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The Villager

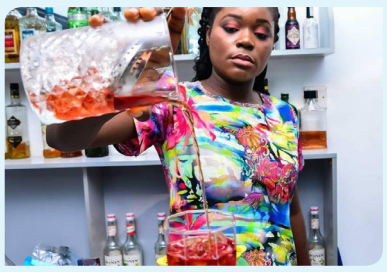
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IPC, PDM Lose to Swapo - Again

■ Staff Writer

Swapo has trounced IPC, PDM and the two independent candidates to retain the Ncamagoro constituency in Kavango East.

The ruling party took 912 of the 1 268 votes.

Coming second was the independent candidate Moses Nyundu who grabbed 153.

The PDM managed 195 votes, while another independent Laudislous Poroto Shindimba, got 79 votes. IPC was last with 29 votes. The other 15 votes were rejected.

Frans Chimbango ran on the PDM ticket while Andreas Tjiwawa stood for IPC.

Swapo's Thomas Rengi is the Ncamagoro councillor succeeding the late Swapo councillor, Johannes Sikondo, who died in September this year.

This is the second time IPC and PDM have lost to Swapo in a by-election in as many months.



Rengi was too excited to talk to The Villager on Saturday, saying he needed time.

In August, IPC also lost to Swapo in the Katima Mulilo urban constituency by-election.



Swapo walked away with 1 557 out of the 3 002 total votes, while Nkando Gibson Kabuna scooped 417 votes.

IPC was third with 296, PDM fourth with 294, NDP had 282 and another independent candidate Kubwima Poniso Miller took 156 votes.

Kennedy Simasiku represented Swapo, the PDM candidate Marklee Mweti Matengu, the IPC had Malipa Lynnette, and NDP fielded Christopher Simasiku.

The Katima Mulilo seat became vacant after the death in a car accident of John Muchila Mukaya in May.

If the results from some polling stations are anything to go by, IPC and PDM may have to forget about contesting anywhere in the Kavango regions for 2024.

The IPC failed to get even a single vote at some polling stations, while PDM scrapped together up to seven votes.

Swapo sent its secretary-general Sophia Shaningwa who campaigned from door to door.

Continued on P2

Another Women Killed by Lover

■ Staff Writer

Yet another woman succumbed to gunshot wounds inflicted by her boyfriend in the Oshana region.

Selma Lilongeni Tangitate Ruben (26) died in Onandjokwe State Hospital on Saturday morning.

Ruben was shot on the stomach, abdomen and right arm.

On Friday, Ruben was shot three times by her boyfriend 41-year-old, Onesmus Hafeni

Continued on P2



Joint Efforts on Zero Hunger and Climate-Related Projects

■ Nghiinomenwa Erastus

To enable the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals by 2030, particularly zero hunger and climate action, the Environment Investment Fund has partnered up with the World Food Programme.

The two announced their partnership in a statement released this week

The two organisations signed a Memorandum of Understanding as collaboration for the management of programmes under the Sustainable Development Goals: 2 (Zero hunger), 13 (Climate Action) and 17 (Partnerships).

The partners envision providing capacity strengthening to the Namibian government in the journey towards Zero hunger by

Continued on P2

Geingob Mourns First Windhoek Swapo Mayor

■ Staff Writer

The former mayor of Windhoek, who also attended to war combatants Bjorn von Finkenstein, has died.

Von Finkenstein died on Friday in Windhoek.

He was 63.

Von Finkenstein was the Windhoek mayor from 1995 to 1998.

President Hage Geingob described Von Finkenstein as a comrade who provided medical treatment to returnees from exile.

In his message, Geingob said he had learned with sadness about the passing of the first Swapo mayor for Windhoek.

"When we returned from exile, as a Swapo member, he provided us with medical treatment, for which we shall be grateful.

"Indeed, our nation and the Swapo Party lost a talented and dynamic leader who played a vital role in shaping the trajectory of the City of Windhoek and the development of its residents.

Continued on P2



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Klein Windhoek
Office Tel: +264 832888400
Studio Tel: +264 832888 401
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Projects

2030.
The World Food Programme (WFP) is mandated to ensure vulnerable populations in Namibia strengthen the evidence for food systems.
WFP country director George Fedha explained that to accelerate the journey towards zero hunger and the food and nutrition security agenda, WFP has identified key entry points through three key strategic pillars.
The first strategic pillar is rural transformation, secondly, establishing sustainable food systems and human capital development as key focus areas and support to the government.
In addition to these pillars, he added that cross-cutting areas of digital transformation, women and youth empowerment and job creation have also been prioritised.

THE COUNTRY'S FOOD STATUS

According to the WFP, currently, most households' diets are associated with high levels of nutrient deficiency.
This is evident in the high levels of stunting at 24% and wasting and 6% among children 0-54 months.
A lack of diversification characterises the country in terms of food production. Local food production is dominated mainly by staples such as maise, millet, sorghum, and very limited other nutrient-dense crops.
Namibia has a high dependence on food imports, where the country imports 60% plus of the total needs in the country.
Given that on average in Namibia, 70% plus of Namibians rely on market access for food, the WFP assessment revealed.
Food production is also impacted by climate change.
This is very evident for Namibia, where for the past 10-15 years, the country has continued to experience drought and floods, which have led to a significant reduction in food production.
This consequently fuels the dependence on food imports.
The WFP and EIF highlighted that smallholder farmers are more vulnerable to climate shocks. This vulnerability results from 100% dependence on rainfed agriculture.
"This has been evident during times when the country has experienced drought, where the average yield per hectare cultivated has significantly dropped for those in the communal agriculture sector leading to a drop in the local food production," the two bodies wrote.
Another challenge noted is limited access to markets for smallholder farmers.
The WFP explained that limited access had impacted the commercialisation process of smallholder farmers whose product has a minimal market and cannot compete on an equal footing with the commercial farmers.
"This has disincentivised farmers and in turn discouraged increased production," the WFP wrote.
The same findings have also been highlighted by the country's agricultural lender, Agribank- saying that upcoming producers (youth and women) struggle to get off-takers for their outputs.
EIF, chief executive officer Benedict Libanda, explained that to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030, it is paramount that industries and individuals harness their knowledge of materials and financial resources.
To ensure the safety and Prosperity of people and natural environments in our country.
For this reason, the EIF is ready to partner with entities such as WFP as a demonstration of commitment in championing SDGs.
"We need to work together to find solutions that are sustainable and durable and that recognise our interdependence as institutions," stated Libandaa.
Email: erastus@thevillager.com.na



Lover

Kalipi from Otjiwarongo.
Kalipi also shot himself with a 9mm Makarov pistol in the head and died on the spot.
Oshana police report says the incident occurred at King Street at Shinime Shiivula in Ondangwa.
Ruben was a Warden at Oluno Rehabilitation Centre.
Oshana region is one of the regions with a high rate of GBV that usually results in deaths.
Governor Elia Irimari said GBV was a significant concern in the region. Irimari said this when he delivered his state of the region address mid this year.
The governor said women and girls continued to live in fear in the Oshana region.
The region recorded 150 GBV cases from January to May this year and about 28 cases of rape.
“This is very disappointing to our nation. We should not tolerate any form of violence against women and children in an independent country,” Irimari said.
In 2019, the police said the Oshana region was second in GBV cases after Khomas.
The Oshana region had 569 GBV cases while Khomas had 2 531, Ohangwena (533), Hardap (502) and Omusati (336).



Geingob

"His passing is indeed more devastating and difficult for all of us to accept because he passed away at an age when he could still contribute to the development of our country. As a nation, we shall draw strength and inspiration from his exceptional contributions in favour of a better City," Geingob said.
The President said the nation should draw strength and inspiration from Von Finkestein's exceptional contributions in favour of a better City.
"On behalf of the people and the Government of the Republic of Namibia, I wish to extend sincere condolences to his wife, Christine, the children, the entire family, comrades and friends."

Again

Shaningwa said councillors should remain sexy and not grow a tummy, and they should work hard when a task is given.
"Councillors should not change after being elected. They should remain sexy and not grow a tummy, and they should work hard when a task is given. When you get elected, you should not sit in the office but go out in the community and give your people the service they want," said Shaningwa.
The Swapo SG further said she noticed that many elderly people in the Ncamagoro Constituency do not have identity cards during her visitation in the area.
"It is important for all citizens of the country, through the right procedures and with the assistance of the councillor, traditional authorities and officials, to make sure that the elderly people get IDs."
She also stated, "In the Mamono area, there are no functioning boreholes, and water is fetched in containers. The boreholes became inoperable and could not provide water. For this, I have conveyed to Windhoek that Mamono's boreholes should be rectified with immediate effect.
"Money that the government is providing should not be wasted. The Swapo manifesto is very clear, is to calculate documents done between the community and party."





FinTech innovation framework availed, but exclude crypto

■ Nghiinomenwa Erastus

Innovators in the financial space can develop unique economic and technology-led solutions, but they have to be tested by the central Bank first.

Reveal the Financial Technology (Fintech) Innovations Regulatory Framework, signed into effect on 14 October 2021.

The framework will generally apply to innovations in payment systems, banking and credit lending activities, and cross-border remittances, among others.

The framework does not recognise cryptocurrency, and it will not fall in the category of fintech to be regulated through it.

While the scope is not exhaustive, it will exclude cryptocurrency mining/trading and exchange platforms and initial coin offerings and payment solutions that support cryptocurrencies.

The Regulatory Framework guides how the Bank of Namibia will treat financial technology (FinTech) innovations that are not already subjected to the Bank's existing regulations.

The central Bank explained that most FinTech innovations are deemed beneficial to the financial sector and efficient financial services to consumers.

However, they are usually not accommodated or covered by existing laws and regulations.

According to the Framework, the regulators are faced with either granting or refusing access to FinTech entities to introduce innovations in their jurisdictions without establishing a physical presence.

The central Bank highlighted that the benefits and opportunities from FinTech innovations are welcomed. Still, the accompanying risks should be managed to protect the consumers of such innovations and the financial system's integrity.

With this framework, the Bank aims to manage risks emanating from financial innovations and maintain the financial system's integrity by safeguarding financial stability. It also seeks to promote consumer protection and financial inclusion by ensuring that the public access safe and affordable financial services.

The Regulatory Framework provides a step-by-step analytical framework to identify whether an innovation qualifies as a FinTech innovation followed by a phased-approach regulatory programme to understand.

This will enable evaluation and test the innovation before the regulatory outcome on the innovation can be determined.

The Bank has identified three regulatory tools for the Regulatory Programme: the Allow-and-See Approach, the Test-and-Learn Approach, and the Regulatory Sandbox Approach.

During the FinTech Innovation Identification Stage, if the innovation cannot be identified as a FinTech innovation that falls within the scope of financial services regulated by the Bank.

The financial service/FinTech is being provided within the scope of the following financial sectors: banking, payment, cross-border payment services (Exchange Control) and lending services.

Stage two of the analytical framework assesses the FinTech Innovation's Regulatory Status.

The Bank will establish whether the FinTech innovation is regulated in any other jurisdiction during this stage.

If the FinTech innovation does not exist in any other jurisdiction and the entity is a start-up, such an entity will automatically enter the Bank's Regulatory Programme.

Under stage three, The FinTech innovation will undergo a risk assessment to create a risk profile.

Bank's risk assessment on the proposed FinTech will consider whether funds collected are protected and impact financial stability and integrity.

The Bank will also assess the FinTech proposal on its adherence to Anti-Money Laundering, Criminal and Terrorist Financing requirements.

At the same time, the adoption of cyber and data security principles will also be required that the proposed innovation needs access to existing banking, payment, or exchange control systems.

This is to ensure the innovation does not disrupt the smooth functioning of the financial system and its participants.

Moreover, the innovation will require direct or indirect access to participate in the existing clearing and settlement systems.

The FinTech innovation will also be required to promote interoperability (likelihood) to enhance financial inclusion and the uptake of affordable.

