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✓ UPCOMING EVENTS FOR MARCH 2019

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
1 March 2019	Zero Discrimination Day	Melaka, Malaysia
4 March 2019	International HPV Awareness Day Campaign	Melaka, Malaysia
8 March 2019	International Women's Day	Melaka, Malaysia
20 March 2019	International Day for Happiness	Melaka, Malaysia
21 March 2019	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	Melaka, Malaysia
22 March 2019	World Water Day	Melaka, Malaysia
25 - 31 March 2019	Global Money Week	Melaka, Malaysia



✓ BOTSWANA: KHAMA ENUMERATES YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES

Gaborone, 14 February 2019 - MINISTER of Youth Empowerment, Sports and Culture Development Mr Tshekedi Khama has encouraged youth leaders of different political parties to take advantage of government initiatives and policies targeting young people.

Addressing representatives of political party youth leagues at his office February 13, Minister Khama assured them of government's commitment to youth empowerment through skills development, job creation and sports.

He encouraged young people to take advantage of government sponsored youth initiatives and policies and also advised

them to be 'imaginative'. "Explore the manufacturing sector, which is where we can start. We have the skills, human resources and natural resources," he added.

Minister Khama said certain policies and regulations may be distracting young people from implementing their initiatives and assured them that government would consider being more flexible.

He said he was impressed to learn about young peoples' passion for agriculture and promised to talk to the Ministry of Agricultural Development and Food Security to harmonise the two ministries' youth development initiatives.

He said there were huge opportunities in the agricultural sector such as the irrigation component that could be utilised at dams in northern Botswana.

The minister said wildlife management areas provided another opportunity that young people could utilise.

"Let's see what natural resources can offer us in an affordable way. Let's come up with design concept for youth centre, how do we want that centre to look like, we want to give young people an opportunity to challenge anyone at any level, let's keep the ball rolling," he said.

Youth leaders had made an unanimous call for the creation of opportunities for

young people to channel their energies into.

They pleaded with the minister to consider revisiting some policies to ensure they were in synch with modern challenges.

They also requested government to assist them in doing research to enhance their proposals as a way of improving their chances of getting funding.

[Botswana Daily News]

✓ MALAWI YOUTHS PLACE HOPE ON TREE PLANTING INITIATIVE

Lilongwe, 23 February 2019 – MALAWI Youths from Likoma and Chizumulu Islands have embraced the Malawi Youth Forest Restoration Program (MYFRP) initiative saying it will change their lives, African Daily Voice has learnt.

The tree planting initiative is being implemented by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Energy and Mining and the National Forest Landscape Restoration Strategy (NFLRS).

This was revealed following a two day meetings called by authorities from the forestry department on 20th to 21st February at Likoma Community Hall.

According to Malawi24, a district forestry officer for

Nkhata-bay Alfred Manda who is the coordinator for the project said the MYFRP initiative which is being championed by the government of Malawi under the NFLRS is a response to widespread of forest degradation and deforestation in Malawi.

"The idea is to restore deforested and degraded landscapes through scaling up improved management of forests resources which will contribute to increased food security and resilience to climate change with an aid of youth involvement," he said.

"Youth clubs have been involved to spearhead this project as one way of empowering their economic lives in the country hence Likoma district deserves to

benefit from the initiative as many youths are economically challenged due to its detachment from the mainland by Lake Malawi.

The youth have been privileged to benefit from this project as they will earn some income which will be given to them in various youth clubs after successfully planting the trees and taking care of them in order to reach a utilizable age."

The Director of Public Works (DPW) from Likoma District Council, Vincent Holowanya expressed gratitude for the initiative saying the development agenda is of essence as it will foster the restoration of forests on the Islands at the same time empowering the

youths.

"Likoma was turned into a bare Island but with the coming in of this initiative, we are going to restore it and preserve its environment.

Malawi Youth Forest Restoration Program is a project initiative which is expected to run for five years in the country and five Youth clubs have been selected to benefit in the first phase of its implementation in Likoma and Chizumulu Islands where 50 youngsters will be picked to do the exercise and the routine will carry on in years to come.

[Nyasa Times]



✓ NAMIBIA: YOUTH ENTREPRENEUR URGES FELLOWS TO BE INNOVATIVE

Lüderitz, 13 February 2019

- ONE should always plan ahead, and not only when you want something specific to happen that time, this is a lesson, a young entrepreneur, Angelina Shetu Fillemon, 25, learnt last year from the challenges she met in her business.

"If I had the chance to go back to 2018, I would probably make changes to the lifelong commitments that I made, which turned out not to work for me.

It is sometimes regretful when you make commitments you haven't really researched and worked through," says she.

Fillemon did not fulfil all her 2018 resolutions, as most likely only 75% of her goals were achieved.

For 2019 her expectations are very high, as she has

started achieving her goals already.

"I have more of personal goals this year, as I need to muscle up so that I can fully maintain my business.

This year should be a year of restoration, whatever I couldn't achieve the previous year should happen most likely this year," she emphasises.

Born and bred in Windhoek, Fillemon is set on becoming a successful entrepreneur.

From a tender age, she has always wanted to become a businesswoman.

She owns the Ang-Fil Boutique, which caters for outfits for weddings, matric farewells and all other functions.

"People are frequently amazed by fashion, and would always want to look good.

We sell clothes to all, male or female, we cater for everybody," says Fillemon.

With a lot of competition in her line of business, Fillemon is not complaining, saying her boutique is doing extremely well and she is satisfied.

Apart from owning a boutique, she also sells hair, all types and textures, with her clientele ranging from the 20 to 40-year-olds. She also registers companies, currently only close corporations.

Thus one can say she is a 'jack of all trades' planning for a strong marketing team equipped with modern advertising skills and tools.

She encourages the youth to be innovative and to strive towards creating own businesses to reduce the unemployment in the country.

"It is not easy at all but an entrepreneur is someone who is willing to take risks.

Go after your dreams but also find a business coach or mentor who will ensure you reach greater heights," says Fillemon, adding that one needs to build oneself because no one else will do it for you.

