the Ghana Air Force undertook various flights/activities in support of the Operation which included airlift of medical Supplies from Accra to Kumasi, Tamale, Wa and Bolgatanga.

The Air Force at a point had to airlift a COVID-19 patient from Bolgatanga to Tamale with helicopter to Accra by fixed wing aircraft. This was done in conjunction with medical staff of the 37 Military Hospital.

Other support to OPERATION COVID SAFETY were aerial patrols over Kumasi and its environs, aerial patrols over Accra, Tema, Asutsuare and Kasoa general areas along with VIP escorts, coastal patrols and COVID-19 sensitization with Ghana Navy along towns in the Half Assini and Elubo general areas, and Old Ningo for patrols.

The Ghana Air Force was additionally on standby at all times to fly more logistics from Accra to various regions in the second week of the partial lockdown.

GAMBIE:

President Barrow says judiciary regaining public confidence in Gambia

<https://www.voicegambia.com/2020/04/17/president-barrow-says-judiciary-regaining-public-confidence-in-gambia/>

Posted on April 17, 2020

President Adama Barrow has said that Gambian judiciary is re-gaining its lost image and public confidence within three years of his administration.

He made this remark while presiding over the swearing of two new Gambian judges and a permanent secretary at a ceremony held on Thursday at the State House.

The Gambian leader noted that such a development impacts positively on the country's democracy and promotes investment for the socio-economic development of the nation.

Gambianising the judiciary has been central to judicial reform programme of the government's National Development Plan (2018-2021), as Gambian judges currently account for 17 out of 25 superior court Judges, all of whom were appointed between 2017 and date.

This has become a source of pride for the President, as he commends the appointed judges ready to commit and dedicate themselves to service.

"I must challenge you to commit to serving the nation with honour and to the best of your ability. Your commitment and desire to serve professionally, without fear or favour, will go a long way in giving hope to the public sector and ensuring that set results are achieved," he told the newly-sworn in judges.

Justice Momodou S.M. Jallow and Justice Landing M. Sanneh are Gambia-trained judges who served considerable years in the judiciary and rose through the ranks to their new appointments.

While Jallow served nine years as magistrate and principal magistrate in all regions across the country, Sanneh served as clerk, registrar, Sheriff and judicial secretary prior to his new appointment.

Their appointments came following the recommendation of the Judicial Service Commission and approval by President Barrow. It brings the number of new judges in 2020 alone to four.

For Permanent Secretary Momodou Mbai Jabang, he gathered his wealth of experience as a civil servant in the agriculture ministry prior to his appointment as Permanent Secretary. The challenges of that sector are not new to him either.

"We are all aware of the realities of our country," Justice Sanneh said, as he delivered a statement on behalf of his colleagues.

"It is incumbent on all of us to contribute our quota in the development of our beloved country in service to Gambians in positions bestowed on us," he added.

UNION AFRICAINE :

L'Union africaine «en discussion avec Madagascar sur un remède à base de plantes» du COVID-19

Par Maroc diplomatique avec MAP - 5 mai 2020

<https://maroc-diplomatique.net/lunion-africaine-en-discussion-avec-madagascar-sur-un-remede-a-base-de-plant-es-du-covid-19/>

L'Union africaine a annoncé mardi être «en discussion avec Madagascar en vue d'obtenir des données techniques concernant la sûreté et l'efficacité d'un remède à base de plantes», récemment annoncé par ce pays pour la prévention et le traitement signalés du COVID19.

La Commissaire aux Affaires sociales de l'UA, Amira El Fadil, a tenu ,dans ce sens, une réunion avec l'ambassade de Madagascar à Addis-Abeba, au cours de laquelle il a été convenu que ce pays

fournirait à l'Union africaine les informations détaillées nécessaires concernant le remède à base de plantes, indique un communiqué de l'UA.

Une fois les détails fournis, l'UA, "par le biais du Centre africain de contrôle et de prévention des maladies (CDC Afrique), examinera les données scientifiques recueillies jusqu'à présent sur la sûreté et l'efficacité des matières organiques pour le COVID-19. Cet examen sera basé sur les normes techniques et éthiques mondiales pour recueillir les preuves scientifiques nécessaires concernant les performances du tonique", précise le communiqué.

Ces développements font suite à la participation du Président malgache Andry Rajoelina à une réunion par téléconférence du Bureau de la Conférence de l'UA avec les Présidents des Communautés économiques régionales de l'UA au cours de laquelle il a fait une présentation sur le remède à base de plantes.