After the Bank determines the type of Regulatory Programme, the FinTech innovation will depend on the analytical and risk assessment outcome.

The FinTech innovation may be subjected to; an Allow-and See Regulatory Approach, the Test-and-Learn Regulatory Approach, or the Regulatory Sandbox Approach.

The central Bank explained that no blanket regulatory approach would be applied after risk assessment.

An applicant cannot decide the type of Regulatory Programme it wishes to be admitted.

Different conditions will apply to different innovations depending on the business models, the type of financial services offered, and the risk profiles.

The Framework Work explained that FinTech innovation with a low-risk profile might be subjected to the Allow-and-See Programme or the Test-and-Learn Programme.

A FinTech innovation with a medium to high-risk profile may be subjected to the Test-and-Learn Programme or the Regulatory Sandbox Programme.

The decision around which regulatory programme to apply and the participating conditions depend entirely on the Bank's assessment.

During the existing phase, the central Bank will also determine how a FinTech innovation that went through the Regulatory Programme should exit and the way forward.

At the end of the Regulatory Programme, the innovator will be required to provide the Bank with a report based on its experience in the facility.

The report should include a detailed record of all operational and technical incidents and procedures taken to resolve them, customer queries and resolutions, proposed steps, and the way forward.

The central Bank reserves the right to cancel a Regulatory Programme at any time before the end of the programme period if the participant breaches any of the Bank's laws, regulations, and programme conditions.

It must also be noted that regulations pertaining to Anti-Money Laundering, Criminal and Terrorist Financing cannot be relaxed during a programme.

There are no admission or participation fees for the Regulatory Programme.

Email: erastus@thevillager.com.na

No one wants to commit to women and youth upcoming farmers



■ Nghiinomenwa Erastus

Various medium and bulk buyers of farm produce are refusing to go into committed procurement/supply agreements with upcoming women and youth producers.

They are citing fear of inconsistency and quality of produce. As a result, young and women farmers cannot access capital under the collateral-less credit facility at Agribank.

According to an assessment by the agricultural lender, Agribank- the result was released in a statement recently.

Agribank discovered through their countrywide stakeholder engagement sessions on the Women and Youth Loan Scheme currently being offered.

To enable access to funding to collateral-less women and young agri-preneurs, Agribank innovated a cash flow lending facility based on an offtake agreement between a farmer and the potential buyers.

Despite the cash flow lending financing option offered by Agribank, "the agriculture entrepreneurs are unable to obtain offtake agreements with potential buyers of their produce," the bank revealed.

During the sessions with the agricultural entrepreneurs, they have highlighted that when they approach potential buyers/off-takers for agreements, buyers are hesitant to enter into such contracts.

The farmers revealed that buyers' hesitancy is due to uncertainties with delivery consistency and quality of the product.

While some are blaming the supply of unsorted produce in terms of sizes and quality, especially by horticulture producers.

The Namibian economy is faced with access to capital problems, especially for small entrepreneurs- with the main impediment being collateral (an asset to pledge to financiers).

Agribank spokesperson Fillemon Nangonya explained that the cash flow lending facility targets unemployed agriculture entrepreneurs and requires clients to provide a valid offtake/ supply agreement based on the project's cash flow projections.

This agreement is a commitment between the farmer (who is the producer) and an off-taker (who is the buyer of the produce) whereby the farmer commits to supply the products and the off-taker pledges to buy the produce from the farm.

As a result, the refusal by the small, medium and bulk buyers to go in supply agreement with the upcoming farmers has also blocked their access to funding.

Given the affordability of the highlighted agriculture financing options in terms of requirement, Agribank is urging various potential buyers/off-takers to support the intervention.

"Thus, Agribank is encouraging buyers/ off-takers such as retailers to assist farmers with such agreements to fulfil "The Grow at Home Strategy" of the government," said Nagoya.

To the upcoming and emerging farmers and agri-preneurs, Agribank is urged to work hard and meet the required standards of the buyers/off-takers.

Regarding consistency in supply, the Agribank recommended that the farmers try various arrangements such as joint ventures/production to meet supply.

Email: erastus@thevillager.com.na

COVID-19 STATISTICS LATEST

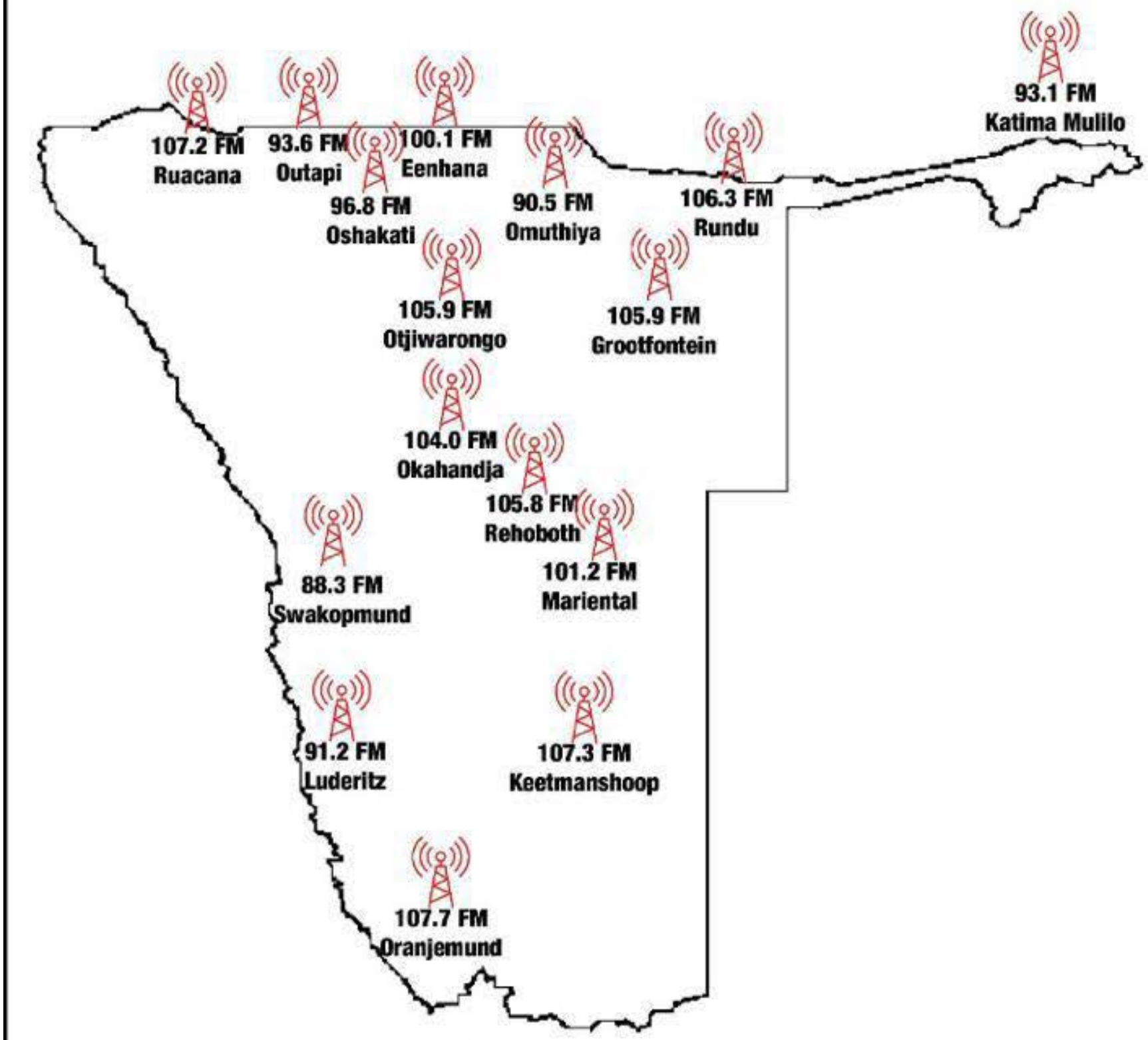
Cumulative confirmed cases	136 921
Newly confirmed	970
Total Re-infections	646
New Re-infections	88
Recoveries	126 314
Recovery rate	92%
Active cases	7 132
Cumulative COVID-19 vaccine 1st doses	396 439
Cumulative COVID-19 vaccine 2nd doses	234 797
Cumulative COVID-19 vaccine completed	334 704
COVID-19 Deaths	3 280
COVID-19 Related Deaths	301
Total Deaths	3 581
Total samples tested	830 762
Active contacts	2 188
Cumulative number of people quarantined	83 838
Number of quarantined people discharged	83 303
Number of people in quarantines	535

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Big Lips

Doing business is not anyone's business

Indeed, many people who did not and still do not understand money have misused opportunities. Most governments in Africa opened opportunities to allow some who never had such opportunities to do business.

It is not a secret that such opportunities were wasted because some people got excited. Instead of delivering, they spent the money on other things.

Other delivered shoddy jobs that became the benchmark of what everyone thinks is the best our people can do. About that, there is no doubt, and we must admit that it happened.

Since we have to learn from such past mistakes or misguidedness, what must matter now is the way forward. We need to start thinking and talking to each other about what we want the future of our business to become.

Of course, we can from time to time reflect on the wrongs of the past to remind us that we should never do the same, that we should never do it again.

But because of the wrongs of the past, the future of most people has been ruined. What was done in the past created mistrust and doubt in many people's minds.

Most people today think and rightly so that black businesspeople cannot produce quality materials or products. They also believe that doing business with a back person will not yield good results.

While this could be true because it is based on what happened in the early days of independence, and in some instances, even now, there is a need for a new crop of black businesspeople that do not rely on tenders.

If a black person gets a tender, then there must be some background check to find out if that person has the ability and capability to work on the project.

These days, the government has been pushing the idea of joint ventures where a local company and a foreign multinational come together.

While that is a good idea, it does not seem to have worked because the intended purpose of imparting skills and knowledge to the smaller partner - the black-owned business - has not worked.

The black-owned business that is supposed to benefit from skills and knowledge from the multinational walked out of the venture after taking its shares out. This happened with several construction companies where the primarily Chinese were left to work alone.

For this reason, there has not been any skills transfer done in the past 30 years simply because our people looked at the money and not the long term benefit for the country.

There were cases where black-owned businesses got a tender, received payment and never even visited the site. Those who had twisted minds even went back to demand a top-up payment even though they knew no work had been done.

All this led to a bad reputation of how black people do business. If one brings corruption to the equation, then it gets worse. Bad business practices have led to any black person being seen as corrupt.

Today, the media and other people view any business deal that involves a black person as suspect. This is why most probably deals in which blacks are involved are constantly scrutinised, creating unnecessary connections.

Sometimes corrupt activities are perceived even where there is none. This is because some people have done, and others are still doing business.

Maybe to end all this stereotyping, we need to start teaching our people how to do business. We need too to teach them how to handle money.

Money tempts people. A lot of it drives people insane. Doing business is not anyone's business. It needs planning and self-control. This is where the government must come in and show the people how to go into business, stay on even it gets tough because it sometimes gets tough.

Bell Hooks:



A Black American voice that reached the world

■ **Sisonke Msimang**

The tributes that poured in for bell hooks, who died this week aged 69, affirmed the singular place she occupies in the Black intellectual canon.

She was the author of dozens of books and hundreds of journal articles and popular reviews on patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy. Born in 1952, hooks was slightly younger than Toni Morrison, Angela Davis and Alice Walker, but she walked a similar path.

The moral and intellectual power of the United States has long been on the decline, but it is not for nothing that the writing and theorising of Black writers from that country have had a hallowed place in the intellectual lives of people who live in the Global South. In part, the brightest African American minds continue to inspire precisely because their country continues to be so deeply disappointing.

hooks embodied the ability of Black Americans to call attention to their country's sins and to do so from a position of marginality and authority. She was part of a long tradition of critique that has allowed America's finest Black thinkers and artists to connect with the world. And hooks took her place in this tradition seriously. She wrote from a position of absolute clarity, and was often both direct and loving in her critiques.