She concludes by advising fellow youth to be choosy whom they associate with, quoting a wise man who once said: "associate with the great and you will be great" but motivating that there is "absolutely nothing without hard work and dedication".

[New Era]

✓ TANZANIA: TANZANIA'S GENDER NETWORKING PROJECT FOR WOMEN AND YOUTH

Dodoma, 22 February 2019

- TANZANIAN Gender Networking Programme (TGNP) recently established a local knowledge centre with several women and youth groups from Nyakonga targeted, the Daily News reported.

Set-up in 1993, the TGNP emerged through a collective process of critical reflection by leaders of key women's and gender organisations about the situation of women who are the most exploited and oppressed people within the exploited labouring classes.

Funded by the Crossroads International of Canada, the project is mainly aimed at women and youth economic empowerment meant to fight Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), fish farming, poultry keeping, horticultural farming and a conference hall.

TGNP Programme Officer, Deogratias Temba, revealed this when councillors and senior officials of Tarime District Council visited the project site recently.

"Our goal is to empower the groups of women and youth economically so that they can help to fight FGM and other Gender Based

Violence (GBV) acts", said Temba, adding that the projects were expected to be ready by next month.

The initiative is set to further include drilling of a borehole that will help to improve water services in the area.

The councillors have welcomed the projects, expressing confidence in the government on this initiative that is set to uplift the living standards of citizens and fight FGM.

The council's Social Services Committee Chairman, Mustapha Masian urged the projects'

beneficiaries to extend FGM education campaigns to other parts of the district.

[African Daily Voice]



✓ ZAMBIA: BRIGHT FUTURE FOR EDUCATED YOUTH

Lusaka, 20 February 2019 - EDUCATION gives young people the tools they need from cognitive and social skills to self-confidence to succeed throughout their lives.

For many African countries, including my home country of Zambia, burgeoning youth populations make delivering high-quality education to all particularly urgent. But success will be possible only with a sharp focus on girls and women.

Education plays a central role in determining girls' and women's capacity to claim economic, social, and political rights and status in society.

That is why it is so important that countries place the education and empowerment of girls and women at the top of their political agendas.

For Zambia, that decision is already paying off. Women now occupy powerful positions previously dominated by men, including Chief Justice, Head of the Drug Enforcement Commission, President of the Constitutional Court, Vice President, and Finance Minister.

Zambian President Edgar Lungu is experiencing his own "Blair's babes" moment (British Prime Minister Tony Blair was once photographed surrounded by 96 of the 101 female Labour MPs elected to the House of Commons in 1997) without the patronizing slogan.

Of course, promoting

gender equality is not just about getting women into the top levels of power.

Not everyone wants to or can be a CEO or political leader. Gender equality is fundamentally about choice: giving women the same breadth of opportunities that men enjoy.

Education gives girls and women the knowledge they need to make informed choices about the life they want to become a homemaker or scientific researcher, for example, or a small business owner or the head of a multinational corporation and the skills they need to achieve it.

To support this effort, Zambia's government has increased its investment in building technical secondary schools for girls. Moreover, to boost education quality, it has been recruiting teachers, with a focus on women. So far, 1,265 female teachers have been hired, compared to 744 male teachers.

The Zambian government has also strengthened its "re-entry policy," focused on helping young mothers return to school after childbirth. And it is buttressing its efforts with legislation, including the Gender Equity and Equality Act and an amendment to the Zambian Constitution Act.

A bill to curb sexual and gender-based violence is also in the pipeline.

Zambia's progress challenges outsiders' assumptions about what it means to be a woman in

Africa.

It should serve as a model for neighbouring countries seeking to bolster development by improving gender equality and as a source of hope for girls and women everywhere, giving them the confidence to dream big.

But our work is far from finished. We not only need more women to be playing decisive roles at all levels of society; we must also close educational-attainment gaps between, say, urban and rural girls.

Nevertheless, the future looks bright. For one thing, with the adoption of Sustainable Development Goal 4, United Nations member states have committed to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" by 2030, with a focus on eliminating gender disparities.

For another, high-profile figures have thrown their weight behind initiatives promoting education and, in particular, girls' education.

Notably, Meghan, Duchess of Sussex, is now a patron of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, the only accredited organization representing higher education (more than 500 universities) throughout more than 50 Commonwealth countries. Among the ACU's key areas of work is gender equity.

This is an obvious fit for the

duchess, a vocal feminist, who has used her platform to encourage the empowerment of young women, including through education.

For example, speaking to a group of students at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji last October, she declared, "Everyone should be afforded the opportunity to receive the education they want, but more importantly the education they have the right to receive." She then underscored the added importance of this objective for "women and girls in developing countries."

The duchess has previously worked with organizations like One World Vision and has been an ambassador for UN Women.

Perhaps most important, she has the star quality that captures young people's attention.

With her compelling personal story in which she found her own success, lived her values, and defied expectations she is the epitome of the modern woman, and an inspiration to girls and women throughout Africa.

The advocacy of figures like the Duchess of Sussex, together with a strong commitment from governments and NGOs, suggests that the future of our young girls is bright.

[Matangi Tonga Online]



✓ BAHAMAS: WORK PROGRAMME TO HELP BUILD SKILLS OF YOUTH

Nassau, 9 February 2019 - ADDRESSING the issue of unemployment among the nation's youth, Minister of the Public Service and National Insurance Brensil Rolle announced that the government introduced a restructured employment programme this week in which participants will receive soft skills training at the National Training Agency and additional training on the job in the public and private sectors.

Mr Rolle made the announcement at the launch of a re-structured National Job Creation and Skills Enhancement Programme

yesterday at the National Training Agency that will engage 1,036 trainees in New Providence, Grand Bahama, and the Family Islands. Partners in skills training from the private sector providing job placement for skills training include: SMG Construction and Millwork; Craftsman Plumbing; DLH Electric; Culmer's Mechanical Plumbing; ILF Bahamas; and Forbes Air-Condition and Refrigeration.

