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SDGs for All Newsletter - August 2020 In Retrospect

One Nation, Six Governments – COVID-19 Battle Uncovers Australian Federalism



By Kalinga Seneviratne

SYDNEY (IDN) – China may have one nation and two systems, but in Australia, it looks like there is one nation and six systems. As the second wave of coronavirus spreads across the continent, the State Premiers have taken unilateral decisions to close borders to travellers from other states to the dismay of Prime Minister

Scott Morrison.

Speaking at the Bush (Regional) Summit on August 28, Morrison bemoaned “Australia was not built to have internal borders, in fact the very point of federalism was not to have them”. While acknowledging that COVID-19 has touched people everywhere, he added, “We must not allow this crisis, this pandemic, to force us to retreat into provincialism. That’s not the answer”.

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Concerted Campaign to Protect Nairobi National Park



By Dominic Kirui*

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NAIROBI (IDN) – The Nairobi National Park is a rare gem that defines the Kenyan capital and it is the only national park in the world that shares a fence with a city. It boasts of abundant wildlife, including the “big five” animals – the lion, leopard, rhinoceros, elephant and buffalo – that can, in places, be viewed against a backdrop of city skyscrapers and planes coming in to land at the local airports.

Despite the park being only a five-minute drive from the Nairobi central business district, the Kenyan government has a history of approving development projects

...ment, and many governments have a history of approving development projects inside the park, which threaten its existence and that of the wildlife that inhabits it.

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How the Shadow of Slavery Still Hangs over Global Finance



Viewpoint by Philip Roscoe*

ANDREWS, Scotland (IDN) – When the infamous [Zong massacre](#) trial began in 1783, it laid bare the toxic relationship between finance and slavery. It was an unusual and distressing insurance claim – concerning a massacre of 133 captives, thrown overboard the Zong slave ship.

The slave trade pioneered a new kind of finance, secured on the bodies of the powerless. Today, the arcane products of high finance, targeting the poor and troubled as profit opportunities for the already-rich, still bear that deep unfairness.

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UNDP South Africa Analyses the Horrendous Impact of COVID-19



By Devendra Kamarajan

JOHANNESBURG (IDN) – The COVID-19 pandemic will push South Africa's overall GDP down by 7.9% in 2020 leading to major setbacks in addressing poverty, unemployment and inequality, the government's development priorities, according to new research by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

The [study](#) expects the economy to recover slowly through 2024.

It points out that female-headed households, persons with lower levels of education and the Informal Sector are hit hardest. Those with access to technology and digitisation are faring better. Innovative government policies and action are therefore needed for recovery, emphasizes the report. COVID-19 negatively impacts the attainment of the [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs).

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In a Historic Move, Africa Eradicates Devastating Polio



By Ronald Joshua

GENEVA | BRAZZAVILLE (IDN) – While COVID-19 pandemic is playing havoc with the global economy and a frantic search continues for a vaccine, thanks to a concerted campaign of immunization, Africa is free of a highly infectious disease which

mainly affects children under 5 years of age. It is a significant development marking the eradication of the second virus from the face of the continent since

smallpox 40 years ago.

"Today is a historic day for Africa," said Professor Rose Gana Fomban Leke, Chairperson of the African Regional Certification Commission for Polio eradication (ARCC), which has declared the region free of polio. (P14)
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Burkina Faso Faces 'Alarming Deterioration' in Food Security as It Grapples with COVID-19



By Radwan Jakeem

NEW YORK (IDN) – Two United Nations agencies have warned that about 3.3 million people in Burkina Faso are facing acute food insecurity. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) cited alarming [new data](#), and the World Food Programme (WFP), stressed that “urgent and sustained action” is needed to address the worsening food and nutrition situation throughout the landlocked West African country.

According to the latest analysis, acute food insecurity has increased more than 50 per cent since the situation in Burkina Faso was last assessed in March. The UN survey points out that in a country already reeling from conflict and climate change, [COVID-19](#) has intensified people’s inability to earn money to cover their daily needs.

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World Leaders Call for Funds to Stop COVID-19 Generation from Being Locked Out of the Classroom



By Caroline Mwanga

NEW YORK (IDN) – As country lockdowns to prevent the spread of COVID-19 pandemic come to an end, an immediate priority is the fate of 30 million children who may never return to school, warns a [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization \(UNESCO\) report](#).

With this in view, former world leaders, economists and educationalists say in a letter to the Group of Twenty (G20) nations and other countries: "We cannot stand by and allow these young people to be robbed of their education and a fair chance in life." They urge them to take action to prevent the global health crisis creating a "COVID generation" – leaving tens of millions of children with no hope of education.

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India's COVID-19 Experience May Usher in a More Humane World for Women and Informal Sector Workers



Viewpoint by Lakshmi Lingam*, [Tata Institute of Social Studies](#)

MUMBAI (IDN) – Women in India spend [207 minutes](#) on unpaid domestic work each



297 minutes on unpaid domestic work each day, 245 minutes more than men who contribute only 52 minutes. Women's work is not accounted for in the national accounting system, making their contributions unrecognised and unvalued.

An [Oxfam report](#) observes that the unpaid work of Indian women plays a crucial role in sustaining economic activity, equivalent to 3.1 per cent of GDP. Economic and social challenges, including domestic violence, dowry at the time of marriage and the trafficking of women, coalesce to sustain and perpetuate gender inequalities in India.