CHINE :

China, Africa to hold video conferences on COVID-19: spokesperson

Source: Xinhua| 2020-04-27 22:06:30|Editor: huaxia
http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2020-04/27/c_139012708.htm

BEIJING, April 27 (Xinhua) -- China and African countries will hold a series of video conferences on COVID-19 in the face of the rapid spread of the pandemic in Africa, said a Foreign Ministry spokesperson Monday.

The conferences, organized by China's Foreign Ministry and National Health Commission, will enable Chinese medical professionals to share with African officials and experts on epidemic prevention and control, clinical diagnosis and treatment, test methods, border quarantine and risk assessment, spokesperson Geng Shuang told a daily press briefing.

The first such video conference was held Monday.

Geng said China relates deeply to the difficulties posed by the pandemic to African countries, and will continue to provide its utmost support and assistance to Africa through various means.

"China will provide more medical supplies and send more medical experts to Africa in light of the development of the pandemic and the needs of African countries," Geng said.

China will speed up the construction of the Africa Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and strengthen public health and disease control cooperation with the African side, to jointly win the battle against the virus at an early date, he added. Endtiem

Coronavirus aid: Chinese medical teams arrive in Africa to mixed reactions

<https://www.theafricareport.com/25746/coronavirus-aid-chinese-medical-teams-arrive-in-africa-to-mixed-reactions/>

China is boosting its COVID-19 aid efforts in Africa by sending medical teams to various countries and also connecting local health providers across the continent with infectious disease experts back in China.

The deployment of medical personnel to countries like Algeria and, soon, Nigeria, is part of a larger global initiative to send Chinese medical experts to Europe, the Middle East and the Persian Gulf among other regions.

In Africa, the use of medical personnel is an evolution of Beijing's relief efforts on the continent. These initially focused exclusively on the distribution of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and other medical supplies — including government-to-government support and philanthropic gifts like the recent PPE donation by the Jack Ma Foundation.

Chinese Medical Experts Arrive in Africa

ALGERIA: Last month, Algeria was the first African country to receive Chinese medical experts when a 13-member team joined a relief flight carrying PPE and other medical supplies including badly-needed respirators. China is also expected to build a small hospital in Algeria that will be used for preventive care for an estimated 5,000 Algerians and 4,000 Chinese employed by a Chinese engineering company in the country.

NIGERIA: The Nigerian government announced on 3 April that an 18-member Chinese medical team including doctors, nurses and other medical advisers will arrive this week along with a plane-load of additional PPE. Nigeria, to date, has 190 confirmed cases of COVID-19.

It's interesting to note that in both the Algerian and Nigerian cases, the cost of the PPE and medical personnel is not being underwritten by the central Chinese government but instead by Chinese state-owned enterprises that currently operate in the two countries.

In Algeria, the China State Construction Engineering Corporation is paying for this latest relief operation and in Nigeria, Health Minister Osagie Ehanire said "a group of Chinese companies working in Nigeria" is taking care of the costs.

Impending Arrival of Chinese Medical Teams in Nigeria Provokes Backlash

The Federal Government is coming under blistering criticism from medical and other professional associations in Nigeria who are steadfastly opposed to Health Minister Osagie Ehanire's decision to invite an 18-member medical team from China to assist in the fight against COVID-19...

USA :

Washington approves Sudan's choice for ambassador to US

Diplomatic representation between two countries was reduced to charge d'affaires level for nearly quarter of a century

Ahmed Asem | 05.05.2020 KHARTOUM, Sudan

Sudan said Monday that the US has approved Khartoum's choice of veteran diplomat Nour Eddin Satti as its ambassador to Washington, marking a warming of ties after more than two decades.

"The approval comes in the framework of normalizing US and Sudanese diplomatic relations by which it will be upgraded to ambassador level after a quarter decade of being at the level of chargé d'affaires," Sudan's official news agency SUNA quoted the Foreign Ministry as saying.

The ministry added that Sudan will continue work to achieve the goals of the Sudanese revolution and to restore Sudan's position at the international level.

The ministry also reaffirmed the importance of enhancing Sudan's relations with friendly countries. On April 27, the Foreign Affairs Ministry said seven countries had approved the appointment of new Sudanese ambassadors, including Switzerland.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in late December that the two countries would begin the process of exchanging ambassadors after a break of 24 years.

The US closed its embassy in Khartoum in 1996, accusing Sudan of sponsoring terrorism. It reopened the embassy in 2002, but it has been led by a chargé d'affaire.

The Sudanese transitional government headed by Abdalla Hamdok gives importance to establishing balanced foreign relations.

*Ahmed Asmar contributed to this report from Ankara

US Africa Command Commander engages Senegal's Chief of Defence

Written by Africom - 4th May 2020 Africom commander Stephen Townsend.