Over the next few days, trainees will learn soft skills facilitated by the Ministry of the Public Service &

National Insurance, and the National Training Agency, with priority to those wishing to become teacher's aides, patient care monitors and care of the elderly assistants.

Providing assistance in training and placement will be the Ministries of Education, Health, Social Services and Urban Development, and the Bahamas Technical and Vocational Institute (BTVI).

#Some of the trainees will be given the opportunity to attend BTVI and receive a weekly stipend. Mr Rolle explained: "Some of you

will be given the opportunity to attend BTVI and receive a weekly stipend.

The government will invest \$2,000 per student for 50 persons for a total investment of \$100,000.

"Development courses are designed with 20 weeks of classroom training followed by 30 weeks of paid internship in the fields of construction, plumbing, electrical installation, welding, cosmetology and fashion design, in addition to the business and IT components all offered by BTVI. Indeed some of you

✓ BELIZE: DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH SERVICES LAUNCHES "YOUTH MAINSTREAMING

Belmopan, 28 February 2019 - MANY young people in Belize have fallen victims to gun violence; others have joined gangs while others find themselves jobless.

There have been several initiatives designed to attract young people and draw them away from crime.

The latest initiative is "Belize Youth Mainstreaming Strategy Consultation brought out by the Department of Youth Services.

Aida Escobar is the department's Communications Officer; she noted that "mainstreaming" is a new concept.

Aida Escobar Communications Officer Department of Youth Services: "Basically it's an all inclusive form of getting

our young people's attention, getting them heard and getting new opportunities for them and when I say all inclusive I mean we are looking at political aspects, we are looking at social aspects because we know that our young people are very social and we are looking at financial aspects that can all come together to help them.

At the end of these three days we are going to be looking together at the year plan and we want to accomplish having youth mainstreaming become the norm in Belize.

We want to see how we can reach out to our young people who aren't getting equal opportunities and youth mainstreaming at the end gives us equity not only for our young people but for how our young people and our adults in Belize can work together to create a better Belize."

The Minister of Youth, Patrick Faber, was also on hand for the launch and welcomed the new initiative.

Hon. Patrick Faber Minister of Youth: "Any opportunity that we get to bring together the stakeholders in youth work is I think a very worthwhile one and on this occasion we want to thank the CARICOM Secretariat as well as the Commonwealth Secretariat for being present here in Belize to engage with our young people so that we can understand what are best practices in the region as well in the wider Commonwealth but more importantly for us to gather together our young people and the workers in youth work here so that they can chart a path forward to ensure that we have good quality youth work going on in this country."

The "Youth

Mainstreaming" is being funded by the Commonwealth Secretariat with Belize being the second country to launch this initiative.

[Breaking Belize]



✓ BERMUDA: ARGUS DONATION TO YOUTH COUNSELLING PROJECT

Hamilton, 19 February 2018

- THE Argus Group has donated \$15,000 to Family Centre in support of its Youth Development Zone counselling programme.

The YDZ is a community initiative launched in 2011 that offers services to the youth population living in North East Hamilton.

Family Centre provides YDZ with child and family counselling and, by end of last September, had worked with 77 families.

In addition to counselling, Family Centre helps to coordinate other services for YDZ children and their

families, including collaboration with Bermuda Police Service, Bermuda Economic Development Corporation, Bermuda Coalition, Workforce Development, Salvation Army, Mirrors, Team Street Safe and a local church representative. According to a press release, these efforts help to ensure that social services are more accessible to residents living in the North East Hamilton area.

Martha Dismont, executive director of Family Centre, stated: "I would like to thank Argus for being a loyal supporter of the

Family Centre year after year. For us to be accessible to the communities that we serve, we rely on generous donations from sponsors. Without them, we couldn't have the impact that we do."

Lauren Bell, executive vice-president of Life and Pensions at the Argus Group, and a member of the Argus Group's Charitable Donations Committee, stated: "Our core values include integrity, fairness, excellence, respect, professionalism and teamwork.

We believe that it is only fair for everyone to have access to professional services like the counselling that Family Centre provides.

"Their YDZ programme involves teamwork with partners throughout the community to ensure families who otherwise would not have access to important services can do so.

[Royal Gazette]

✓ GUYANA: YOUTH BRIDGE GAP BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND CLIMATE AWARENESS

Georgetown, 1 February 2019

- A group of youngsters in the Caribbean who promote environmental protection in the region is on a drive to empower other youth to address some of the big issues facing their generation.

National Coordinator of Caribbean Youth Environment Network (CYEN), Kiefer Jackson, says the organisation has been working to gather the youth perspective, build capacity at a grassroots level and fill the gaps that would have been missed by government initiatives or plans.

"The Ministry of Presidency's Office of Climate Change has recognised the work being done by this chapter of CYEN and has asked us to join with them this year in facilitating their climate change awareness in schools around Guyana," Jackson told IPS.

"We believe this partnership to be one step in the direction of ensuring that young people play an active role in climate action and ensure non-governmental organisation and government partnership for the betterment of our people."

Jackson said CYEN Guyana has been offering young people experiential learning opportunities and internships overseas which help to build the country's capacity for climate resilience.

As far as capacity is concerned, last year, CYEN was approved by YOUNGO, the Children and Youth constituency to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to undertake a Conference of Youth in the countries where CYEN operates. CYEN's website reflects a presence in Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and

Saint Lucia, among others.

Jackson added that the activity was used to assist in further building the current participatory environmental awareness programmes for young citizens of Guyana.

"We have also been engaging in a series of panel discussions, in an effort to inform and educate young people on the Sustainable Development Goals," Jackson said.

"The last talk would have been on Goal 13 (Climate Action). Based on the feedback of these activities, we have recognised that young people in Guyana, have robust and innovative ideas and we have been working on creating a platform for them to showcase their ideas or projects that guarantee the strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate change in Guyana."

In addition to facilitating larger scale education and awareness, Jackson believes

more attention should be given to ensuring adequate and appropriate infrastructure and housing that can withstand, as far as possible, the perils of climate change.

