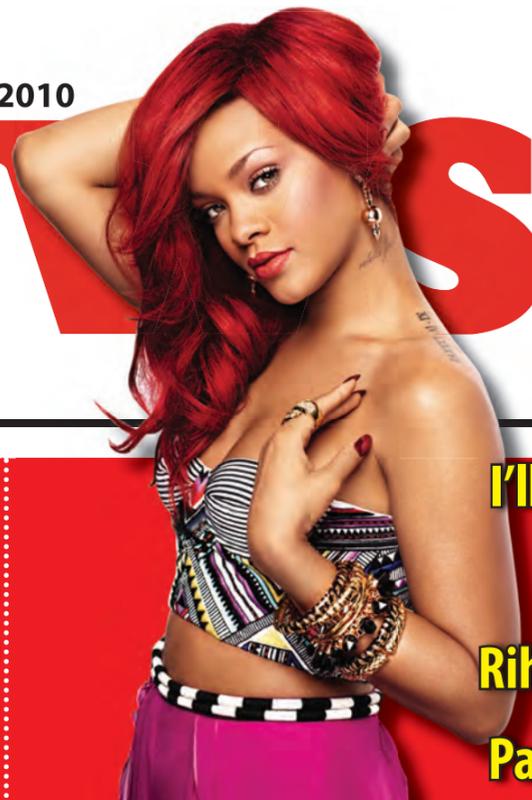


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Southern Eye

Doctors raise alarm over COVID-19 tests

BY DESMOND CHINGARANDE/RICHARD MUPONDE

LOCAL medical doctors have expressed concern over the low numbers of people being tested for the deadly coronavirus in the country at a time the number of COVID-19 cases rose to nine yesterday.

In a statement, the Health ministry said the ninth patient was a 50-year-old man from Harare, who had travelled to the United Kingdom and returned home on March 21.

"He started exhibiting mild symptoms and the local COVID-19 rapid response team went to assess him at home on April 1, 2020 and collected samples for testing," the statement read.

This came as the United Nations (UN) yesterday warned that Africa could lose millions of lives to the novel virus in the next fortnight if developed countries fail to assist the continent.

The UN said the virus would remain a vicious circle in the world if developed countries fail to mobilise resources and urgently provide test kits, masks, ventilators and protective suits for health workers to avert loss of millions of lives in Africa.

Zimbabwe Association of Doctors

● TO PAGE 2



Pic: Nunurai Jena

Chinhoyi University of Technology (CUT) staff and students manufacturing masks for use in the fight against coronavirus. CUT marketing manager Musekiwa Tapera said they were now producing more than 3 000 masks per day.

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Local News

Mwonzora, Khupe on collision course

BY MOSES MATENGA

FORMER opposition MDC-T secretary-general Douglas Mwonzora has set himself on a collision course with party leader Thokozani Khupe after blasting the Political Actors Dialogue (Polad) platform, where Khupe is a key figure.

Mwonzora, who was MDC Alliance deputy secretary for international relations before a Supreme Court ruling delivered on Tuesday that nullified MDC Alliance president Nelson Chamisa's appointment as the opposition leader, also told a local media outlet that he had no respect

for President Emmerson Mnangagwa's human rights record and the way he was handling his dialogue processes under Polad.

Khupe's MDC-T is a member of the dialogue series snubbed by Chamisa.

"I don't agree with the way this government is carrying on its governance of this country," Mwonzora said.

"I don't agree with President Mnangagwa at all. I don't agree with his human rights record. I don't agree with the way he is carrying on his political dialogue, the Polad and so on. What I think is in the best interest of Zimbabwe is to have genuine dialogue before a neutral arbiter."

His position, however, will likely set him against Khupe, Mnangagwa's key ally in Polad.

In Polad, Khupe is tasked with pushing the international community to remove sanctions imposed on Zimbabwe, particularly by the United States and her allies.

Mwonzora accused MDC vice-presidents Tendai Biti and Welshman Ncube of leading Chamisa astray as they do not qualify to stand for posts at the proposed congress set in three months.

He also attacked exiled former Cabinet minister Jonathan Moyo, saying given his record in

government and history of fighting the MDC, he could not preach democracy to the opposition party.