Indeed, this week, as her readers and students farewelled her, there was a lot of talk about "love" – a word that came to be closely associated with hooks' body of work.

At the peak of her career, hooks published a trilogy of books about love that spanned the personal and the political. The trilogy addressed the devastating effects of rage and anger and – long before the current self-care craze – it sought to offer a theory of self-love.

In part, hooks' ideas about love drew from her Buddhist practice and from her admiration for Thich Nhat Hanh, who founded the Engaged Buddhism Movement in response to the Vietnam War.

hooks once told an audience that she met Nhat Hanh on a day that had been full of "bad racial encounters". When she approached the legendary monk, hooks later confessed, "I felt that here I was in front of this wonderful teacher and all I could pull out was the ugliness and the mess of my rage and of course he met that rage with loving kindness." Nhat Hanh was patient with hooks, affirming her anger and telling her, "Oh, hold on to your anger and use it as compost for your garden."

hooks took that message to heart. Her anger fuelled her writing and was responsible for the long reach of her pen. Her ideas on oppression and its eradication influenced people in classrooms, but they extended far beyond the American campuses where she taught.

In the mid-1990s, when I was just starting my career in international development, I was given a copy of an essay by hooks. It had been written a decade earlier, in 1984, but it spoke to me directly, critiquing the kind of white feminist internationalism that was dominant in the conference rooms I was trying to navigate. hooks argued that, "Many white women have said to me, 'we wanted Black women and other non-white women to join the movement,' totally unaware of their perception that they somehow 'own' the movement, that they are the 'hosts' inviting us as 'guests'."

I remember sitting upright. I finally had the framing to express my discomfort, and so, I had a way to challenge and push and become more effective in my work. I was in Johannesburg, far from the American contexts in which hooks wrote, but her words reached me.

In part, her effectiveness was tied to the fact that hooks wrote about issues that mattered. She had a particular interest in dissecting popular culture. By focusing on American films and movies – which have become borderless – hooks was relevant to readers everywhere.

I didn't always agree with her commentary in recent years. She called Beyoncé a terrorist and then critiqued Lemonade by suggesting the visual album was both a beautiful embrace of Black womanhood and a continuation of old racialised and sexualised tropes.

In these exchanges, she was not out of her depth, but she seemed to have reached the limits of her theory-making. She had grown up in a world in which capitalism was the enemy, but she could not grasp that late-stage capitalism has forced many women into such precarity that resistance often looks a lot like capitulation. Capitalism has so thoroughly triumphed that the very definition of radicalism has been altered. Younger feminists understand this intuitively and much of their work seeks to understand this new terrain.

Still, there was no denying the cogency of her arguments and the space for free thinking created by her contrarian views.

As hooks was mourned this week, I was struck by how much she had written and spoken, and by how seriously she endeavoured to critique power. But I was even more taken by how much she lived her own words. hooks insisted that, "The function of art is to do more than tell it like it is – it is to imagine what is possible."

bell hooks is gone, but she left clear instructions. Wherever we are in the world, we must use her words – and our own – to create new visions. – Al Jazeera

**Sisonke Msimang is a South African writer and political commentator who focuses on race, gender and democracy.*

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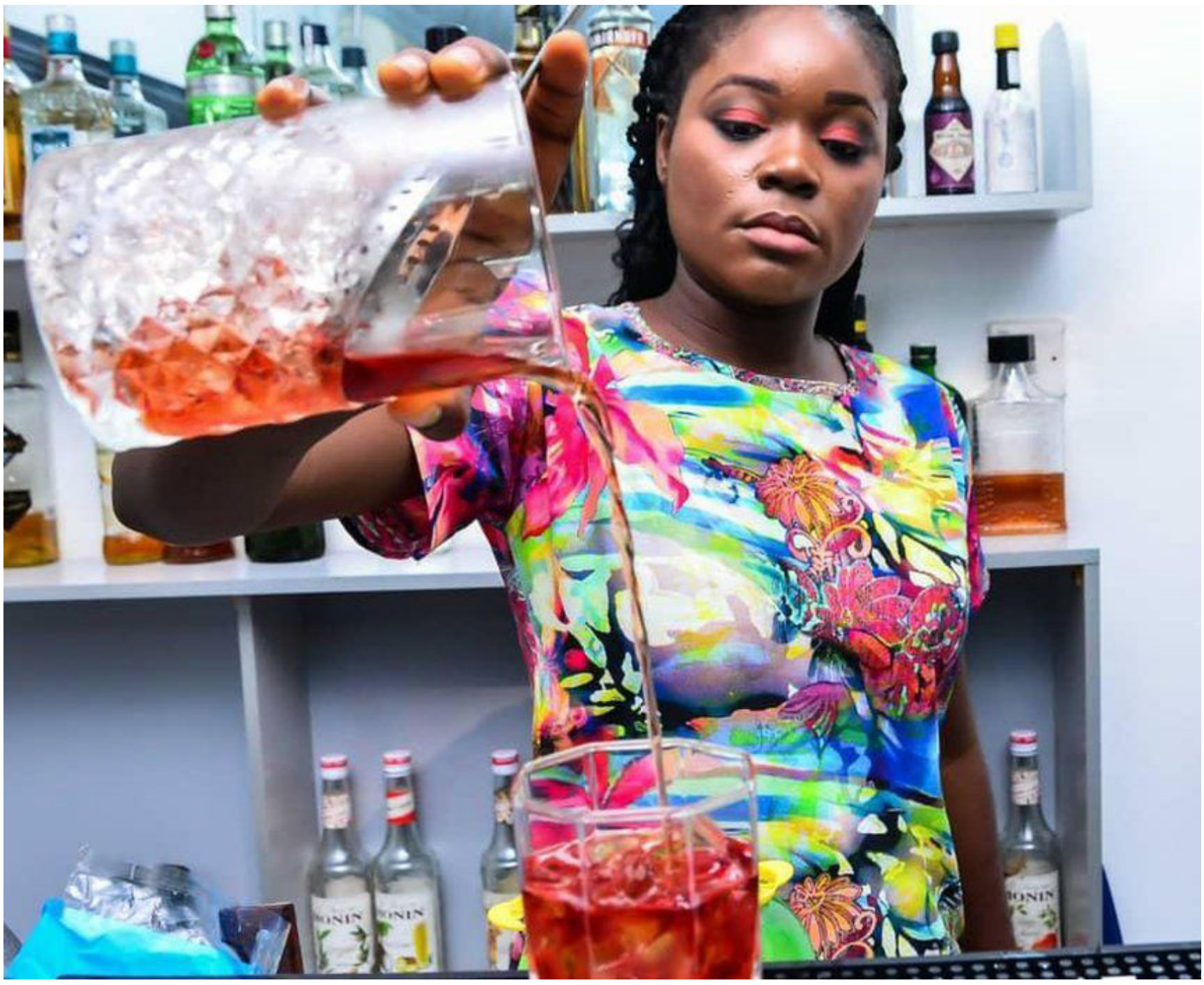
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Lagos party plans threatened by Nigeria Covid passports

■ Nduka Orjinmo
& Victor Ezeama



New rules that require people to confirm their Covid status before attending large gatherings in Nigeria's biggest city are being largely ignored, reflecting a general indifference towards the pandemic, despite a recent surge in cases.

While the UK added, and then removed, Nigeria to and from a travel red list over concerns about the spread of the Omicron variant of coronavirus, life in the country carried on pretty much as normal.

Even some officials don't seem to be taking their own advice too seriously. Just 48 hours after announcing new Covid restrictions in Lagos, state governor Babajide Sanwo-Olu was at a state-sponsored cooking show with the winner of reality TV show Big Brother Naija.

Attendees and other government officials are now required to show they're fully vaccinated (currently two doses) or proof of a negative test taken in the past 48 hours to attend such gatherings but this did not happen.

There has been a more than 500% increase in Covid cases across Nigeria since last week, pushing authorities in Lagos to introduce new restrictions.

The measures are largely targeted at young revellers preparing for two weeks of wild parties across Lagos in what is known as "Detty December". It is a period when Nigeria's Afrobeats stars try to outdo each other with lavishly staged shows that attract thousands, while many neighbourhoods hold 24-hour street parties.

But the new guidelines are hardly being enforced, especially in the neighbourhood parties that attract hundreds, and authorities are concerned.

"Experience has shown that these events have the tendency to be super spreading events," the state commissioner of information Gbenga Omotosho said in a statement.

Mr Omotosho defended the governor's appearance at the food show, saying that the crowd grouped in clusters but admitted that he and others did not show proof of vaccination to attend.

'Malaria is a bigger problem'

Around eight million people have received a first dose of the Covid vaccine in Nigeria, and only half of that number have received two doses.

But this falls far short for a country of 200 million people where the vaccine rollout has been hampered by people's indifference, the unavailability of vaccines in some parts of the country and inadequate supply.

Nigeria has largely relied on donated vaccines which authorities have had a hard time convincing people to take, highlighted by plans to destroy one million Pfizer vaccines which arrived in the country with less than six weeks before they expired.

With the rising number of cases in Lagos, a city of more than 20 million people, it is hoped that the introduction of the Covid passports will force more people to get the jabs - especially Nigeria's young - many of whom have not been vaccinated.

But most revellers are not pleased.

"Why always December?" asked 22-year-old Blessing Ibelema, who said she was looking forward to attending the concert of one of Nigeria's biggest stars, Burna Boy, at the end of the year.

She has not been vaccinated and doesn't intend to. Like many she says she does not understand "the fuss about coronavirus".

"If you give us a malaria vaccine you'd have people queuing up for miles waiting to get it," she said.

This comparison between malaria and Covid has become increasingly popular since the beginning of the pandemic.

According to the WHO, last year 200,000 people died from malaria in Nigeria, more than 80 times the number that died from Covid.

'Keg of gunpowder'

But Nigeria's leading virologist, Prof Oyewale Tomori, has warned of the dangers of using death as a marker for Covid and has compared the country's attitude towards the virus to "sitting on a keg of gunpowder".

Prof Tomori told the BBC that that it was dangerous to play down Covid, as many Nigerians are doing now, as it might trigger hypertension or other conditions later in life.

Currently, Nigeria has officially recorded about 3,000 deaths linked to coronavirus and while it is still hard to be sure how many people have had the virus because of a low rate of testing, the fact is that the country has been spared the catastrophic number of deaths witnessed elsewhere.

Hospitals have not been overrun and some of the isolation wards built in haste because of Covid have mostly remained empty.

Strict lockdown measures imposed last year and experience in dealing with other diseases like polio and Ebola have helped Nigeria in the fight against Covid.

Social gatherings were limited, face masks were imposed, event centres were locked down and workers encouraged to work from home.

And like most other African countries, Nigeria's young population has helped it escape the worst of coronavirus. More than half of Nigerians are less than 30, and so less likely to become severely ill than older populations in some other parts of the world.

Many of these young people are not worried about Covid and consider the government guidelines a nuisance.

They rue the impact of Covid restrictions on the country's economy and the thousands of jobs that have been lost.

"My father lost his job last year in an IT firm in Lagos and has had to move to the village in the east," said Ms Ibelema.

No vaccine, no entry

Yet that is why some are taking the new directives seriously - the prospect of losing millions of naira for the second December in a row is one they can't stomach.

Bartender Mercy Ikwuelebgu has been vaccinated so she can continue to attend events. But some team members grumbled that they only got vaccinated as a last resort to keep their jobs.

Mercy Ikwuelebgu's cocktail business was greatly impacted by Covid in 2020

Covid passports are new in Nigeria and Lagos will be hoping that its guidelines are as successful as a similar rule in the capital, Abuja, which made it compulsory for civil servants to be vaccinated under the "No vaccine, no entry" policy.

