



Sunday, July 7, 2019

young nation



PHOTO| DIANA MUTHEU
From left: 17-year-old Ziyaan Virji, project co-ordinator of Tunaweza CBO Charity Chahasi and Ziyaan's mother holding some of the reusable sanitary towels.

Teenager's project offers sanitary towels to the poor

BY DIANA MUTHEU
dmutheu@ke.nationmedia.com

In a small building at Ziwa la Ng'ombe, Mombasa, a group of young girls and boys are working alongside women with disabilities to sew reusable sanitary towels. They are led by 17-year-old Ziyaan Virji.

The group of women is famously known as Tunaweza Women with Disability (TWD). Tunaweza which means, "we can" is a com-

munity-based organisation (CBO) formed in 2000. Most of its members are from Kisauni and Nyali areas of the county.

Ziyaan, an 11th Grade student from Aga Khan Academy, Mombasa is a young man with a passion to provide sanitary towels to girls who cannot easily access the product through a programme known as Affordable and Accessible Sanitation for Women (AASW).

Turn to page 3 >>

Page 4
Story time...



Page 2
Birthdays



Page 3
Origin of words



Page 4
Did you know





Inspired by a video clip, Ziyaan's group is changing lives of girls

From page 1 >>

Recently, he was feted at his school at an event dubbed "Let's have a bloody good time" which was graced by vocalists and singe, Anto Neosoul and other speakers. The main topic was menstrual hygiene. His story dates back to 2017, after he watched a documentary named "India's Menstruation Man" aired by an international media outlet, which he bumped into while scrolling through his Facebook feed.

"I was inspired to swing into action. Since I had little knowledge about the reproductive cycle, I had a conversation with my mother. Coincidentally, I found out that when she was young, she also did not have proper access to sanitary pads. Sadly, because of not having access and all the social stigma and taboo, many girls miss school during their menstrual days and are trapped in the vicious poverty cycle that is passed on from generation to generation. That is what am trying to change," Ziyaan said. According to the World Bank, in 2018, 500 million girls around the world did not have access to sanitary pads so they converted old rags, clothes, leaves, tissues and blankets during that time of the month.

In many areas, some of these girls lock themselves up in a room and miss school and other activities when they are on their periods. Ziyaan said AASW is



PHOTO | DIANA MUTHEU

The reusable sanitary towels made by 17-year-old Ziyaan Virji and a group of women known as Tunaweza Women with Disability (TWD).

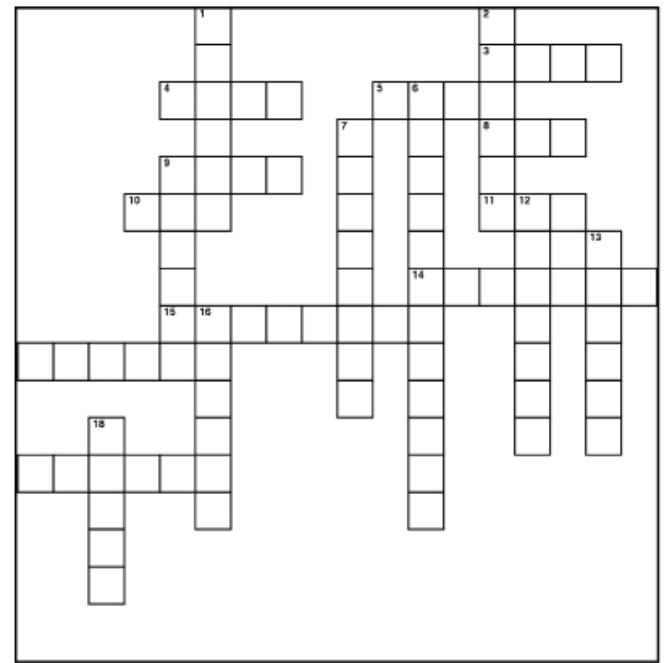
an initiative that aims at giving girls access to menstrual hygiene globally and breaking the taboo and stigmatisation that surrounds menstruation.

"In collaboration with Tunaweza Women with Disabilities, we produce and distribute sanitary pads that are reusable, cost-effective, environmental friendly and embarrassment-free. These packages last for up to three years and are 100 per cent biodegradable and differ from the normal pads," Ziyaan said, adding that the sanitary towels cost between Sh300 to Sh500. The project also aims to create job opportunities while helping girls access sanitary pads. He has so far worked with a team

from Kenya, Tanzania, Pakistan, India, Nigeria and United Arab Emirates (UAE) and more than 300 girls have benefited from the pads. Ziyaan has used several social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram where he hosts various campaigns to create awareness about his initiative and educate the society about the importance of menstrual hygiene. So far, he has engaged over 25,000 people in the programme.

"We aim to reach out to 51,000 girls in one year, get registered as a non-profit, continue breaking the social stigma and taboo, spread awareness and educate people about menstruation," said Ziyaan.

Crossword



ACROSS:

3. One who inherits.
4. Joint in the middle of the leg.
5. Opening in a wall or fence for a passageway.
8. Organ of hearing.
9. Bubble up; reach the temperature where a liquid changes to gas.
10. Exclamation of surprise and satisfaction or discovery.
11. A Snake Fish.
14. Second word of two continents.
15. Language specialist.
17. Made of a very precious metal.
19. Not sweet.

DOWN:

1. Opening in a wall to let in light and air.
2. Macaroni and _____.
6. This may afflict a low joint in the long run.
7. Moves through water with arm and leg movements.
9. Small container to drink from.
12. Test; inspect closely.
13. Vocal or musical sound; a particular pitch in an intonation.
16. Tell; give information or knowledge to; make aware.
18. A sudden or violent outbreak of wind, rain, snow, etc.

Photo album



PHOTO | SAMMY KIMATU

Pupils at Bonanza Valley Academy in Kahawa Wendani, Kiambu County reciting a poem during the School's Annual Talent Day.

PHOTO | IDENNIS ONSONGO

Kangemi Youth School performing a Luhya Folk song at Kangemi Resource Centre in Nairobi.

ORIGIN OF WORDS



RHINOCEROS

A rhinoceros is a large Asian or African animal with thick grey skin and a horn, or two horns, on its nose. These horns are made of keratin, the same type of protein that

makes up hair and our fingernails.

The word rhinoceros has its origins from the from Greek word, rhinokērōs, meaning 'nose-horned', from word rhis, meaning 'nose', and keras, meaning 'horn'.