Mwonzora said if Chamisa subjected himself to the congress, he stood a good chance of winning the party leadership.

● feedback@newsday.co.zw

Lockdown: Police brutality under spotlight

BY MOSES MATENGA/RICHARD MUPONDE

POLICE yesterday said it was probing its members accused of human rights abuses after being deployed to enforce the 21-day national lockdown to combat the spread of coronavirus. This comes amid reports that several people had been subjected to severe beatings since Monday.

Several people, who fell victim to police beatings, told *NewsDay* that they were beaten up for loitering, but argued they had presented genuine cases why they were outdoors.

Close to 200 people have so far been arrested since the beginning of the 21-day lockdown, which started on Monday.

NewsDay witnessed Bulawayo residents being forced to kneel on the tarmac after allegedly contravening the lockdown order.

Police spokesperson Assistant Commissioner Paul Nyathi said they were still verifying videos showing police officers beating up people.

"That video we are still verifying and we want to know whether it is a recent one or old videos being circulated by people who want to cause alarm, like one with officers in a residential area. We do not have police officers in pairs in riot gear," he said.

However, while only two appear in the video circulating, it emerged that about eight police officers, driving around in a truck were actually involved in the beatings.

Another video showed police officers beating up women in a residential area before releasing them and ordering them to go back home.

"Some of us were going to fetch water at a nearby borehole and we were ordered back after being slapped," one of the victims said.

In a report, Anti-Corruption Trust of Southern Africa (ACT-SA) director

Obert Chinhamo said his organisation was disturbed by increasing reports of corruption and brutality perpetrated by police.

"While ACT-SA has no issues whatsoever with the maintenance of law and order in the country because of health concerns, it is, however, gravely concerned with reports from members of the public who are being made to pay bribes in exchange for their freedom after being arrested or to operate their businesses outside the gazetted timelines. To coerce suspects to pay bribes, these police officers threaten that all those refusing to comply will be held in custody for the 21-day lockdown. Reports of corruption have been received in Zhombe, Kwekwe, which could save as a microcosm of the situation obtaining countrywide," Chinhamo said.

He said people doing their shopping in Kwekwe during the gazetted times were forced to sit on the floor regardless of having given genuine reasons on why they were in town.

"I drove to town around 9am and was one of the victims at the same spot," he said.

ACT-SA official Munyaradzi Bidi said reports of corruption and police brutality were overwhelming.

Bidi said in Mbizo high-density suburb, some police officers on patrol were spotted drinking alcohol.

One of the drunk officers assaulted a resident, whose attempts to report the matter at Mbizo Police Station failed since the officer is from that police station.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa, in announcing the lockdown last week, said people should stay at home, but those in need of essentials like seeking healthcare, water and food should be allowed if they presented genuine cases.

● feedback@newsday.co.zw

Establish military-style hospitals in COVID-19 fight: Masiyiwa

BY VENERANDA LANGA

TELECOMMUNICATIONS mogul Strive Masiyiwa has suggested that military-style field hospitals must be established in empty buildings where there is sufficient water in Africa in order to effectively combat the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a *Facebook* post yesterday, Masiyiwa lauded China's friendship with Zimbabwe and other African countries, saying there was need to reach out to the Chinese to provide assistance to combat the virus, which has caused havoc around the world, especially in Europe.

"Let us prepare military-style field hospitals in all available halls, and empty buildings, where there are sufficient

facilities for water," he said.

"During the Ebola campaign, I worked closely with African military corps, and I was impressed. They should be out there, right now, building and preparing."

There are fears that Africa, with weak health systems, could experience the worst if the virus, which has so far claimed about 50 000 lives globally and infected nearly one million people, spreads on the continent.

Zimbabwe has very few isolation centres that are poorly equipped, and with doctors and nurses downing tools due to unavailability of personal protective equipment, the prospects of tackling a full-blown outbreak looks grim.

Masiyiwa said it was imperative to

prepare a minimum 25% of all existing hospital beds to take critically ill coronavirus patients.

On Chinese relations, he wrote: "Turn to China. Our Chinese friends (and they are our friends, don't let anyone fool you otherwise — China is our friend), they have the capacity and the reach to help us in this situation."