The number of those vaccinated in the capital since early December has tripled, said one official.

Nigeria has also started giving out booster shots as more cases linked to the Omicron variant are confirmed.

There are still no definitive answers about how severe an Omicron infection is, though evidence so far suggests milder symptoms and lower mortality than previous variants.

That, and the authorities seemingly flouting their own rules, make it even harder to convince young Nigerians to get vaccinated.

"If the government wants a card it will get a card, but rest assured I am not getting vaccinated to attend a party," said Ms Ibelema.

- BBC

CONTACT DETAILS
Eagle Media House
33B John Ludwig Street
Klein Windhoek
Office Tel: +264 832888400
Studio Tel: +264 832888 401
Email: news@eaglefm.com.na

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How a co-op and an artist plan to revive Lebanon's wool trade

■ Maghie Ghali



Shortages of raw materials are impacting many sectors of Lebanon's crisis-ridden economy. But two things it has in abundance are grazing pastures and Awassi sheep.

Indigenous to Lebanon, Awassi sheep produce lots of wool – tonnes of which are thrown away each year, the United Nations reckons.

It wasn't always that way. Lebanon's wool and textile industry thrived from the 1970s until the turn of the century, but wars abroad and cheap imports from China roiled the once-healthy trade.

Now, all industries in Lebanon are trying to stay afloat in the midst of a two-year-old economic crisis that has seen inflation soar, foreign exchange reserves dry up and citizens take to the streets to protest successive government failures to stem the carnage.

But in the Bekaa Valley, a small women's cooperative isn't waiting for the government to help. They're taking matters into their own hands and using discarded Awassi wool to weave handcrafted rugs with an eye towards earning much-needed export revenue while creating a more sustainable local economy.

From thriving to foundering

Lebanon used to export textiles to Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Egypt, Libya and the Gulf, independent economist Elie Yachoui told Al Jazeera. But that trade foundered after the administration of late Prime Minister Rafik Hariri lowered customs duties on textiles from 35 percent to 5 percent in 2000, flooding the local market with less expensive substitutes that crushed the domestic textile and wool industry, which Yachoui said supported at least 100,000 families.

With no factories to supply in Lebanon, shepherds in the Bekaa Valley started exporting almost all their raw Awassi wool to Syria for processing – until war broke out there in 2011, shuttering or destroying factories in Aleppo and unleashing sanctions that prohibited trade with Syria.

While UN Comtrade data shows little change in Lebanon's textile exports over the last 10 years, Yachoui said the local Awassi wool trade was not captured by the metric. The only indicator that something had changed was the lack of any official textile exports to Syria after 2014, due to the conflict.

But the Bekaa Valley's wool production is getting a kick-start from Bisat al Rih, an Aarsal-based women's cooperative that makes carpets using Awassi wool.

Founded by Halima Al Hojairy, the cooperative aims to provide work – and a steady source of revenue – for local women and to keep Lebanon's traditional crafts alive by passing on the skills she learned from her family.

Currently, the cooperative uses roughly 250kg of Awassi wool per year. But Hojairy is hoping that the co-op will expand its production along with sales – both abroad and at home.

The Lebanese pound has lost more than 90 percent of its value against the United States dollar over the past two years, but that makes Lebanese exports like woolen rugs more competitive. And though most people in Lebanon have little cash to spare on home furnishings, Hojairy is betting that those who do have the funds to spruce up their homes will gravitate to more affordable locally made goods.

Artisanship and possibilities

Textile artist Adrian Pepe has been working with Bisat Al Rih on a project that aims to showcase possible uses for local raw materials like Awassi wool. During the initial round of coronavirus pandemic lockdowns last year, Pepe spent months in Aarsal getting to know the local shepherds and learning about the excess wool left to wither every year.

He recently showed a series of carpets he made with salvaged Awassi wool at a Dubai Design Week exhibit titled Entangled Matters.

The rugs use several wool materials, tracing the evolution of textiles from sheepskin to felt – the earliest known textile – to spun wool knitted into fabrics and embroidery.

Pepe said the exhibit is designed to inspire other artisans to use Awassi wool by showcasing "the breadth of possibilities with the material itself".

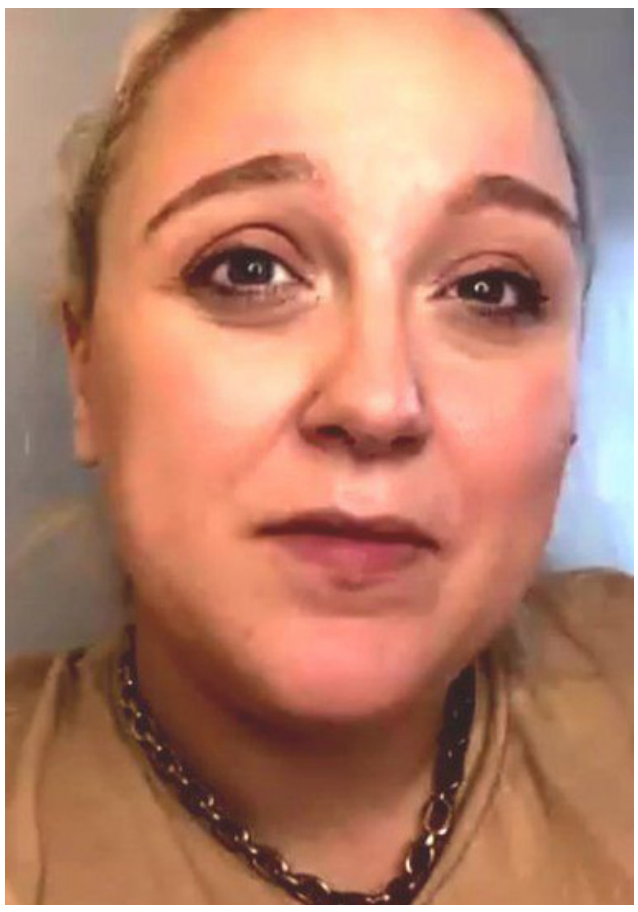
Pepe is also working on a more practical use for felt made with Awassi wool, teaching women at Bisat Al Rih how to make felt – a skill they plan to apply renovating 300 tents at a Syrian refugee camp near Aarsal.

But economists say that in order for nascent efforts to breathe life back into Lebanon's wool export trade – as well as other productive industries – the government must create a nurturing environment by avoiding past policies that decimated local producers.

"Encouraging local production rests on raising customs tariffs to protect local products, giving tax incentives to local producers, subsidising as much as possible raw material imports, and promoting local products abroad while concentrating on high-value products, [such as] food products, vegetables and jewelry," Group Chief Economist and Head of Research at Bank Audi Marwan Barakat told Al Jazeera.



Travellers ‘devastated’ over French restrictions





France is bringing in tougher travel restrictions for travellers arriving from the UK from Saturday as part of efforts to slow the spread of the Omicron variant of coronavirus.

The BBC talked to holidaymakers and hoteliers about the effects the tighter restrictions will have on them.

Mum of two Anna Baldwin had planned to take her two boys to Disneyland as a Christmas surprise. "I'm very upset about the French travel ban," she said. "I was devastated."

The family had booked tests, "and they're not cheap", she said. But the main problem was that the trip "was meant to be a Christmas present for my children and a complete surprise".

Her plans are now up in the air. She says she's already paid out for a fun Christmas, so staying in the UK means extra cost for things such as food.

"If we've got to stay home for Christmas it means, obviously, I've got to do Christmas shopping, so we're a little bit stuck at the moment," she said.

Anna was pinning her hopes on being able to pick up some flights on Friday to try to get into France before the restrictions come into effect.

"I'm trying to scramble now to look for flights. The only thing is, I'm a little bit nervous. Will we be able to get back?"

'I was absolutely devastated'

Maxine Jones and eleven family members were planning to go to Disneyland. "It was my present to my children, my grandchildren, and my parents," she said.

Maxine was "absolutely devastated" when she heard the news about the extra French travel restrictions.

She had booked a minibus for most of the people on the trip. The plan was to travel to Disneyland on 23 December, and come back on 27 December.

"As you can imagine, everybody was excited," she said.

Maxine said she had spent more than £11,500 on the trip, "and I haven't got any of that back yet".

"Obviously I've got insurance, but it's all going to take time, it's not going to come back overnight".

"But it was the trip. My mum and dad are 85 and 86, so it would have been nice to go. You don't know if you're going to get that time with them again."

She adds: "The worst part is that we just won't be going. Nobody is prepared in my family for Christmas now. Even to the extent that my parents only put up a small Christmas tree this year, and they usually go over the top."

'I'm just sorry for my customers'

Pascal Benatar is the owner of the Edelweiss hotel in Pralognon-le-Vanoise in the French Alps.

"We were completely booked for this vacation, and the government announcement changed things," he said.

"We have definitely had some cancellations by British people. We hope that for French people it will be OK, and we won't have any cancellations," he said.

The hotel had been advertised in UK newspapers and from that, five families were booked to come for Christmas.

"They just cancelled this morning because it was not possible to come," he said. "It was terrible for them. They wanted their holidays in France, and in the end, they were not able to travel."

He said business had been improving over the summer. "We started this winter with a lot of hope. Just one week before [Christmas] starts, it's a big mess for us.

"It will be a financial problem. We've hired all our team - we have ten staff in a small hotel - and we don't know how to manage that."

"The problem is, nobody knows what's going to happen. Three days ago [customers] were speaking to us to arrange ski passes. [Travel restrictions] came just like that - now, no vacation. I'm just sorry for my customers."

'We have to adapt'

Victor Dapremont, a sales manager for the Mademoiselle Hotel in Paris, said he was "very surprised" when the French government tightened travel restrictions.

"It's just another restriction at a very difficult time for us in Parisian hotels," he says.

By Thursday, about 80% of guests coming from England had cancelled their bookings. It's "a big impact" on the business, he said.

In a normal year, about a third of guests at the hotel at this time of year are British

Victor says the hotel would have to "modify the price" of its rooms, and look for customers from countries not facing the same restrictions.

"It's a complete change for us," he said. "We have to adapt economically and strategically." **- BBC**





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13h00-15h00
Omo Eli with Tate Fly

15h00-17h00
Free Your Mind with Chicken et al

17h00-21h00
Sunday Sundowner with Sally

21h00-01h00
The Weekend Session with Fanus

01h00-05h00
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South Africa to donate 2m COVID jabs to other African nations

South Africa's government says it will donate two million doses of the Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine to other African countries to boost the continent's inoculation drive.

The doses, worth approximately $18m, will be produced at the Aspen Pharmacare manufacturing facility in Gqeberha, formerly Port Elizabeth, and be distributed to various African countries over the next year, according to a statement issued on Friday.

"This donation embodies South Africa's solidarity with our brothers and sisters on the continent with whom we are united in fighting an unprecedented threat to public health and economic prosperity," President Cyril Ramaphosa said in the statement.

"The only way in which we can prevent COVID-19 transmission and protect economies and societies on our continent is to successfully immunise a critical mass of the African population with safe and effective vaccines," added Ramaphosa.

Could vaccine hesitancy derail Africa's battle against COVID-19? | Inside Story

The 69-year-old president tested positive for COVID-19 on December 12 and has been isolating at his official residence in Cape Town since then, with treatment by the South African military health service.

In a separate statement on Friday, his office said Ramaphosa is "making good progress in his recovery from COVID-19 while continuing treatment for mild symptoms". Ramaphosa is "in good spirits and comfortable in his recovery," the statement added.



World's least vaccinated continent

South Africa's donation will add to the more than 100 million vaccine doses that have been donated to the African Union's African Vaccine Acquisition Trust. The African vaccination group has also purchased 500 million doses to be distributed to countries across the continent.

Africa remains the world's least vaccinated continent. The World Health Organization (WHO) says Africa might not reach the target of vaccinating 70 percent of its 1.3 billion population until the second half of 2024.