Guyana is plagued by poorly-maintained drainage and sea defence infrastructure.

The low coastal plain which houses the capital Georgetown, and where a large percentage of the population resides, is below sea level and at high risk of flooding.

"With the effects of climate change becoming even more present through intensifying natural disasters, more should be done to prepare this region for what seems to be inevitable," Jackson said.

In addition to being prone to flooding, Guyana is also affected by drought.



Joseph Harmon, minister of state in the ministry of the presidency of Guyana, says drought and flooding have proven to be a double-edged sword, especially for the country's farmers.

"Some people might find it difficult to appreciate that in a country like Guyana, a part of the tropical rainforest, that you can still have portions of this land which have drought," Harmon told IPS.

He said government has taken steps to address the problem of flooding with the implementation of projects by the Ministry of Agriculture.

"They are dealing with how to sustainably harvest water so that it can be utilised for farming and other domestic purposes," Harmon said.

"In the period of drought, we are now looking at the question of utilisation of wells."

In December 2017, the Guyana government and the government of Brazil signed a technical cooperation agreement for the implementation of a project to reduce the impact of drought in the Upper Takatu-Upper Essequibo, Region 9 of Guyana.

Harmon said the agreement was established to mitigate

the historical impact of droughts in the Upper Takutu-Upper Essequibo region and its implementation has so far resulted in the drilling of eight wells that are now providing year-round potable water to the indigenous peoples in the south Rupununi.

In its quest to bridge the gap between climate change and climate awareness, Jackson said CEYN is hampered by limited availability of financial resources, particularly for long term projects that could ensure sustainability.

Additionally, she said quite often, urgent need for

climate action is hampered by the effects not always being glaring to the public eye.

"So, the challenge is making climate seem real in the context of day to day life in the Caribbean," Jackson said.

"Hurricane season is once a year. Sea level rise is slow and almost unnoticeable. We try to identify indicators which can catch people's attention, and which are personal as well as immediate."

[Stabroek News]

✓ JAMAICA: MORE THAN 2,000 YOUTH TO BENEFIT UNDER ANIMATION PROJECT

Kingston, 28 February 2019 - MORE than 2,000 young persons are to benefit from training opportunities under the Youth Employment in Digital and Animation Industries Project in the upcoming fiscal year.

The Government has set aside \$908.2 million in the 2019/20 Estimates of Expenditure to undertake several training exercises, among other activities.

It is intended that 1,850 youth will benefit from instruction in the digitisation of Government records over a six-month period; and another 120 under the project's apprenticeship programme.

In addition, 270 persons are to benefit from training in accessing work online, and 670 from 2D and 3D training.

Further under the project, a Business Development

Programme for animators is to be completed where 20 studios will be trained in the business of animation; and nine community/youth centres are to be refurbished and equipped.

The funding will also provide for the hosting of the National Youth Innovation Awards and KingstOOOn Animation Festival; conduct stakeholder consultations on the National Science, Technology and Innovation Policy; and develop the Green Paper for the Animation Policy.

Up to December 2018 under the project, 30 unattached youths were trained in how to access global online work; 1,339 youth were trained in the digitisation of records, and 679 placed in internships; several training camps were undertaken with 37 trainers from secondary/tertiary/vocational institutions in 2D

and 3D animation; and scholarships were provided for two participants to attend a two-month animation summer programme in Canada.

The project also saw the procurement of 334 graphic tablets, which were distributed to seven training institutions, and the purchase of 558 2D animation (Toon Boom and TV Paint) software licences for six training institutions. Being implemented by the Office of the Prime Minister, the project seeks to build the capacity and enhance the skills of Jamaica's youth, to improve their employability in the digital and animation industries.

This is being done by providing animation training for individuals and capacity building for institutions delivering animation training; the development of an

Animation Policy for Jamaica; business development support for existing and potential businesses in the local animation industry; and training, apprenticeship and job opportunities in the digitisation of government records for unattached Jamaican youth aged 18 to 24.

In addition, the project is enhancing Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) through the national innovation and young innovators awards and the development of an STI Policy, and supporting institutional capacity-building for project management.

[Jamaica Gleaner]



✓ BANGLADESH: EMPLOYING THE YOUTH, KEY TO ACHIEVING SDGS

Dhaka, 25 February 2019 - AT a discussion on SDG implementation, speakers said it will be difficult for Bangladesh to achieve the set goals without creating jobs for the unemployed youth, and we agree with this assessment.

Growing unemployment among the young has become a major cause for concern in recent years, as according to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics' Labour Force Survey 2016-2017; youth unemployment was more than double the overall unemployment rate, recording a double-digit figure of 10.6 percent.

On top of that, what is especially concerning is that unemployment seems to be

increasing even more rapidly among the more educated segments of our population.

The same BBS survey revealed that unemployment among young individuals who had received secondary level education was as high as 29.8 percent, while it was 13.4 percent among those who had received tertiary level education.

At a time when we're trying to modernise our economy with the infusion of more advanced technologies, this trend runs contrary to what is expected.

One would think that young people, who find it easier to adopt new technologies, would be in high demand in

the job market.

However, the fact that it is not the case shows that there is something seriously wrong.

One explanation is the lack of quality education and training that is being given at our educational institutions.

And, as speakers suggested, given the increasingly competitive nature of the job market, young people have to be more versatile in the knowledge and skills they possess.

Our educational institutions must be made to function in accordance with that, and our young people need to be encouraged to develop more technical skills besides

receiving their general education.

We call on the government to take their advice and to bring about the necessary changes in our education sector.

Additionally, it should draw up a long-term strategy to ensure that the country can benefit maximally from the productive and creative potentials of our young people.

[The Daily Star]

✓ MALAYSIA: POLICY, PLAN LAUNCHED TO IMPROVE YOUTH WELFARE

Kota Kinabalu, 21 February 2019 - THE State Government has launched the Sabah Youth Policy and Sabah Youth Development Strategic Plan 2016-2020 to improve the welfare of youths and to enable them to become the catalyst for development.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Panglima Shafie Apdal said that the National Department of Statistics' report for 2015 had revealed that Sabah has over 1.87 million youths this makes them one of the largest communities in the state.