<https://www.defenceweb.co.za/joint/diplomacy-a-peace/us-africa-command-commander-engages-senegals-chief-of-defence/>

U.S. Army Gen. Stephen Townsend, commander, U.S. Africa Command, spoke with Senegalese Chief of Defense, Air Force Lieutenant General Birame Diop, on Apr. 24 via telephone. The military leaders discussed a range of topics from military exercises to COVID-19 response.

"COVID-19 impacts how we currently interface with our African partners, but the virus is not stopping our support," said Townsend. "Senegal is everything we ask for in a partner, and we will continue to stay fully engaged with Senegal to promote security and stability."

Diop echoed Townsend's sentiments.

"Africa Command remains for us a valuable strategic partner. In this pandemic context, our focus is to keep our troops safe, and support the government in implementing Senegal's National Response Plan," said Diop.

Townsend and Diop discussed Exercise United Accord, a multinational army exercise scheduled to be hosted by Senegal Sept. 10-25.

The command's support to Senegal includes a UN-standard level-II field hospital, provided in October 2019 in partnership with the U.S. Department of State. Senegal recently deployed that field hospital to help support its response to COVID-19.

Townsend and Diop agreed on the importance of security services' positive role in helping citizens through the COVID-19 crisis. Just as U.S. military medical officers are assisting in the U.S. response, the Senegalese Armed Forces medical professionals are serving as advisors in regional offices and providing medical support to civilians in Senegal.

Senegal is also ramping up its COVID-19 testing. Once adequately resourced, the Military Hospital of Ouakam will support the Government of Senegal in its fight against the virus by conducting mass testing.

The generals also discussed non-commissioned officer (NCO) corps development. Diop thanked Townsend for AFRICOM's support in promoting Senegal's NCO corps, and said that Senegal values U.S. Africa Command's NCO professional development programs.

Diop relayed that he looks forward to continuing to advance and expand the US-Senegal bilateral partnership in NCO corps development, and emphasized his goal to promote and inspire NCO development throughout West Africa.

Townsend will continue to conduct phone calls with African partners. Such engagements reaffirm U.S. commitment to Africa in the face of the global COVID-19 pandemic, Africa Command said.

In rare admission, US Africa Command says it killed 2 civilians in Somalia airstrike

AFRICOM's first-ever public civilian casualties report offers a glimpse into the command's notoriously opaque review process

Jared Szuba Jared Szuba April 27, 2020

U.S. Africa Command on Monday, April 27 said it inadvertently killed two civilians and wounded three others more than a year ago near Kunyo Barrow, southern Somalia, in an airstrike that it said also killed two suspected members of the terrorist group al-Shabaab.

The strike, which occurred on February 23, 2019, killed a baby and its father, according to local Somali media reports cited by Airwars, a U.K.-based NGO that tracks civilian casualty reports. AFRICOM at the time said it assessed no civilians were harmed and that two Shabaab militants had been killed.

The rare acknowledgement is only the second of its kind by U.S. AFRICOM, which has overseen U.S. military operations across the continent since the command's founding in 2007.

AFRICOM has now admitted responsibility for accidentally killing a total of four civilians despite hundreds of local allegations resulting from more than 200 strikes in Somalia alone over the past 13 years.

Monday's announcement was included in AFRICOM's first ever quarterly civilian casualties assessment report, part of a new push towards transparency in reporting civilian casualties.

The report examines 97 conducted strikes between February 1, 2019 and March 31, 2020. AFRICOM said it assessed claims of civilian casualties pertaining to 27 of those strikes. It acknowledged killing civilians in one incident, denied doing so in 20 others and said seven cases remain under inquiry.

AFRICOM's admission about the 2019 Kunyo Barrow strike came after a "foreign non-government organization" provided further information in January 2020 on the incident, the command said in the press release. Airwars on its website suggested it was the source of the evidence.

NGO researchers who have met with AFRICOM staff and Pentagon officials have told The Defense Post that the command, citing security concerns, has resisted pressure from NGOs to set up a field office in Somalia where civilians can present in-person claims of harm to their relatives and neighbors by U.S. military activity.

Researchers also have said AFRICOM has a history of outright dismissing civilian casualty allegations reported by pro-al-Shabaab websites, even though the al-Qaeda-linked militant group does not allow civilians in its territory to possess smartphones, making the collection of evidence from non-Shabaab sources very difficult.

The command added a English-language link on its webpage in February where people can report allegations of civilian harm.