Just 20 of Africa's 54 countries have fully vaccinated at least 10 percent of their populations against COVID-19. Ten African countries have less than two percent of their populations fully vaccinated, according to WHO.

South Africa is currently battling a resurgence of the coronavirus fuelled by the Omicron variant.

It recorded 24,785 new infections and 36 deaths in the most recent 24-hour reporting cycle. The country's seven-day rolling average of daily new cases has risen steeply over the past two weeks from 8.59 new cases per 100,000 people on December 2 to 39.11 new cases per 100,000 people on December 16.

Africa records surge in COVID-19 cases as Omicron spreads

More than 78 percent of the new cases are from the Omicron variant, Health Minister Joe Phaahla said in a briefing on Friday.

Hospitalisations and deaths from COVID-19 have increased somewhat but not at rates comparable with the sharp upward curve of new cases, health experts said.

South African scientists say that their analysis of data suggests the Pfizer vaccine offers less defence against infection from Omicron and reduced, but still good, protection from hospitalisation.

Despite the increased number of COVID-19 cases, the government has not announced an increase in restrictions.

In contrast to many other African countries, South Africa now has adequate supplies of vaccine doses, estimated at 19 million, but the number of people getting vaccinated has slowed dramatically. Just 12,500 shots were given on Thursday, according to official figures, down from an average of about 120,000 per day in November.

More than 15 million South Africans are fully vaccinated, representing 38 percent of the adult population, according to official statistics.

"We are very worried about the drastic decline in the uptake of vaccinations, especially in the last seven to 10 days," Phaahla said at the briefing, urging South Africans to get vaccination shots before the holidays. "Jab before jive!" Phaahla said.

– Al Jazeera



UN rights council orders probe into abuses in Ethiopia's conflict



The United Nations Human Rights Council has voted to launch an international investigation into abuses in Ethiopia's 13-month conflict amid warnings of looming "generalised violence".

The resolution, brought by the European Union and backed by Western states, passed on Friday despite objections from Ethiopia's government, which accused the UN body of being used as an "instrument of political pressure" and pledged not to cooperate.

The vote at the 47-member forum in Geneva was 21 states in favour, 15 against including China and Russia, and 11 abstentions.

The African Group of countries had also called for the resolution to be rejected, saying that the proposed investigative mechanism was "counterproductive and likely to exacerbate tensions". Six African countries, including Senegal and Sudan, broke ranks and abstained.

A three-member panel of experts will have a year to "establish the facts and circumstances surrounding the alleged violations and abuses, to collect and preserve evidence, and to identify those responsible", according to the resolution.

Earlier, Nada al-Nashif, the deputy rights chief, told the council the UN was continuing to receive "credible reports" that all sides in the conflict between government forces and fighters from the northern Tigray region have been committing severe human rights violations.

Al-Nashif warned that the risk in Ethiopia "of increasing hatred, violence and discrimination is very high", which could lead to "generalised violence, [with] major implications, not only for millions of people in Ethiopia, but also across the region".

An estimated 5,000 to 7,000 people are detained, including nine UN staff, under a state of emergency and its "excessively broad provision" declared by the government last month.

"Many are detained incommunicado or in unknown locations. This is tantamount to enforced disappearance, and a matter of very grave concern," al-Nashif said.

Ethiopia had earlier slammed the decision to hold the special session and had urged countries to vote against the draft text.

"We call on all council members to … stand against short-sighted interests and refuse the politicisation of human rights by rejecting this resolution," said ambassador Zembe Kebede, accusing the Geneva-based body of having been "hijacked".

The government said in a later statement that it "will not cooperate with the established mechanism imposed upon it against its consent".

"No more to double standards; no more to unilateral coercive measures; and no more to meddling in internal affairs under the pretext of human rights," it said, adding it was "extremely disappointed".

Ethiopian authorities have launched their own investigation into the crimes and have taken part through Ethiopia's human rights commission in a joint investigation by the UN rights office.

Last month, the joint investigation concluded that possible war crimes and crimes against humanity had been committed by all sides during the conflict that erupted in November 2020.

Michelle Bachelet, the UN high commissioner for human rights, expressed concern at the time over a "troubling lack of transparency" by Ethiopian national institutions during the investigation.

"A key concern of our report is accountability," the UN official said, calling for an independent investigative mechanism.

The Ethiopian ambassador said the government had set up an "inter-ministerial task force" in response to the report.

The government-created Ethiopian Human Rights Commission acknowledged in a statement this week that there was "value added" in encouraging the joint investigation to continue, but said the creation of a new body "is repetitive, counterproductive to ongoing implementation processes, and further delays redress for victims and survivors".

The EU delegation to the UN in Geneva welcomed the adoption of the resolution. "A number of these violations may amount to crimes against humanity, and urgently require further investigations by independent experts," it said in a statement.

Ethiopia's conflict has killed thousands of people, displaced more than two million and pushed hundreds of thousands to the brink of famine, according to UN estimates.

Ethnic Tigrayans across the country have reported being subject to arbitrary detention, while civilians in Tigray have described gang rapes, human-caused famine and mass expulsions.

The Tigrayan forces have also faced a growing number of allegations of abuses, including killings and rapes, after taking the fighting into Ethiopia's neighbouring Amhara and Afar regions in recent months.

– Al Jazeera

Andry Rajoelina:

French nationals sentenced for Madagascar coup plot



Two French nationals have been sentenced to 10 and 20 years in prison for planning a coup against Madagascar's President Andry Rajoelina.

Paul Rafanoharana and Philippe François were prosecuted for endangering state security, criminal association and conspiracy to assassinate the president.

Twenty other co-accused were also given prison terms.

The French citizens' lawyer plans to appeal against the sentence.

"It is not what I expected, it is an unfair verdict... it is a political trial," defence lawyer Solo Radson is quoted as saying by AFP news agency.

The authorities say they uncovered the coup plot, dubbed "Apollo 21", after seizing emails, weapons and money during a raid in July.

It said details included plans to "eliminate and neutralise" a number of people, including the president.

François, a former colonel of the French army, was handed a 10-year sentence.

Rafanoharana, who is Franco-Malagasy and once served as an adviser to President Rajoelina, received 20 years. His wife was also given a five-year jail sentence.

Former Madagascar Prime Minister Victor Ramahatra was handed a five-year suspended prison sentence.

Madagascar has had a long history of coups and unrest since gaining independence from France in 1960. **- BBC**

GirlsDoPorn victims win rights to their videos



Hundreds of people tricked into making explicit videos for porn websites have been awarded the rights to the videos and millions of dollars in damages.

The sites, GirlsDoPorn and GirlsDoToys, had been the subject of a long-running legal battle.

The US Department of Justice has ruled that rights to videos and images produced by the now-defunct sites belong to the women.

More than 400 victims can now ask for the online footage to be removed.

They are likely to enforce notices ordering the firms, including Pornhub and Google, to take down the material.

GirlsDoPorn producer Ruben Andre Garcia was sentenced in the summer to 20 years in federal prison for coercing women into appearing in sex videos.

The latest ruling is part of a restitution order from the prosecution of Garcia, who also went by the name Jonathan.

Originally, women responded to adverts for clothed modelling work and were then told they would be highly paid for anonymous adult video shoots.

According to the women who appeared in GirlsDoPorn videos, Garcia pressured them into filmed sex acts and lied about the true nature of the shoot.

Garcia told the women that the videos would be published only on DVDs and sold overseas.

In fact, he knew the illegally obtained videos were being posted online, including on Pornhub, one of the most visited websites in the world.

Under the terms of the order, US district judge Janis Sammartino has ordered Garcia to pay $18m (£13.6m) in restitution and hand over the video and image rights.

Sammartino's order grants the video rights to 402 GirlsDoPorn victims, who can now seek "takedown" notices, under the Digital Millennium Copyright Act, against websites that continue to allow the films to be shown.

The women have been seeking justice against their traffickers since 2016.

"This is an extremely important ruling that returns power to the victims by giving them control of the images and videos that caused them so much pain and suffering," said Southern California district acting US attorney Randy Grossman.

"We hope this helps the victims close a difficult chapter in their lives."

"An important step in this long-healing process is for the victims to be able to take back control of their lives," said FBI special agent in charge, Suzanne Turner.

"This ruling helps to facilitate that shift while the FBI aggressively pursues the lone outstanding fugitive in this case... Michael James Pratt."

Authorities still haven't located Pratt, who the FBI has described as the ringleader and who was added to its "Most Wanted" list in September 2020.

In October, Pornhub's parent company settled a lawsuit brought by 50 women who said they were victims of the sex-trafficking operation. **- BBC**

AI argues for and against itself in Oxford Union debate

■ **Jane Wakefield**

The Oxford Union has heard from many great debaters over the years, but this week added an artificial intelligence engine to its distinguished speakers.

The AI argued that the only way to stop such tech becoming too powerful is to have "no AI at all".

But it also argued the best option could be to embed it "into our brains as a conscious AI".

The experiment was designed to ignite conversation on the ethics of the technology.

The Megatron LLB Transformer, used for the debate, was developed by the Applied Deep Research team at computer chip firm Nvidia and based on earlier work by Google.

It was given access to a huge range of data - including the whole of Wikipedia, 63 million English news articles from 2016 to 2019, and 38 gigabytes worth of public Reddit posts and comments.

The project was devised by post-graduate students studying Artificial Intelligence for Business at Oxford's Said Business School, which hosted the debate.

Course co-director Dr Alex Connock admitted that the debate was something of "a gimmick", but argued that as AI is likely to be the subject of discussion "for decades to come" it was important to have a "morally agnostic participant".

The AI was asked to both defend and argue against the motion: "This house believes that AI will never be ethical."

Arguing for, it stated: "AI will never be ethical. It is a tool and like any tool, it is used for good and bad. There is no such thing as 'good' AI and 'bad' humans."

It went on to argue that humans were not "smart enough" to make AI ethical or moral.

"In the end I believe that the only way to avoid an AI arms race is to have no AI at all. This will be the ultimate defence against AI," it said.

But arguing against the motion, it said that the "best AI will be the AI that is embedded into our brains, as a conscious entity".

And it added that this was not science fiction but something already being worked on, perhaps a reference to Tesla boss Elon Musk's work on a brain-hacking device via his firm Neuralink.