"The score that was obtained in the Sabah Youth Index (IBS) 2015 was 68.68.

This shows that the youths of Sabah are now in the moderate stage based on the 12 domains of the IBS free

of deviant behaviour, health, social relationships, safety, self-development, self-identity, self-potential, media use, education, economic welfare, leisure time and political socialisation.

"Therefore, the Sabah Youth Policy and Sabah Youth Development Strategic Plan was created to increase the welfare of the youths in Sabah and to foster youths to become the main leaders and catalyst in the development of Sabah.

"This instrument and mechanism are the main foundation in empowering youths as the leaders of our state and country for the today and the future,"

Shafie said in his speech read by Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Jaujan Sambakong at the launching ceremony at the Sabah State

Administrative Centre (PPNS) on Thursday.

Shafie expressed his hope that the said policy would be referred to as the main guideline in developing youths to be positive and active in all sorts of youth associations and for them to become the agents of change in their respective communities.

"I hope that this will not be merely rhetorical. It must be implemented and carried out using all the government and private agencies as well all the other youth agencies as the youths are the country's main asset," Shafie asserted.

He congratulated the Sabah Youth and Sports Ministry and its consultants for their success in producing the Sabah Youth Policy and Sabah Youth Development

Strategic Plan 2016-2020.

"Congratulations as Sabah is one of the leading states when it comes to youth development. This was proven by the publication of the IBS 2015 shortly following the Malaysia Youth Index (IBM)," said Shafie.

Shafie added that the youths must also be prepared to face the challenges of the advancement of technology such as the Internet of Things (IOT), Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data and so on.

He said that technology must be used accordingly with manners and knowledge to prevent it from being misused.

[The Borneo Post]



✓ NEPAL: GOVT WILL PROMOTE SELF-EMPLOYMENT SCHEMES FOR YOUTH

Kathmandu, 7 February 2019 - CHIEF Minister of Province No 3 Dormani Poudel said that the government will promote self-employment among youth and employ them in nation-building.

Inaugurating a two-day interaction program organized by the National

Youth Council at Hetauda from Thursday, CM Poudel said that those youths should be mobilized to gain prosperity.

Stressing the dignity for any work, Poudel said the tendency to be ashamed of taking up any jobs at home that are menial in nature and doing the same work abroad

should be abandoned.

Also speaking at the program, Minister for Economic Affairs and Planning Kailash Dhungel argued that the youths should be enabled to resolve any issues be it petty or paramount.

Youth entrepreneurs from

13 districts of Province No 3 were participating in the event, according to Council's Santosh Chaulagain.

[Nepali Sansar]

✓ PAKISTAN: PTI-LED PUNJAB GOVT. TO EMPOWER YOUTH

Islamabad, 23 February 2019 - PROVINCIAL Minister for Industries and Trade Mian Aslam Iqbal has said that youth is the future of Pakistan and nation has much expectation from them.

Punjab government will empower the youth imparting them with latest technology and we will change the destiny of nation by empowering youth.

Soft Loan Program (SLP) for skilled is ready and will be launched next month.

He expressed these views while addressing the prize distribution ceremonies of private schools here today. Provincial Minister also distributed certificates and cash prizes among the position holders. Provincial Minister said that youth has to play important role for the progress of the country

and to materialize the dreams of their parents.

He said that education is the only way to move forward and the nation those gave importance to educate made tremendous progress.

Punjab government has made top priority of education and steps are being taken for the promotion of quality education.

He said many programs have been prepared for the empowerment of youth. Soft loan program for the skilled youth will be launched next month and women will be given special incentives in this program.

[Pakistan Observer]

✓ PHILIPPINES: GRASSROOTS SPORTS PROGRAM TO SHIELD YOUTH FROM ILLEGAL

Iloilo City, 25 February 2019 - LOCAL government officials on Sunday vowed to support grassroots sports programs in line with President Rodrigo Duterte's goal to shield the youth from illegal drugs.

"The city government supports the program of the President that through sports we stop illegal drugs in this part of the country," Iloilo City Mayor Jose Espinosa III said in his welcome message during the opening of the Batang Pinoy Visayas leg at the Iloilo Sports Complex here.

"They (youth) are the future leaders of our community that we should protect and preserve," he added as he welcomed 2,849 athletes from 71 local government units (LGUs).

Espinosa encouraged

everyone to ensure that the Philippines "will be in good hands" by seeing to it that the future generations are free from influence of illegal drugs.

He thanked former Special Assistant to the President (SAP) Christopher Lawrence "Bong" Go for helping him to get an appointment with the President for his program "Utos ni President, Utos ni Mayor: No to Corruption, No to Criminality, No to illegal drugs". Go together with former Philippine National Police Director-General Ronald dela Rosa graced the opening ceremonies of the week-long sport event.

In a media interview, Go said the Batang Pinoy is a program of the government to protect children from the drug menace.

"This will be one of our priorities, sports development, especially for the grassroots," Go said.

He said athletes should get the much-needed support and big incentives.

"They should be supported from the start up to their training, especially those with potentials," he said.

Go, a senatorial aspirant like dela Rosa, pointed out that the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) should be given additional budget. Batang Pinoy is the PSC's grassroots sports development program for children 15 years old and below with national winners bound to get opportunity to be part of the national pool.

Iloilo Governor Arthur Defensor Sr., for his part, also expressed strong

support of the provincial government to the PSC's grassroots program.

Defensor is hoping the country's first ever Olympic gold medalist will come from Batang Pinoy.

"The Philippines since it joined the Olympic Games has not won a gold medal. Maybe through the Batang Pinoy, they can discover athletes who can compete and win the coveted gold medal in the Olympics" he said.

