

'No time to lose' as humanitarian catastrophe looms in Somalia – UN agencies

17 February 2017 – Amid worsening of an already devastating drought in Somalia, United Nations agencies have underlined that only a massive and immediate scale-up of humanitarian assistance can help the country avoid falling into another catastrophe.

According to the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) some 6.2 million people – almost half the country's population – are either severely food insecure or in need of livelihood support.

"Huge numbers of Somalis have come to the end of all their possible resources and are living hand-to-mouth," said Steven Lauwerier, the UNICEF Somalia Representative, underlining that there is only a small window of opportunity to arrest the looming humanitarian crisis and save lives.

The situation of children is particularly concerning: close to one million children are estimated to be malnourished this year, including 185,000 severely malnourished and in need of urgent lifesaving support. There are also grave fears that this number could increase to 270,000 over the coming months.

The ongoing drought and other shocks have left communities – that have already been battered by decades of conflict – with little to no resources to fall back on, the two UN agencies said in a joint news release.

Whole villages have lost their crops or seen their livestock die. The prices of water and locally produced food have risen dramatically, and thousands of people are on the move in search of food and water.

RELATED: Drought drives food price spike in East Africa, UN warns

The drought has also led to an increase in waterborne diseases with more than 4,000 cases of Acute Watery Diarrhoea/Cholera this year.

"Humanitarian assistance has saved lives in the drought-affected north over the past year, but as the crisis spreads we have no time to lose," added WFP Country Director Laurent Bukera, noting that together with its partners, the UN agency is "moving as quickly as possible" to reach people with lifesaving support.

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The two agencies further noted that humanitarian access remains conqueringly limited in some drought-affected areas of the south, but that WFP and UNICEF are reinforcing their joint efforts to scale up the response in areas that are accessible, where millions of lives are at risk.

The agencies have been responding together to the drought by providing food and water vouchers to hundreds of thousands across the most affected areas of Somalia as well as nutrition assistance.

As additional resources are mobilised, the joint response will continue to expand in the most vulnerable regions.

However, with growing needs, more funds are needed. UNICEF and WFP together still require more than \$450 million to be able to provide urgent assistance required in the coming months.

[News story: When cities meet cities-UK Smart Cities Showcase in Taiwan](#)

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DIT Taiwan recruited a UK Smart Cities Trade Mission to exhibit at the Smart City Summit & Expo from 21 to 24 February 2017

The UK economy has already made the transition from an industrial economy to a post-industrial economy. Now it's leading the way in the transition from a post-industrial economy to a knowledge-based economy. UK companies are world leaders in Smart City products and services, and are keen to export these skills abroad to assist the rest of the world in improving their cities.

UK expertise in the Smart Cities sector includes:

- Urban design, planning and architecture
- Infrastructure, engineering and construction
- Data, software and analytics
- Project management, financing and real estate
- Public engagement and service design innovation

To demonstrate UK's smart city capabilities, DIT Taiwan recruited a UK Smart Cities Trade Mission to exhibit at the Smart City Summit & Expo from 21 to 24 February 2017

The trade delegation consists of 10 companies and two cities- Royal Borough of Greenwich and Peterborough with highlights on their smart city excellence.

- For delegates' information, please see: "UK Smart Cities Mission Brochure"[UK Smart Cities Mission Brochure](#) (PDF, 3.56MB, 18 pages)
- Location: UK Pavilion: J432
- Useful link: 2017 Smart City Summit & Expo: http://smartcity.org.tw/index_en.php
- Useful link: UK-Taiwan Smart City Forum: http://smartcity.org.tw/2017forum_detail.php?id=152

[Museum, park to be constructed on ruins of ancient capital](#)



The the archaeological site of the capital of the Xia Dynasty (c. 21st century-16th century BC) in Erlitou in Henan Province in central China. [lyrb.com]

A museum and a park will be built on the ruins of the capital of the Xia Dynasty (c. 21st century-16th century BC), China's earliest dynasty, local cultural heritage authorities said on Thursday.

"Construction of the project will start in the first half of the year near the village of Erlitou in the city of Luoyang where more than 40,000 square meters of the ruins have been excavated since 1959," said Yu Jie, head of the city's cultural heritage bureau.