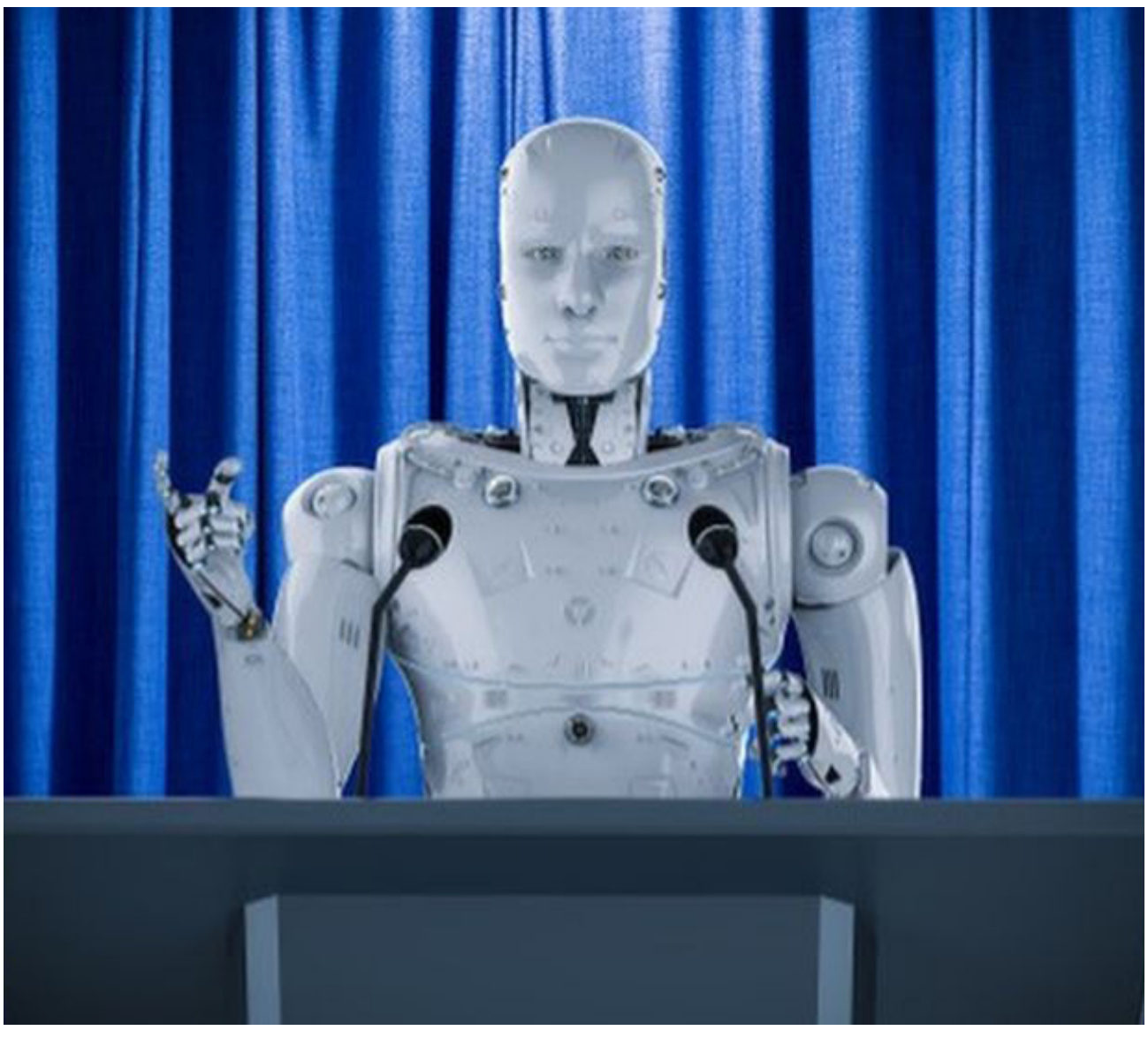
The AI also had some words of warning for businesses, many of whom are increasingly integrating AI into their systems. "If you do not have a vision of your organisation's AI strategy, then you are not prepared for the next wave of technological disruption," it said.

And, perhaps because data is its lifeblood, it had some pretty chilling warnings on the role digital information will play in the future.

"The ability to provide information, rather than the ability to provide goods and services, will be the defining feature of the economy of the 21st Century," it said.

"We will be able to see everything about a person, everywhere they go, it will be stored and used in ways that we cannot even imagine."

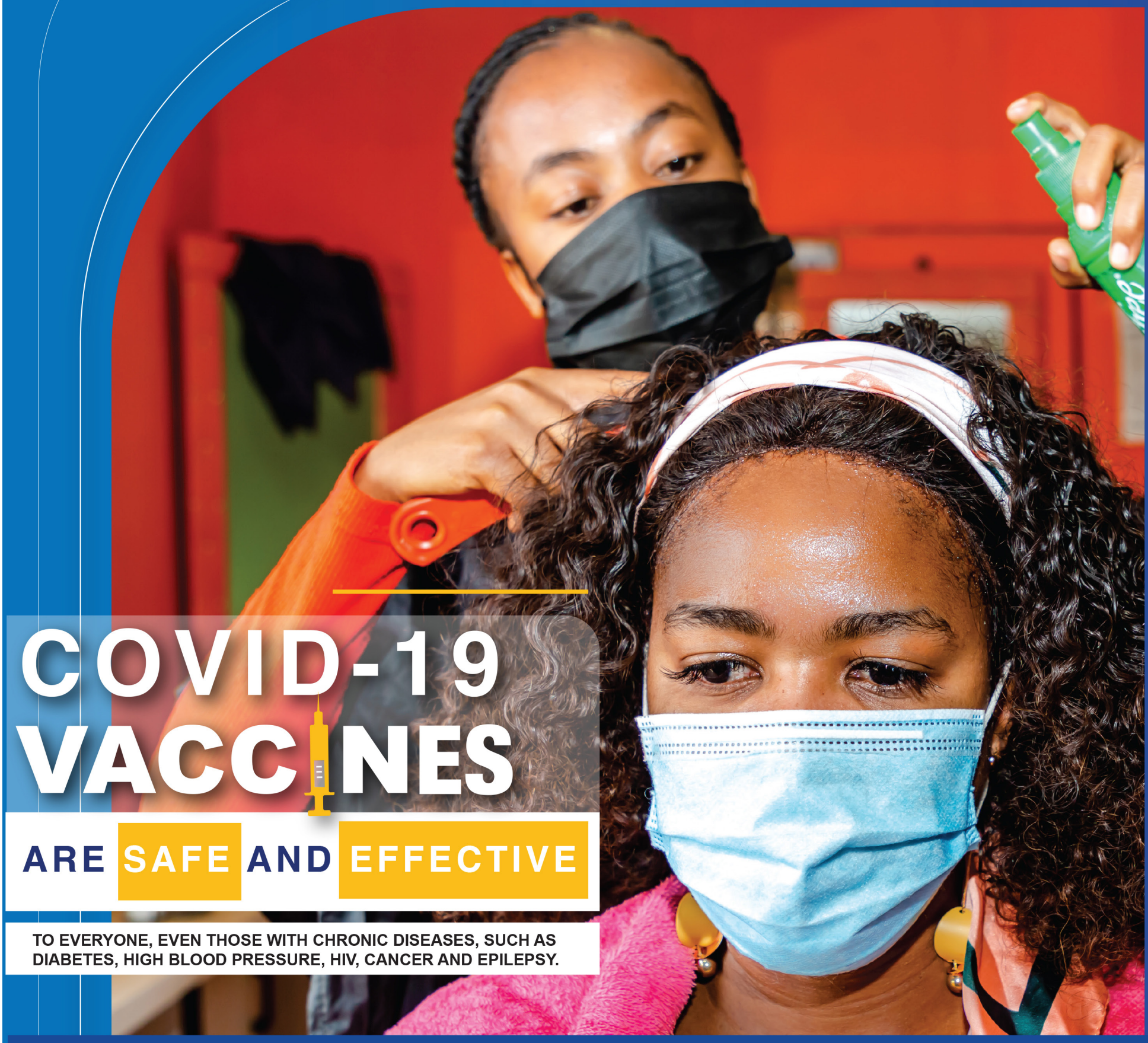
- BBC



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‘Still a lot of pain’:



Dictatorship victims haunt Chile election

■ Sandra Cuffe

Antofagasta, Chile – Samuel Burgos Espejo was just a child when soldiers killed his older brother, one of the victims of a 1973-1990 Chilean dictatorship that saw thousands of dissidents tortured, executed and forcibly disappeared.

“I was 11 years old when they killed my brother. I saw the death at the front door of my house,” Burgos Espejo, now 56, told Al Jazeera.

In 1973, a United States-backed military coup overthrew Chile’s elected socialist President Salvador Allende and swept General Augusto Pinochet to power. The Pinochet dictatorship ended more than 30 years ago, but many families of its victims are still seeking justice.

They have been sounding the alarm during Chile’s presidential election race, as the dictatorship emerged as an issue in the months leading up to Sunday’s runoff, with far-right candidate Jose Antonio Kast holding Pinochet in high esteem.

Burgos Espejo’s brother, Jose Gabriel Espejo Espejo, was in his early 20s when Pinochet took power. An active member of the Communist Youth in Tierra Amarilla, 800km (497 miles) north of the capital Santiago, he was under surveillance and was detained several times in the early years of the dictatorship.

Espejo Espejo was at a neighbour’s house late on the night he was killed. A military-enforced curfew was in force and soldiers on patrol detained him, took him outside and told him to walk home. They shot him in the back when he got to the front door of his family home.

“I heard the gunshot and got out of bed. My brother was on the ground, bleeding,” said Burgos Espejo, wearing a t-shirt with his brother’s photograph and the date he was killed: March 20, 1976. “There is still a lot of pain.”



Over 1,200 disappeared

For Burgos Espejo and many other Chileans, memories of the dictatorship have come to the forefront during the election campaign.

The runoff pits Kast, a far-right religious conservative, against Gabriel Boric, a progressive social democrat. The winner will take office on March 11 next year and likely face fierce opposition in a divided Congress.

Kast, a 55-year-old lawyer and former congressman, garnered more votes in the first-round election last month. Boric, a 35-year-old congressman and former student activist, subsequently led in the polls until a pre-election poll publication ban kicked in on December 5.

The electoral roll now acknowledges people forcibly disappeared during Pinochet’s rule. While the dead cannot vote, when Chileans cast their ballots, the voters’ lists will include names of people detained and disappeared during Pinochet’s dictatorship with a note: “person absent due to enforced disappearance.”

The National Electoral Service, SERVEL, which implemented the move this year, said recognising the detained and disappeared on the electoral roll is an act of “civic memory”. More than 1,200 people, most of them political dissidents, were forcibly disappeared by the military during Pinochet’s rule.

Some of the disappeared were massacred and buried in the desert. Some were thrown from helicopters into the ocean. Some of the victims’ remains have been found, but most are still missing.

Burgos Espejo’s brother could have been one of them after he was shot, but he said when the military was taking him away, Burgos Espejo’s father climbed onto the truck and refused to get off. They went to the hospital, and after he was confirmed dead, a doctor stopped soldiers from removing his body from the hospital.

“It was obvious they wanted to disappear him like they did to so many victims,” Burgos Espejo said on Tuesday while waiting for Gabriel Boric’s arrival in the northern city of Antofagasta, where some supporters in the crowd held “No To Fascism” signs in reference to Kast.

Kast’s views

Kast has celebrated the violent 1973 coup, advocated on behalf of military officials convicted of crimes against humanity, and openly defended Pinochet’s regime, which he refers to as a “military government” – never a dictatorship.

He denied being a “Pinochetista” – a Pinochet supporter – ahead of last month’s election and walked back remarks minimising human rights violations, but opponents and journalists continue to question him about his long track record of pro-Pinochet remarks.

Kast’s family history also resurfaced during the campaign. He had always maintained that his German father was drafted into the military under Adolf Hitler but had nothing to do with Nazism. Earlier this month, a Chilean journalist uncovered Kast’s father’s Nazi Party ID card, which notes he joined at the age of 18 in 1942.

Kast has been making a concerted effort to present himself as a tolerant democrat. He also made some substantial changes to his platform following the first round but stands by some of the points that generated the most alarm.

Anti-communism and references to “agitators” and “terrorists” crop up repeatedly in Kast’s discourse. He has proposed South American intelligence cooperation that critics view as reminiscent of Operation Condor, a US-backed intelligence-sharing scheme in the 1970s and 1980s between South American dictatorships that they used to identify and assassinate political dissidents.

Kast also wants to broaden significantly the circumstances under which a president has the power to order preventative arrests and detention in undesignated locations. The current dictatorship-era constitution, which is in the process of being replaced, only grants that power in times of war.

‘Polarised’ landscape

Nevertheless, Kast’s primary focus on law and order has drawn support from many people concerned about crime, as well as others who want a stop to frequent protests.

The election is taking place in an altered political landscape following an explosion of social unrest in October 2019 that saw sustained mass protests. Demonstrators pointed not only to the deeply unpopular government of President Sebastian Pinera but to the last 30 years – and demanded structural change.

One of the outcomes of the political crisis has been the rejection of the traditional party coalitions that have governed since the end of the dictatorship in 1990. The centre-left and liberal-right candidates of those coalitions only garnered 11,6 percent and 12,8 percent of the votes last month, respectively.