[Philippine Star]



✓ AZERBAIJAN: EXPANDS YOUTH EMPLOYMENT IN AGRICULTURE

Baku, 8 February 2019 - UNTIL today, about 1,000 young people have turned to join the project to increase agricultural employment (AMAL), the head of the State Service for the Management of Agricultural Projects and Credits under the Azerbaijani Ministry of Agriculture, Mirza Aliyev, told journalists on Friday, Trend reports.

He noted that this project is the first of its kind. Its goal is to stimulate growth of employment in the regions in the field of agriculture.

"Thus, interest in this sphere will increase, innovations will be introduced and the opportunities of people involved in the sphere of agriculture will enhance," he said.

Aliyev added that today there are still proposals for participation in the project. The first 300 people who successfully passed the first

stages will have the opportunity to participate in trainings.

"We will provide financial assistance to farmers whose business ideas will be more attractive," Aliyev said, adding that the financial assistance provided will be an average of 2,000 manats.

One of the main goals of the AMAL project ("Agrarian Employment Enhancement Project") is to help implement business ideas for young people living in the regions of Azerbaijan and willing to work in agriculture.

Azerbaijan within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals carries out reforms in leading sectors of the economy, and especially in the field of agriculture.

Thanks to the well-thought policy of the country's leadership, the country has achieved sustainable

development, and this trend is evident in the small and medium-sized businesses, and in the implementation of infrastructure projects.

All this contributed to the improvement of living standards and welfare of population, as well as to reducing unemployment and increasing employment

Youth employment remains a priority of state policy, and intensive work is being done in this direction, in particular by the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection.

Azerbaijan pays special attention to the implementation of agrarian reforms and the development of agriculture, which is one of the main areas of the non-oil sector. Agriculture is an important part of the country's economy, therefore it is considered in the context of overall development.

It is no coincidence that the dynamic development of the economy of Azerbaijan in recent years, the expansion of our financial opportunities have opened up new opportunities for agriculture.

In a recent Doing Business 2019 World Bank report, Azerbaijan entered the list of 10 reformer countries and was declared the country that had the most reforms.

In the new report, Azerbaijan rose by 32 steps and ranked 25th among 190 countries, and also became a leader among the CIS countries.

The agrarian policy pursued in Azerbaijan develops on the rails of a market economy.

[AzerNews]

✓ BELGIUM: YOUTH FOR CLIMATE LAUNCHES PLATFORM TO GATHER CITIZEN IDEAS

City of Brussels, 1 February 2019 - THE movement at the root of the so-called pro-climate "school strikes", Youth for Climate, is launching an online platform, intended for compiling citizen ideas to limit global warming.

The solutions proposed will be submitted to the authorities, "the idleness" of which youngsters are denouncing every week in the streets.

Flowing from the demonstration this Thursday, the fourth organised in Brussels by Youth For Climate, the

collective has unveiled its new platform. "We will continue our demonstrations until we are sure that we have been heard.

However, we also wish to give people who are not (yet) engaging in climate initiatives, the opportunity to make their voice heard," indicates the collective.

"It is not simply youngsters' ideas any longer, indeed everyone can post suggestions there," states the French-speaking coordinator, Adélaïde Charlier.

The deadline for the submission of ideas is fixed

as 31 March 2019.

These will be analysed by a committee which will assess their given feasibility.

Internet surfers will then be able to vote for those which, in their view, must be the priorities for the next parliament.

The most successful ideas will be submitted to the authorities. "We hope that politicians will be inspired by some of these ideas," adds Dries Cornelissens, of Youth for Climate.

On Thursday, some 12,500 youngsters, once again,

demonstrated in the streets of the capital demanding significant political measures to fight climate change.

Although less numerous than last week, youngsters nevertheless continued to demonstrate. "The movement is not crumbling as such but it is dispersing," states Adélaïde Charlier.

For example in Liège, more than 15,000 students also walked through the streets.

[The Brussels Times]



✓ BULGARIA: 70% OF YOUNG PEOPLE THINK THEIR MEANS OF LIVING ARE SUFFICIENT

Sofia, 20 February 2019 - MORE than 70 per cent of young people think that their means of living are sufficient, young people who are in a severe social situation are mainly from ethnic minorities.

This finds the annual youth report for 2017, submitted by the Council of Ministers and adopted by the National Assembly.

In 2017, the number and relative share of school drop-outs from the total number of pupils dropped from 2.9 per cent in 2016 (or 21,170) to 2.7 per cent (or 20,092), thus interrupting the trend of a steady increase in this indicator over the last four years, is stated in the document.

It states that a decision by

the Council of Ministers of July 5, 2017 established a mechanism for joint work of the institutions for enrollment and retention in the educational system of children and students at compulsory pre-school and school age.

Graduates of secondary education who continue to study in Bulgaria are 51 per cent and 14 per cent are leaving for education abroad.

Unemployment among young people has dropped by almost 16 per cent. Over 50 percent of working young people declares that they have found jobs easier than expected.

In Bulgaria, young people with primary and secondary education tend to be more

likely to go abroad.

The policy of the Ministry of Youth and Sports is aimed at encouraging students to pursue systematic sport activities, creating habits for healthy motor activity and opportunities for sporting events.

In pursuance of this policy, the ministry administers annually the programs "Sports for children at risk" and "Development of the sport of students".

Sixty-three per cent of rural residents and 59 per cent in small settlements do not think they can get a good education there, according to a government report for 2016. It was also passed by parliament.

In the capital, 79 percent are of the opinion that they can get a good education, and only 11 percent that they cannot.

A positive trend was also in 2016 to reduce youth unemployment. As a negative, it is reported that 54 percent do not work in their specialty, and only 30 percent have been implemented in line with their education.

In 2016, 36 youth information and counselling centers were funded on the territory of 28 of the major cities and 39 youth initiatives related to volunteering.

[Novinite.com]

✓ GERMANY: YOUTH BETWEEN MARGINALIZATION AND CONTRIBUTION

Berlin, 18 February 2019 - THE Don Bosco Forum in Bonn provided a platform for more than 400 guests to discuss social marginalization of youngsters.