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COVID-19 Derails Education in Southern Africa



By Jeffrey Moyo

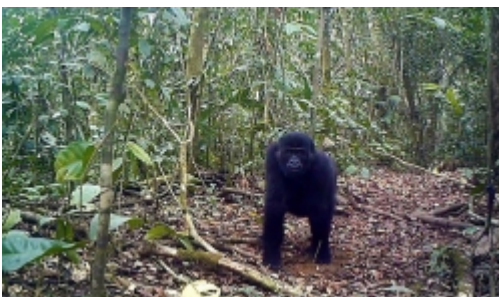
MUSINA, South Africa (IDN) – His three teenage children play home-made paper ball on the dusty streets of Musina, exercise books scattered on the veranda of their rented home in the South African border town with Zimbabwe. Yet Gerald Gava, the children's 47-year old father, lies on a reed mat spread on the veranda, apparently with

nothing to do after he stopped working three months ago as the lockdown took toll on the construction company that employed him.

Gava, who is a migrant from Zimbabwe, said even his children have had to remain home as schools also shut down, thanks to the coronavirus that has pounded the entire globe. (P13) [JAPANESE TEXT VERSION PDF](#) | [SWAHILI](#)

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Cameroon Decides to Save Last Intact Forest in Central Africa



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – Good news is rare for those toiling to save the environment, but environmentalists could finally share the excitement of hard-won success.

The government of Cameroon announced on August 14 it was cancelling plans to log some 170,000 acres of the Ebo Forest, home to hundreds of rare plant and animal species, including the tool-using Nigeria-Cameroon chimpanzee, the western gorilla and giant frogs.

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Chronic Underfunding of Public Health and Racist Policies Responsible for the Impact of COVID-19 in the US



Viewpoint by Marshall Auerback

The writer is a market analyst and commentator. This article was produced by



Economy for All, a project of the Independent Media Institute.

NEW YORK (IDN) – It is understandably tempting to drop all the blame for America’s catastrophic response to COVID-19 on the big desk in the Oval Office. But there’s more to the story than epic incompetence, grift and delusion at the highest levels of government. The stark divide in the level of health care from testing to treatment is divided by wealth and the legacy of systemic racism.

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UN Women Bashed for Indiscriminate Partnership with Unilever



Viewpoint by Sharanya Kanikkannan

The writer is Legal and Policy Adviser at AIDS-Free World and its Code Blue Campaign.

NEW YORK (IDN) – Like so many Indian girls, I learned at an early age that light skin was feminine, precious, and desirable.

Pink tubes of Fair & Lovely cream—a product that **comprises** 40 per cent of the skin lightening market in India—were a staple of my childhood, tucked away in dressing table drawers in every home and displayed on the shelves of every corner store. Looking back, I wonder why so many adults failed to imagine a world where girls were more than a “pantone” shade on a plastic tube.

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Dirty Oil Floods Pristine African Beach in Major Spill



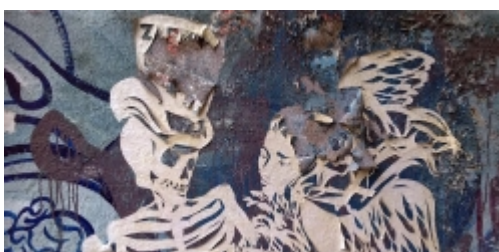
By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – An Indian Ocean island nation, beloved for its sandy beaches, pristine lagoons and reefs, its tropical climate and its multi-ethnic population, has become another world treasure soiled by the relentless trade in oil, shipped by tankers, unsafe at any speed.

The ship that ran aground off the shores of Mauritius began spilling oil into the country’s famed blue lagoons this week, setting off an environmental crisis in a tiny island nation that relies on its waters for fishing, food and tourism.

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We Need A One-World Monitoring System to Watch and Destroy Viruses



Viewpoint by Jonathan Power*

LUND, Sweden (IDN) – Almost forgotten in the story about the Coronavirus is the story of AIDS. The drive to deal with it, the search to find medicine to cure it, and the self-discipline by homosexuals only began in

1981, when the disease was discovered, and its causes understood.

It was a stroke of luck that AIDS was discovered so quickly. Another five or ten years could have easily passed before it was detected. Then it would have rampaged through societies all over the world.

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Bronx Zoo Issues Apology for Displaying African Man In Cage



By Lisa Vives, Global Information Network

NEW YORK (IDN) – 'Black Lives Matter' can take credit for the scores of apologies from around the world for racist statues, discriminatory corporate policies and now from the Bronx Zoo for its cruel and racist display of an African man in a cage in 1906.

“In the name of equality, transparency, and accountability, we must confront our organization’s historic role in promoting racial injustice as we advance our mission to save wildlife and wild places,” officials with the [Wildlife Conservation Society \(WCS\)](#) said a [statement](#) released to the press on July 29. [JAPANESE](#)

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Trump's Withdrawal From WHO: A Cover-Up for His Abject Failure on COVID-19



Viewpoint by Prabir Purkayastha

The writer is the founding editor of [Newsclick.in](#), a digital media platform. He is an activist for science and the free software movement. This article was produced in partnership by [Newsclick](#) and [Globetrotter](#), a project of the [Independent Media Institute](#).

NEW DELHI (IDN) – Microbes do not recognize borders. We are all safe only when everybody is safe. In a pandemic, to attack the only body we have for global cooperation endangers everyone. That is why the U.S. withdrawal from the World Health Organization ([WHO](#)) is dangerous not only for the United States, but for all of the world.

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