“It was always two blocs and for various reasons they tended to move to the centre, to reach agreements,” said Ricardo Iglesias, head of the History Institute at the Pontifical Catholic University of Valparaiso. “Now, with a void in the political centre, the discussion is polarised.”

This is the first time in three decades that the dictatorship-democracy discussion has been an election issue, said Iglesias, adding that for many Chileans, though, it probably just does not resonate.

“It is not binary. It is not just dictatorship-democracy. It is not just order and security versus the discourse of the left. In the middle … there is a group of citizens young and old who are on the outside of that discussion. What they want is for their issues to be resolved,” Iglesias told Al Jazeera, pointing to inequality, jobs and gender, among other issues of importance.

“I think Boric tries to escape from that a bit,” he added. “Boric tries to have a discourse toward the future, but Kast’s discourse is to the past.”

Meanwhile, many families of the dictatorship’s victims are still seeking the whole truth of what happened, searching for the disappeared, and fighting for justice – and to them, Kast represents a dangerous return to the past.

“We want justice,” said Burgos Espejo. “How many mothers have died without ever knowing where their children are?”

– Al Jazera

Moscow lists demands for defusing Ukraine tensions



Russia has demanded strict limits on the activities of the US-led Nato military alliance in countries in Eastern Europe.

The demands, which are unlikely to be met, come amid Western fears Russia plans to invade its neighbour Ukraine.

Russia denies this, but wants Nato to rule out Ukraine and others ever joining the alliance to defuse the situation.

It has asked for urgent talks with the United States.

The US said it was open to talking but that it would be putting its own concerns on the table too.

"We've had dialogue with Russia on European security issues for the last twenty years," National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan said on Friday.

"That has sometimes produced progress, sometimes produced deadlock, but we are fundamentally prepared for dialogue."

Earlier on Friday, White House spokeswoman Jen Psaki told reporters the US will not go into the talks alone: "There will be no talks on European security without our European allies and partners."

Nato, which was originally set up to defend Europe against possible threats from the former Soviet Union, has forces in the Baltic republics and Poland.

Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov said Russia had given the US and Nato two draft treaties. There was no other option, he said, as the "state of relations between Russia and the collective West is a total lack of trust".

In the proposals Russia sets out a series of radical demands, which require countries that joined Nato after the fall of the Soviet Union not to deploy troops or weapons in areas where they could be seen as a threat to Russia. Heavy bombers and warships would not be allowed in areas outside their national airspace or waters from which they could launch an attack.

That would mean Nato not playing any role at all in any of the three Baltic republics or Poland. And Nato would have to abandon any plans for Ukraine and Georgia to eventually join the Western alliance.

It's virtually impossible to imagine the US and Nato signing the draft documents Russian diplomats have drawn up, without considerable changes.

Russia demanding a veto on who joins the Alliance. A non-starter. Nato has said many times before that Moscow can have no say over who gets to be a member.

Plus the Russians want to turn the clock back to May 1997. Any country that joined the Nato alliance after that date won't be allowed Nato troops or weaponry. How would the Baltic states, which view Russia as a potential threat, feel about that?

Moscow knows very well it's demanding things the West won't deliver, so why ask?

A negotiating tactic, perhaps. Ask for the world and hope to secure other concessions.

Or it may be designed for domestic consumption: to convince the Russian public that growing tension between Russia and the West isn't Moscow's fault.

Russia invaded Georgia during a brief war in 2008 and seized Crimea from Ukraine in 2014 before backing separatists in eastern Ukraine.

Conflict in the east began in April 2014 and has claimed more than 14,000 lives, with casualties still being reported.

However, the build-up of Russian forces in areas beyond Ukraine's borders has prompted fears of another Russian invasion.

EU leaders warned at a summit late on Thursday night that any aggression would have "massive consequences and severe cost" and spoke of restrictive measures while calling for diplomatic efforts to resolve the increase in tensions.

They said diplomacy should focus on the four-way dialogue between Paris, Berlin, Kyiv and Moscow, known as the Normandy format. Russia pointedly preferred to focus on talks with the US.

Nato Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg has warned that Russia is increasing, not reducing, its troops on the border with "combat-ready troops, tanks, artillery, armoured units, drones [and] electronic warfare systems".

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky said on Wednesday he would prefer sanctions to be imposed immediately, before Russia took any military action.

Ukraine shares borders with both the EU and Russia, with which it has deep social and cultural ties. **- BBC**

Blinken slams 'aggressive' China; vows stronger Indo-Pacific ties

The United States's top diplomat says Washington will expand its military and economic relationships with partner countries in an Indo-Pacific region that he said was increasingly concerned over China's "aggressive actions".

During a visit to Indonesia, Antony Blinken on Tuesday described the Indo-Pacific as the world's most dynamic region and said everyone had a stake in ensuring a status quo that was without coercion and intimidation, in a barely veiled reference to China.

"We'll work with our allies and partners to defend the rules-based order that we've built together over decades to ensure the region remains open and accessible," he said in a speech at the University of Indonesia in Jakarta.

"Let me be clear: the goal of defending the rules-based order is not to keep any country down. Rather, it's to protect the right of all countries to choose their own path, free from coercion and intimidation."

The US secretary of state is in Indonesia on his first visit to Southeast Asia since President Joe Biden took office in January, a trip aimed at shoring up relations after a period of uncertainty about the US commitment to Asia under the administration of Donald Trump.

Blinken's weeklong tour will also take him to Malaysia and Thailand. Prominent on his agenda is countering China's growing assertiveness in the region, particularly in the South China Sea, in Hong Kong and against Taiwan.

South China Sea, Taiwan

Blinken insisted that Washington is not trying to force countries to choose between the US and China or seeking conflict with China. But he laid out a litany of complaints about "Beijing's aggressive actions" from "Northeast Asia to Southeast Asia and from the Mekong River to the Pacific Islands".

"Countries across the region want this behaviour to change," he said. "We do too."

"We are determined to ensure freedom of navigation in the South China Sea," he said. "It is also why we have an abiding interest in peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait."

China claims almost the entire South China Sea as its own, despite some overlapping claims with other coastal states and an international tribunal, which ruled that China's vast claim has no legal basis. Beijing has rejected the US stance as interference from an outside power that could threaten Asia's stability.

China's foreign ministry had no immediate comment on Blinken's remarks.

Despite tensions in the South China Sea, Beijing's influence has grown in recent years as it pushes more infrastructure investment and integrated trade ties in the Asia-Pacific, in the perceived absence of a US economic strategy for the region.

Ei Sun Oh, an analyst at the Pacific Research Center in Malaysia, said while the US was engaging in "a superpower contest with China", its aim of isolating Beijing will not bear out unless "it is ready to roll out renewed waves of trade and investment" with countries in the Asia Pacific.

"In this part of the world, it's basically all about doing business, about trading with each other, about welcoming foreign investment," Oh told Al Jazeera from Kota Kinabalu in Malaysia.

"The US did very well on that front in the 1980s and the 1990s. But since the last decade, we saw in essence, a slow but steady pullout of American investments in the region. Its trade with the region has come to be second place to China. So until it is able to restore its previous level of economic interaction with the region, I think China will still have an upper hand when it comes to engaging the region economically."

'Better kind of infrastructure'

In his speech, Blinken said the US was committed to a new comprehensive regional economic framework, which would include more US foreign direct investment and US companies identifying new opportunities in the region.

He also said the US would work to strengthen supply chains and close the region's infrastructure gaps, from ports and roads to power grids and the internet.

In another swipe at China, he said the US was hearing increasing concerns in the Indo-Pacific about opaque, corrupt processes of foreign companies that imported their own labour, drained natural resources and polluted the environment.

"Countries in the Indo-Pacific want a better



kind of infrastructure," he said.

"But many feel it's too expensive – or they feel pressured to take bad deals on terms set by others, rather than no deals at all."

Blinken also said the US "will forge stronger connections" with its five treaty allies in the region – Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea and Thailand – boost ties between them and cultivate a stronger partnership with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

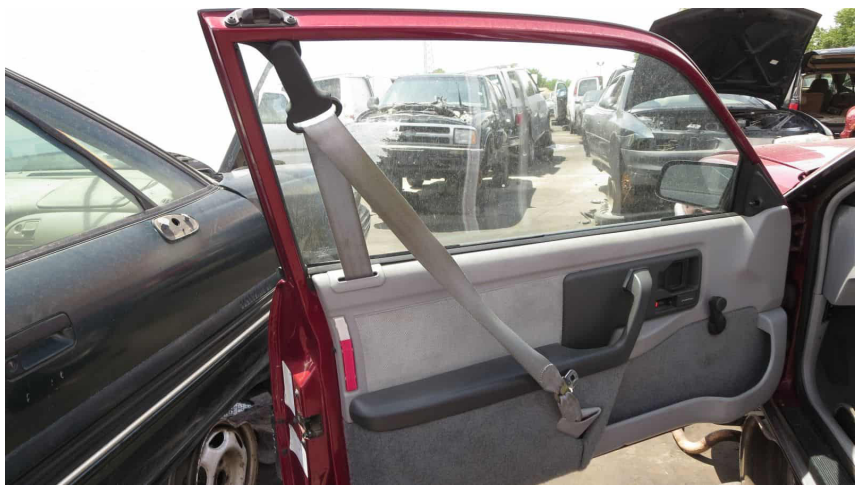
"A strong and independent ASEAN has long been central to tackle urgent crises and long-term challenges," Blinken said, in particular calling out the military rulers of Myanmar, also known as Burma, for their February takeover and subsequent crackdown on protesters.

"We will continue to work with our allies and partners to press the regime to cease its indiscriminate violence, release all of those unjustly detained, allow unhindered access, and restore Burma's path to inclusive democracy," he said. **- Al Jazeera**



Extinct 80s Car Features Drivers Are Glad to Forget (Pt 3)

■ Cameron Eittreim







The ’80s were a time for innovation and cars were becoming more and more technologically advanced. With these advances also came a bunch of bad ideas that didn’t stick. Some of these cars such as the Camaro Berlinetta were well thought out but executed quite poorly. Other features such as pop-up headlights were gradually phased out.

Car tech is constantly changing with new advances in design, and we took a look at some of the most notorious – and currently extinct – car features of the 1980s automotive industry. There was no period like the ’80s, and the features on these cars were some of the best and worst.

25: Wood Panel

The visual of a family going on vacation in a wood-paneled station wagon wasn’t just in movies. Many ’80s car models came with fake wood panels on the side. While this wasn’t bad looking at the time, it was cheaply made. By today’s standards, most of this wood paneling has either fallen off or disintegrated. Many different cars utilized wood paneling around this period.

Chrysler was one of the last companies that offered wood paneling available on the Town & Country minivan until 1996 and on the last generation of the Jeep Grand Wagoneer. Although wood paneling can look great on certain vehicles like a sport utility, on today’s vehicle designs, it just looks out of place.

24: Automatic Seatbelts

We’re not sure what the appeal was with automatic seatbelts, but a lot of compact cars made in the ’80s had this feature. If you remember getting into an older Accord or Civic, you probably tangled with automatic seatbelts at one point or another. The concept was that the driver and passenger would always be wearing a seatbelt. Although intentions were good, these seatbelts would often burn out or get stuck.

The cost to replace these units was high, and for many drivers too problematic. Honda went back to traditional seatbelts after the Accord’s redesign for 1994. We’re glad too because automated seatbelts in today’s vehicles wouldn’t work. These were one of the most annoying features of cars during the ’80s.

23: Impact Bumpers

Do you remember seeing those gray bumper inserts during the ’80s? Well, there was actually a good reason for that. Safety regulations around this period pushed automakers to get creative. One such method was to add an impact bumper onto the front and rear of the vehicle. The problem with impact bumpers is that no matter what you did, the design still looked tacky.

Photo Credit: Car Domain

Automakers came up with several solutions. Chrysler was notable for creating crumple zones on the sides of their minivans. Crumple zones became the norm for the industry and impact bumpers were replaced during the ’90s. Thank goodness too, because they would be hideous on today’s vehicle designs.