"It is our goal as Don Bosco to get youngsters out of isolation" emphasized the managing directors of Don Bosco Mondo (Christian Osterhaus) and of Don Bosco Mission Bonn (Nelson Penedo).

Hundreds of young and long-term members of Don Bosco institutions worldwide, interested parties and representatives from politics and society attended the meeting at the University of Bonn. At the end of the Don Bosco Forum the

participants of the prior scheduled International Youth Conference presented the results on the topic "Marginalization". 40 teenagers from Europe and the Middle East were searching for ways out of radicalization.

They presented the Forum with a video pleading for more tolerance and peace. In addition, their dancing performance served as an impressive testimonial of the meaning of marginalization.

The teenagers experienced the encounter with participants from diverse countries as enrichment.

One female attendee concluded: "the more we know about each other, the more tolerant we become."

Father Thomas Koshy

(SDB), Director of the Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk (YAR) with headquarters in New Delhi, is aware of the meaning of marginalization of the young.

Roughly ten million children live in the streets in his home country India.

For decades he has been promoting the welfare of street children.

Education is an important key to success.

The caste system constitutes a major problem in India demanding a strict separation of social classes.

Accordingly, the so-called "untouchables" are excluded from society being forced into doing menial work such as toilet cleaning and trash disposal. Fr

Koshy laments a culture of exclusion preventing progress.

There are also many youngsters in Germany who are marginalized encountering rejection.

"There is one form of emotional marginalization which leaves young people heavily scarred", Simon Härting (SDB) stated, the educational director of the Don Bosco Youth Aid Center in Sannerz close by Fulda.



“We had one boy with us who was rejected by his parents, grandparents, by his entire family. Nobody wanted to be in contact with him.

As a protective measure, he built armor, also physically.

We did not manage to establish a relationship with him for a year, this being the most important factor we must build up a relationship with the youngster.”

“Sometimes we reach our physical limits when the

youngsters become aggressive or offensive which can hit us also physically. It is important to be well protected and to keep the focus on what is doable and what not. Regardless, Don Bosco always facilitates a

fresh start over.

We adhere by our familiar quotation, “In case of a doubt, we grant a tenth chance.”

[The Guardian]



ROMANIA: BANCPOST SENDS YOUNG ROMANIAN IT SPECIALISTS

Bucharest, 6 of February 2019 - BANCPOST sends the most talented IT specialists from Romania to the competition “Beyond Hackathon” dedicated to young IT specialists (software developer, designer, marketer, business developer), an event to be held between 17-19 March 2017 in Athens.

The Bank supports thus the IT industry, offering young talents real chances to national and international recognition.

The competition aims to promote innovative ideas and projects which can make a difference in the field of financial services and products and can thus influence the future of banking.

Beyond Hackathon is now at its second edition and is organised by Eurobank Group in a partnership with Foundation M.P. and The Cube Workspace M.I.K.E. and with Eurobank Group subsidiaries in the region Bancpost SA (Romania), Eurobank Bulgaria AD and Eurobank Cyprus Ltd.

This year's novelty is that start-ups may also participate in the competition - companies in this field with maximum 5 years' experience.

During three days IT specialists - programmers, software developers, designers and business developers - will participate in workshops held by international leaders in FinTech and will have the opportunity to interact with experts in various fields (business, design, technology and communications).

The final objective is to generate innovative ideas which can materialise in future banking products and services.

First 10 Romanian specialists registered in the competition will benefit from free participation (within the limit of 500 Euro/participant), according to terms and conditions of the campaign „Bancpost sends you to Beyond Hackathon”.

In the end participants will be able to present their ideas before a jury, and the first three projects will be granted money awards (€5,000, €3,000 and €2,000 respectively), as well as the opportunity to implement the projects with Eurobank support.

[The Daily Star]

NEWS



✓ AUSTRALIA: AUSTRALIA REALLY NEEDS A MINISTER FOR YOUTH, MPS SAY

Canberra, 27 February 2019
- THE federal government is under pressure to revive the scrapped cabinet position of Minister for Youth, as MPs speak out against a "war on young people" under the current Coalition government.

Nick Xenophon Team MP Rebekha Sharkie and Senator Skye Kakoschke-Moore, and independent MP Cath McGowan, have teamed up to present motions in both

houses of parliament this week calling on Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull to name a specific minister in charge of youth affairs. The position was junked by former PM Tony Abbott in 2013, and while Labor also dropped the role from their shadow ministry, they brought it back briefly between October 2015 and July 2016, naming Senator Sam Dastyari the Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for School Education and Youth.

However, Labor have sidelined the youth portfolio since then. On the same day a Brotherhood of St Laurence analysis reported youth underemployment was at its highest levels on record at 18 percent, and youth unemployment was also far above the national average at 13.5 percent, the trio of parliamentarians said it was necessary for someone in government to be advocating for Australia's young people. "Children and young people

feel like they're being spoken at, not spoken with by the federal government.

As policy makers, we have a responsibility to ensure any proposals that are put through from a policy perspective take into account what those policies mean for young people," Kakoschke-Moore said at a press conference on Monday.

[Huffington Post Australia]

✓ FIJI: FIJI AUTHORITIES URGE YOUTHS TO TAKE UP FARMING

Fiji, 15 February 2019 - AGING farmers in Fiji's rural communities involved in the agriculture sector continues to be a worrying trend for the Fijian government which wants more youth involvement in this sector.

Agriculture Minister Mahendra Reddy said Thursday the Ministry of Agriculture's Farm 2016 Household survey revealed that 22 percent of farmers in Fiji are between the ages of 19 and 30 while 35 percent of the farmers are over 50

years of age. Reddy said it was vital for Fijians to understand that farming should be treated like a business and the government would continue to encourage farming through support programs.

"We want young people, youths to see agriculture as a business rather than see agriculture as something that is relegated in the periphery.

The Ministry of Agriculture will continue to provide the

required leverage to farmers via various farm support programs to provide services to existing farmers and to attract young farmers as well." Reddy said the ministry plans to attract more young farmers through different initiatives. Agriculture is the mainstay of Fiji's economy, and contributes around 28 percent to total employment in the formal sector.