Citing a plan passed by the provincial government, Yu said that the museum, with a planned building area of 30,000 square meters, will showcase about 40,000 items, such as excavated antiques, text and graphic documents related to the early dynasties, including the Xia and Shang (c. 16th century-11th century BC).

The most famous piece unearthed there is a 70-centimeter-long dragon formed from more than 2,000 pieces of turquoise. Chinese archaeologists dubbed the artifact the "Dragon of China", saying it was the earliest evidence of Chinese infatuation with dragons.

A cultural ruins park covering 41 hectares will also be built. It will protect and display the sites of the ancient city walls, palace and roads, as well as handicraft workshops of bronze casting and turquoise, and the sacrifice venue of the ruins.

"The park will also simulate scenes from more than 3,000 years ago by landscaping and building workshops based on the discoveries," Yu said.

[China open, active in technology cooperation](#)

China will continue to be open and active in its technological cooperation on the world stage, the Ministry of Science and Technology said on Thursday.

In June, Beijing will host the Eighth Clean Energy Ministerial, followed by the Fifth BRICS Science and Innovation Ministerial in July, said Ye Dongbai, the ministry's director of international cooperation.

In addition, dialogue on innovation and technology will be held with Russia, Germany, France, Italy, Israel and other countries this year to facilitate practical cooperation, Ye said.

"International cooperation in science and technology can increase China's global influence, promote breakthroughs in scientific and industrial bottlenecks, and create a friendly environment to facilitate economic reform," he said.

Beijing has established cooperative ties in science and technology with 158 countries and regions, inking 111 intergovernmental agreements, he added.

It has also joined more than 200 intergovernmental organizations dedicated to boosting such cooperation, as well as sending 146 technology diplomats to 71 Chinese embassies and consulates abroad.

China has become a major global research and development player, accounting for 20.4 percent of the world's total R&D spending last year, according to the Industrial Research Institute, a US nonprofit think tank for industrial management and innovation.

Last year, the country broke into the world's top-25 innovative economies, becoming the first middle-income country to do so, according to a report by the United Nation's World Intellectual Property Organization, INSEAD Business School and Cornell University.

"China should actively propose new ideas, new initiatives and new plans on the world stage, so that we can play a leading role in facilitating cooperation in global production and equipment manufacturing," Ye said.

[**Zoo denies viral video reveals abused tiger**](#)



Videos showing a keeper sitting on a tiger and pulling his tail at a private zoo in Guizhou province has gone viral. [Photo: cctv.com]

A private zoo on Thursday dismissed allegations that a tiger shown in a video that went viral was abused.

Videos showing a keeper pulling a tiger's tail and sitting on him at an animal park in Xiuwen county, about 30 kilometers from the provincial capital of Guiyang, Guizhou province, have been reposted by media outlets and individuals on Sina Weibo and WeChat.

One of the videos starts with a keeper pulling a tiger's tail. The keeper then walks behind the animal several times around a small artificial hill. The keeper was also shown sitting on the tiger's back and pulling its ears.

A red line on the body of one tiger later aroused suspicion that the tiger was injured by the keeper. Some netizens also said they saw no teeth in the tiger's mouth.

"The video is clipped from a live-streaming video done three months ago. They were in a training session," said Wang Shulin, manager of the zoo. "It didn't receive much attention when the live streaming was being done. I don't know why it suddenly went viral."

The zoo, which was established in 2006, has 30 tigers.

Yao Shiming, the keeper seen in the video, has been with the 2-year-old tiger since it was a cub and "it's common that they play in that way", Wang said, adding that they "didn't interfere with the live streaming" done by employees.

"I spent at least one hour and, at most, four hours a day with the tiger for more than two years. It sometimes bites me for fun, but never injures me," Yao said. "It just considers me a tiger and we have a very good relationship.

"I asked my colleague to take the video and I only wanted to share that in my WeChat. Others are afraid of the animal, but I can play with it."

Ren Yuewu, director of Xiuwen's ecological civilization department, said an investigation by police found no evidence that the keeper had abused the animal.

"The red line on the tiger was not blood, but red paint, and there is no problem with the tiger's teeth," Ren said.

However, supervision of the zoo will be strengthened, while keepers' behavior will be regulated to avoid future misunderstandings, he added.