AFRICOM first admitted in April 2019 to inadvertently killing civilians in an airstrike near the Somali town of El Buur one year prior. That incident was re-examined retroactively after Amnesty published an investigation into the military's casualties in Somalia. The command later blamed an internal "reporting error" for the oversight.

AFRICOM's prior commander, U.S. Marine Corps General Thomas D. Waldhauser, had ordered a full review of strike casualties dating back to 2017 "due to a recent increase in airstrikes and continued interest by Amnesty International and Congress on civilian casualties."

U.S. Air Force Major Karl Wiest, an AFRICOM spokesperson, told The Defense Post in February that that review had concluded and that no other civilian casualty allegations had been deemed substantiated.

AFRICOM on Monday said it considers a "substantiated" assessment to mean that, based on all reasonably available information, taking into account the totality of the circumstances, U.S. Africa Command determines that U.S. military operations more likely than not resulted in the death or injury of civilians. Deeming an allegation "unsubstantiated" is not intended to deny the possibility that a civilian casualty incident occurred, nor is it intended as a comment on the credibility of the source of the allegation, the command said.

"While we follow very precise and rigorous standards, in instances where we fail to meet our expectations, we will admit the mistake," said AFRICOM's current commander, U.S. Army General Stephen Townsend.

"There is no secret air or shadow war as some allege," Townsend said, adding, "How can there be when the whole world knows we are assisting Somalia in their fight against al-Shabaab terrorists?"

When we publically [sic] announce every single airstrike we conduct? When we publically admit to our mistakes?"

"Unlike al-Shabaab we do everything in our power to avoid civilian casualties and that is not changing on my watch," he said.

The general previously commanded Operation Inherent Resolve, the U.S.-led multinational military effort against Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. OIR went to greater lengths to assess civilian casualties and even organized a body of investigators who were independent of the strike process, researchers and military personnel involved in OIR say.

The discrepancy between OIR and AFRICOM's mission in Somalia has drawn criticism from experts and observers. But researchers say the command is slowly moving in the right direction.

Rights watchdog Amnesty International praised Monday's announcement as "a welcome glimmer of transparency."

Among the seven cases still open is that of a U.S. military airstrike that killed a teenage girl and wounded her grandmother and two sisters in the southern Somali town of Jilib in early January. AFRICOM in report cites, among others, "an online media source" that reported the incident on February 10, same day The Defense Post released its exclusive story about the allegations.

Eleven of the 20 claims deemed unsubstantiated by the military in Monday's report were judged as such because "no U.S. military strike occurred at that location," suggesting CIA strikes, which are never announced, may be responsible for a portion of reported civilian casualties.

In eight other incidents, AFRICOM deemed the individuals killed to be al-Shabaab or Islamic State members, or in one case, a "facilitator."

Amnesty has accused the U.S. of possible war crimes in part because AFRICOM itself has suggested it targets "affiliates" of al-Shabaab in Somalia, a potential violation of the international law of war, which limits targeting to combatants.

"In many cases, the command's information collection efforts are based on layered and reliable intelligence sources that are not available to the public to preserve operations security," Townsend said in Monday's press release.

"This may ultimately lead to perceived discrepancies between the command's findings and those of others," Townsend said.

US citizen released from Egyptian jail after 10 months

<https://edition.cnn.com/2020/05/04/politics/reem-desouky-released/index.html>

CNN-16 hours ago

(CNN) A US woman detained in Egypt for more than 300 days has been released and returned home to the United States. Egyptian-American

CNN)A US woman detained in Egypt for more than 300 days has been released and returned home to the United States.

Egyptian-American Reem Desouky was released from prison on Sunday, according to the Freedom Initiative, an organization that advocated on her behalf. She and her son Moustafa returned to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, late Sunday night.

"We at the Freedom Initiative and her family and friends are ecstatic about her return home and would like to extend our appreciation to the members of Congress, civil society organizations, the State Department and the Vice President's office for championing Ms. Desouky's case," the organization said in a statement released Monday. "Her release is welcomed progress and a step forward in the right direction that we hope is built on for the release of others." ...

U.S. Military's Hub in Africa Fights to Keep the Coronavirus Out

<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/01/coronavirus-us-military-hub-africa-djibouti/>

Contractors who work at the only permanent U.S. base in Africa have tested positive for the coronavirus as officials and experts fear the pandemic's spread could allow terrorist groups to wrest away more territory.

By Jack Detsch, Robbie Gramer | May 1, 2020, 5:45 PM

The coronavirus has cropped up again among personnel at the only permanent U.S. military base in Africa, Foreign Policy has learned, underscoring the difficulty of containing the pandemic's spread even as the U.S. Department of Defense attempts to put in place strict social distancing measures for its troops deployed across the continent.