This sector which was once a major stronghold of Fiji's economy and is the third

largest now, contributing 451 million Fijian dollars (211 million U.S. dollars) or 9 percent annually to the nation's GDP.

Sugarcane which used to dominate the sector now only contributes 0.9 percent and has been surpassed by other crops, horticulture, and livestock production and subsistence sector according to Investment Fiji.

[Fiji Times]

✓ GUAM: YOUTH CLUB LAUNCHED IN DEDENO

Hagåtña, 13 February 2019 - A youth club in Dededo was officially launched on Friday night after doing community work from last year.

Youth Club President said the idea of the youth club came about as a result of trying to develop youths in their neighbourhood.

"We are really happy about

becoming an organization and our main goals this year is to do more community work in this area.

He said being able to keep kids away from crime and be swayed by peer pressure in the notorious Hagatna suburb was the ultimate goal for the formation of the club.

Developing the skills and talents of their members is

also a goal. They would be doing visitation to senior citizens around their area as well.

The Youth club has about 20 members made up of boy's with age range from 8 -17.

The club will be touring to Australia later this year.

They are now officially registered under the

Ministry of Youth and Sports.

The club did a clean-up campaign on Saturday, in February which was published by the Guam Sun the next day.

[Pacific Daily News]



✓ NEW ZEALAND: \$65K FOR 640 YOUTH DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Wellington, 30 February 2019 - SEVEN youth sector organisations will share a total of \$65,000 funding to help them provide new youth development opportunities for around 640 young people, Youth Minister Nikki Kaye announced today.

“This funding is about supporting more leadership, volunteering and mentoring opportunities for young people across New Zealand,” says Ms Kaye.

“The opportunities cover a broad spectrum, from supporting young people to reduce online bullying and move away from at-risk behavior, to enabling them to explore potential career paths and support young disabled people and those living with cancer.

“It’s great to be able to support the many organisations out there doing fantastic work for our young people, and enabling them to provide hundreds more opportunities at the same time.

“There are new opportunities created from Northland to Otago, and these will enable more young people to develop their own skills and leadership and also contribute to other young people and their communities.”

The organisations and initiatives benefitting from this funding are: Sticks ‘n Stones - \$12,000 to support 150 young people in Otago to become ambassadors for ‘responsible digital citizenship’, by running community events and activities for other young people to address the issue of online bullying.

Central Otago REAP - \$12,000 to support 40 rural young people from Central Otago to receive one-on-one and group mentoring, to help them reduce at-risk behaviours by building positive relationships and skills such as resilience and decision-making.

Phab - \$10,000 to support 100 young disabled

people from Auckland to become leaders who act as advocates and supporters for other young people living with a disability.

CCS Disability Action \$7,000 to support 40 young disabled people from Northland to be part of a youth steering group and contribute to the goal of ensuring that those living with a disability are involved in decision-making and ‘in the driver’s seat’ of their lives.

Tauranga Youth Development Team \$10,000 to support 100 Bay of Plenty young people to be part of a project developing a series of local youth events, including workshops, team building and social events. Canteen - \$7000 to support 140 young Aucklanders to become leaders and mentors supporting young people living with cancer.

Taranaki Futures - \$7000 to enable 70 young people living in the Taranaki region to participate in the

Accelerator programme, which partners young people with business mentors and provides actual workplace experience to help formulate potential career paths.

The new opportunities announced today are part of a focus on increasing youth development opportunities from 50,000 to 70,000 annually, and increasing the funds targeting disadvantaged youth from 18 to 30 per cent.

“A leadership, mentoring or volunteering opportunity can turn young people around and open up new directions and possibilities.

This is about giving more young people the chance to develop their skills and build a path to a successful future,” says Ms Kaye.

[Scoop.co.nz]

✓ PAPUA GUINEA: LITERACY VITAL FOR COUNTRY’S DEVELOPMENT

Port Moresby, 10 February 2019 - LITERACY is a word that has multiple meanings behind it. Every individual will have their own definition of what literacy is and how it affects societies today.

Generally, literacy can mean anything that is recognised, read or even just being understood by an individual.

Without literacy the world would fall apart and everyday tasks would be impossible to be completed because it is the ultimate superpower that should be attainable by everyone but is not used to its full potential.

One of the most influential parts of literacy is the lives of individuals in the literacy events that occur in everyday situations such as

doing shopping, chatting with friends, going out for a ride or party, literacy will always be prompt.

Literacy can also bring the world to its knees or to another level with the help from the communication around the world because it contains power that can build or destroy a person. Without literacy, a country’s society can be razed through the struggles

and hardships that lead to high crimes whereas with literacy, it can make a country soar with technology and a thriving economy.



For a developing country like Papua New Guinea, illiteracy is one of the most daunting challenges and main drivers of tribal fights, crimes, violence against women, drugging and home brew activities which have lured the lives of many unemployed youths, abandoning education as the fundamental source to a better life.

According to a literacy report in 2015, youth literacy is low at approximately 63 per cent and covers the population between the ages of 15-24 years.

An estimated 60 – 70 per cent of our population consists of youths and only 20-30 per cent has acquired decent education.

The good news is that one of the objectives of the national governments in the Millennium Development Goal is to achieve 70 per cent literacy rate by the year 2025 including addressing adult literacy.

If the people are illiterate, they will never know how to look after themselves and live a healthy lifestyle. They will lack respect and common understanding.

For example, your ethnic background can also be a major contribution to the amount of acceptance and your views on the society.

Having the ability to be well educated gives you the advantage on how to change the views of others and the ethnic group in which you belong to.

Literacy teaches you on how to be independent,

confident and being true to yourself. It also broadens one's knowledge to differentiate right from wrong.

Although there are occasions where literacy is not as important as it seems, being well educated is a crucial thing in order to make you stand out and be able to navigate through your community because in a world like this, it is what you need in order to be successful.

[Post-Courier]

NEWS

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