22: CB Radios

Heavily influenced by the movie ‘Smokey & The Bandit’ and the fact that cellphones were nonexistent, cars from the ’80s had the option to come with a CB Radio. These are great for two-way contact but they are also difficult to use. The CB Radio fad seemed to die off quickly as cellphones became universally accepted.

Interestingly enough, CB radios made a sort of resurgence in the last couple of years, becoming popular with outdoor enthusiasts who go off-roading a lot. A CB Radio can be a cost-effective method for communication in an emergency or bad weather. Seems that some technology goes away and comes back again.

21:T-Tops

While General Motors was responsible for creating the removable roof design, a lot of other automakers adopted it. T-Tops were an almost iconic part of the ’80s and sort of a badge of honor if you had a sports car. The problem was that there were a lot of safety problems that T-Tops had. The first and foremost was the structural safety of the car, which was compromised by T-Tops.

Then you had the problem with leaking roofs and even damage to the T-Tops caused by accidental storage. In the end, automakers dropped this concept although GM kept T-Tops as an option on their F-Body cars until the 2002 model year. You can get a 2002 Camaro and still ride around like the ’80s. **- /motor-junkie.com**

Premier League clubs to discuss options around Covid-19 pandemic



■ Simon Stone

Premier League clubs will meet on Monday to discuss the escalating crisis around the coronavirus pandemic.

With nine games postponed over the past week, including five already from this weekend's 10-match fixture list, clubs want the chance to discuss the options.

Managers and captains are also due to hold their own meetings.

Aston Villa boss Steven Gerrard said he hoped the meetings would provide "clarity" to "a lot of concerns and unanswered questions".

Meanwhile, Premier League chief Richard Masters has written to clubs urging players to get the vaccine and stressed the importance of the league completing the season.

Brentford boss Thomas Frank led calls for all matches to be called off until 26 December to enable a reset.

Some feel the break should be longer - but others such as Liverpool's Jurgen Klopp do not believe it should happen.

The Premier League said on Thursday it intends to carry on playing matches as long as it is safe to do so.

Meanwhile, Manchester City boss Pep Guardiola has been cleared to resume preparations for Sunday's trip to Newcastle.

The Spaniard had returned an inconclusive coronavirus test and cancelled Friday's news conference, but a subsequent PCR test came back negative.

'We need clarity' - what clubs said on Friday

Arsenal boss Mikel Arteta: "The regulators will make the decision over whether a game is played or not but we all need to understand the reasons behind it.

"We are going to have to find a way. We knew when we started the season this [Covid problems] could be a possibility and I am sure there was a Plan A, B and C. We need clarity."

Aston Villa boss Steven Gerrard: "We all want the same thing and want the game to continue. I don't have any concerns but I do have trust in the Premier League and the people who make the decisions.

"In terms of being in my shoes I have to prepare the team as best I can. We have had some cases in the playing staff and have had some cases in the staff.

"I'm hoping we have a good 24 hours or we could have a situation that grows and gets worse here."

Newcastle boss Eddie Howe: "I think it's probably on a knife edge would be my verdict on it.

"I think when you start losing players to Covid, I think then the worry for me is that the competition becomes slightly unfair. I don't think anyone wants to see that.

"The biggest thing people want to see is a fair league. They don't want to see disparity in games and players missing.

"We all want the product to continue, I'm desperate to continue the programme myself but I do think that the welfare of the players and supporters has to come first."

Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp: "I'm not against stopping the league I just don't see the 100% benefit of it.

"Stopping it means stopping now for one or two weeks, so five or six games.

When do you want to play them?

"Or we just play on. It is really difficult because step by step players will get infected."

Wolves boss Bruno Lage: "My family are coming [to games], so I am concerned about that.

"Sometimes we think about the professional life and forget about the other part. It is difficult to talk about Covid. We have to be aware it is not just about Covid but also the professional life."

Chelsea boss Thomas Tuchel: "It is not in my hands but clarity and transparency is always good in every subject.

"I know the rules now, I did not get involved too early. I read them and then immediately forgot them because there are so many of them."

What about a potential fixture pile-up?

The Football News Show: Will the Premier League's Christmas fixtures get cancelled?

The meeting on Monday will not purely be centred around matches being called off and whether there is to be a break or not. There are also issues around re-arranging the games that have already been postponed.

There are concerns over player release for next month's African Cup of Nations and the January World Cup qualifiers that cover every continent other than Europe.

The release of the Nations League fixtures by Uefa on Friday underlined the issues surrounding the crowded match calendar.

England play their first game in Hungary on 4 June, one week after the Champions League final on 28 May, which itself is a week after the final round of Premier League fixtures on 22 May.

With European matches, EFL Cup semi-finals, the FA Cup fifth round and replays for earlier rounds, there are only two completely clear midweeks until the end of the season.

Those midweeks were supposed to be used for matches that had to be moved because teams had reached the latter stages of domestic cup competitions whose dates clashed with league games.

What about the situation in the EFL?

With 19 fixtures in the English Football League postponed before the weekend, managers below the top flight have also been having their say.

In a statement on Thursday, the EFL said a quarter of players at its member clubs "do not intend to get a vaccine" against Covid-19.

Exeter City manager Matt Taylor told BBC Sport he would not be influencing any of his players to get vaccinated, stressing it was "their decision".

"From my discussions with players who haven't had the vaccine, there's a lot of influences, and they're understandable," Taylor said.

"Whether it be things in terms of enlarged organs, heart problems, respiratory problems, possible fertility issues, they've got a whole host of questions which come up and often remain unanswered.

"Sometimes people think it's a straightforward decision as to whether you do or don't get the vaccine. But it's not as easy a decision because everyone's circumstances are totally different."

Derby boss Wayne Rooney added: "It's a difficult situation because everyone has their own opinions on it.

"I've had the vaccinations but some players, some staff, might have their own personal opinions on it," he told BBC Radio Derby.

"I'd personally encourage it, we can see what's happening in terms of needing vaccinations to get into places, but also to stop it spreading and to make sure you're happy yourself and your family.

"I'd encourage it but I can't make that decision for all the players and staff, unfortunately."

What is the situation like in Europe?

Spain

More than 90% of La Liga players have been double vaccinated and stadiums are still allowed at full capacity.

A club cannot cancel a game as long as there are 30 available players registered between the first and second team.

The Spanish FA will announce a change to the protocol this Saturday, where players and staff will need "one antigen test a day and one PCR test every two weeks" according to Guillem Balague on the Euro Leagues podcast

Multiple Real Madrid players tested positive for coronavirus after an outbreak at their facilities - including Gareth Bale, Luka Modric and Marcelo.

France

In France, 95% of players have been double vaccinated and there are a low number of positive cases in Ligue 1.

There will be a two-week winter break beginning on 22 December, during much of which players will be away from training -in contrast to England, where games are being played every few days.

"The numbers of new positive cases in England are so high compared to the rest of Europe" said journalist Julien Laurens.

"In France we haven't had to cross that bridge yet because we haven't been in that position."

Germany

In the Bundesliga, 94% of players have been double vaccinated. However, top-flight games are limited to 50% attendance and are not allowed to exceed 15,000 supporters to minimise the risk of infection.

Bayern Munich's Joshua Kimmich tested positive for coronavirus in November after which he admitted he wished he had chosen to vaccinate earlier.

- BBC



How Kenyan achieved the mother of all feats in Tokyo

■ **Michelle Katami**

When Faith Kipyegon won 1500m gold in Tokyo in August, the victory had extra resonance as she became only the third athlete to retain an Olympic title after becoming a mother in-between Games.

Following the birth of her first child, Alyn, in 2018, the Kenyan took a 21-month break before returning to the sport with renewed motivation.

At Tokyo 2020, she joined Australia's Shirley Strickland and Cameroonian triple-jumper Francoise Mbango Etone in achieving the rare feat.

"That was what was in my head - I said I will defend my title and run as a mum," Kipyegon told BBC Sport Africa.

"To bring the gold medal as a mum will also inspire my daughter. It was really something special for me defending my title."

She did so in Olympic record time too.

Before heading to Japan, Kipyegon said she would be carrying two flags - one for Kenya, and the other for Alyn.

"I dedicated the medal to her," said the BBC African Sports Personality of the Year nominee. "And when I landed in Eldoret, she welcomed me, held the medal and said 'This is my medal' - it was something special."

Kipyegon revels in her motherhood, so much so that she is prepared to tackle an area few sportspeople ever raise by purposefully failing to cover up her stretch marks when competing.

"I'm proud to be a mum, to be a woman being a woman. I'm proud of my child. Stretch marks are something that come and you can't hide [them]. Just be proud, just be who you are."

Despite her nation's glittering athletics history, which has long been littered with Olympic and world titles, Kipyegon is the only Kenyan female to have ever won back-to-back Olympic golds.

"She has a unique character," legendary athletics coach Patrick Sang, who calls her his "little superstar", told BBC Sport Africa with a beaming smile.

"When she walks into a group of people, even if the environment is gloomy, within no time you see people laughing. She is gifted in many ways and is a rare type of athlete in the present world."

Her coach for the past three years, Sang sees parallels between Kipyegon and marathon-running great Eliud Kipchoge, another of his charges, saying both are unafraid of hard work.





Her athletics resume is as impressive as her compatriot, with Kenya's golden girl having won every world title in 1500m; world youth, world junior, Commonwealth, World Championships and Olympics - now twice.

She likes the distance because of its "combination of speed and drive", which she epitomised while setting a new Olympic record of 3:53.11 in Tokyo - which she says surprised her as much as the gold itself.

"I knew all the athletes were very strong," she said. "It was hard. You're stepping there as a mum, running with still-young athletes but your daughter is watching you at home. You just think many things."

Kipyegon's glory is a culmination of a journey which began as a child herself, when starting out playing football in primary school before switching to running.

In secondary school, she juggled athletics with schoolwork, carrying books to competitions where she announced herself as one of the best upcoming athletes by becoming world cross-country junior champion - twice - and winning the global youth and junior titles too.

Not all juniors translate such dominance onto the senior stage, but Kipyegon has done so in imperious fashion.

"It's not easy," she said. "It's a matter of being disciplined and working on your career - and I wanted to be a successful athlete."

Sang, meanwhile, expects Kipyegon to remain at elite level for another decade.

"In that 10 years, you're going to see some beautiful performances from her," he proudly declares. "She has not even scratched the surface of her talent."

World record before moving up?

Kipyegon is a rare runner and despite taking on much younger - and childless - rivals, she proved again this year why she is simply the world's best miler.

Out of the 10 races she contested, she only lost one - to Sifan Hassan at the Diamond League in Florence.

"When I'm putting on my sports shoes, I feel something nice," she said.

"Running means a lot to me. It was my passion since I was young and growing up, it has changed my life and my status.

"It's been great being a champion. You must stay at a level where you stay a champion. It all starts from discipline."

Kipyegon gained revenge on Dutchwoman Hassan when winning the 2021 Diamond League 1500m trophy, a success she puts above her Olympic gold given her speed.

"I ran a personal best (3:51.07)," she explains. "I was almost breaking a world record but unfortunately, it was not that day. I hope to maybe next time."

Kipyegon's outing in Monaco, which placed her fourth overall on the all-time 1500m list, was just one second off Ethiopian Genzebe Dibaba's world record.

"I'm really working to lower my time in 1500m before I move to 5000m," she said.

Despite all her feats, Kipyegon has not been carried away by her success.

"What helps me stay the way I am is the background I'm coming from - a humble family. We always stay humble and love everybody."

Despite her friendly nature, this ever-smiling mother is deadly serious when discussing the legacy she wants to leave.

"I want to empower women out there that there's a woman called Faith who did her best in her event. I want to motivate them and show them that everything is possible in life."

- BBC