A contractor who works at Camp Lemonnier in Djibouti and lives nearby—who was preparing to move onto the base in line with a Pentagon request—tested positive for the virus this week. This comes after U.S. forces declared a public health emergency on base last week, according to a statement, a move that gave commanders the authority to repurpose facilities for medical uses and better control the flow of American troops and contractors on and off the base.

This is the second known case at Camp Lemonnier, after another contractor working at the base tested positive for the virus in March, according to the New York Times. The contractor who tested positive this week is asymptomatic and has been placed in isolation under restricted movement.

The U.S. military base in Djibouti is crammed next to French, Italian, Chinese, and Japanese bases, reflecting the geopolitical importance of the tiny East African nation that sits at the mouth of the Red Sea, a key international shipping lane. The base is a launchpad for counterterrorism strikes and anti-piracy operations.

[Mapping the Coronavirus Outbreak: Get daily updates on the pandemic.]

The cases in Camp Lemonnier represent the latest example of the global pandemic's knock-on impacts on U.S. military posture and operations. The U.S. military has canceled or pared down major military exercises in Europe aimed at deterring Russia, and an outbreak of the coronavirus has left one U.S. aircraft carrier deployed to the Pacific pierside in Guam and rerouted an American destroyer bound to join President Donald Trump's counterdrug mission in the Caribbean back to the West Coast. U.S. Africa Command also scuttled the massive 9,300-troop, three-nation "African Lion" exercise in March as the Pentagon began to put in place social distancing guidelines for U.S. forces.

Officials and experts fear that terrorist groups in Africa will take advantage of the havoc wreaked by the global pandemic to gain more territory and carry out more attacks. The U.S. military has about

4,400 troops stationed in East Africa, mostly in Djibouti, to advise regional counterterrorism efforts against the Somalia-based al-Shabab terrorist group.

Under the Trump administration, strikes against al-Shabab have surged as the al Qaeda-allied group has openly stated desires to strike the U.S. homeland and installations, raising concerns among military officials. In 2017, the Trump administration declared all of war-torn Somalia an area of hostilities, giving the Pentagon greater authority to call in airstrikes.

The changes have resulted in the Trump administration using a higher volume of defensive strikes to decimate the militant group's contingent of rank-and-file fighters instead of focusing on the high-value terrorism suspects targeted by the Obama administration, experts say, but it hasn't stopped the group from launching successful attacks, such as the gunfight with al-Shabab that killed three Americans in Manda Bay, Kenya, in January.

ONU / UN :

L'envoyé de l'ONU pour la région des Grands Lacs exprime son optimisme malgré les défis

[http://french.xinhuanet.com/2020-04/23/c_138999990.htm]

French.xinhuanet.com | Publié le 2020-04-23 à 03:08

NEW YORK (Nations Unies), 22 avril (Xinhua) -- L'envoyé de l'ONU pour la région des Grands Lacs, Xia Huang, a exprimé mercredi son optimisme, mentionnant des développements survenus au cours de l'année précédente qui présentent des implications positives pour la région.

Ces développements positifs comprennent les efforts pour stabiliser la coalition gouvernementale suite à la transition politique pacifique en République démocratique du Congo (RDC), les progrès réalisés vers une normalisation des relations entre l'Ouganda et le Rwanda, la formation d'un gouvernement d'union nationale au Soudan du Sud, ou encore le règlement diplomatique d'un litige frontalier entre la RDC et la Zambie, a-t-il détaillé au Conseil de sécurité des Nations Unies lors d'une séance d'information en ligne.

Des progrès ont également été obtenus dans la lutte contre les groupes armés opérant dans l'est de la RDC, a indiqué M. Xia.

À l'initiative du gouvernement de RDC, des efforts ont été déployés pour renforcer la coordination et les échanges d'informations entre les forces armées de RDC, du Burundi, d'Ouganda et du Rwanda, dans le but d'optimiser les opérations militaires contre les groupes armés dans ces pays, a-t-il précisé.

Des progrès ont également été enregistrés en ce qui concerne l'intégration régionale. Le 3 décembre 2019, le Burundi, la RDC et la Tanzanie ont signé un accord visant à construire une ligne de chemin de fer reliant les trois pays pour renforcer le commerce dans la région. La nouvelle Conférence des Grands Lacs pour l'Investissement et le Commerce devrait également offrir une opportunité de promouvoir le commerce et de stimuler le potentiel économique énorme de la région, a-t-il dit.

DAM, NY, AGNEWS, <http://burundi-agnews.org>, Mercredi 6 mai 2020