"We need things like test equipment, ventilators, beds, and even field hospitals and clinics. They also have the technical and clinical expertise. Let us appeal to them in a co-ordinated way."

He said home-based care would also save 99% of lives if done properly, as specialist services in Africa were way too small, that is, if they existed at all.

● feedback@newsday.co.zw

NewsDay correspondent arrested over lockdown breach

BY STAFF REPORTER

POLICE in Chinhoyi yesterday arrested *NewsDay* correspondent Nunurai Jena on allegations of contravening President Emmerson Mnangagwa's 21-lockdown order.

Media Institute of Southern Africa (Zimbabwe) yesterday said Jena was arrested for taking a video of police officers manning a security checkpoint along the Chinhoyi-Chegutu Highway in Mashonaland West province.

Jena was charged with contravening

section 11(a)(b) of the Public Health (COVID-19), Prevention, Containment and Treatment (National Lockdown) Order, 2020 and disorderly conduct as defined in section 41(b) of the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act.

In a tweet last night, police said: "Nunurai Jena was not arrested for or in connection with possession of a 2019 accreditation card. He was arrested for a totally different matter, charges which were fully explained to him and his legal representative."

Misa said the police claimed Jena had accused them of being corrupt.

Jena, who is being represented by human rights lawyer Kudzai Choga, was first allegedly quizzed for using an expired media accreditation card.

This is despite the fact that the Information ministry this week advised law enforcement agents that the 2019 Press cards were still valid.

Last night, Jena was still detained at Chinhoyi Central Police Station as the courts were affected by the lockdown.

● feedback@newsday.co.zw

Doctors raise alarm over COVID-19 tests

● FROM PAGE 1

for Human Rights (ZADHR) secretary Norman Matara yesterday appealed to the international community to intervene and save the country from a catastrophic attack from the virus considering its weak health system and struggling economy.

"We wish and pray that the international community intervenes to help (curb) the spread of the disease by providing us with test kits and other protective measures to help health workers in the fight against coronavirus," Matara said.

"The number of people being tested in Zimbabwe is worrisome. They (authorities) should copy other countries like South Africa in increasing the numbers of people being tested and that is the only solution to know and control the spread of the virus."

Matara added: "This coronavirus has come at a time we have a weak health system. The only effective measure in Zimbabwe is to combat the spread of the disease by employing lockdown measures, which is the only cheapest way of controlling the disease for us at the moment."

"The government has not been providing enough funding for our health and this is leaving us vulnerable and if we fail to contain this, we will be wiped."

Zimbabwe has recorded one fatality from eight confirmed COVID-19 cases.

According to the Health ministry, about 233 people out of a population of 15 million have been tested since the country recorded its first case.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa last week imposed a 21-day national lockdown, which became effective on Monday as part of efforts to combat the spread of the virus, but observers said the measure would not be effective without adequately equipping public health facilities.

ZADHR, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum and the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights have been challenging government to do more to combat a possible huge outbreak.

The human rights doctors said the country required a clear referral pathway, apart from back-up diagnostic kits, personal protective equipment and expertise to be able to tackle the deadly virus, which has collapsed the world economy since it was discovered in Wuhan, China last December.

About 6,6 million jobs are already at stake in the United States, the world's economic giant, which has recorded over 200 000 cases, the highest in the world, and over 5 000 deaths.

Italy, the epicentre of the virus in Europe, has lost nearly 14 000 lives from around 115 000 infections, with Spain, another European country, recording as high as 10 000 deaths as the healthcare systems buckle under pressure.

Despite measures put in place by African governments to contain the spread of COVID-19, several countries on the continent have no capacity to roll out massive testing, risking a quick spreading of the deadly virus.

Africa has 5 786 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 196 deaths in 49 countries, with neighbouring South Africa, with over 1 300 confirmed cases, leading the pack.

South Africa has announced plans to dispatch about 10 000 field workers to roll out a mass screening programme for the coronavirus.

United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres said he feared millions of people would die from coronavirus in Africa if the G20 countries, which hold 80% of the global economy, did not work together to pool resources for developing African countries.

"Africa is in urgent need of test kits,

masks, ventilators, protective suits for health workers. We can still prevent the worst in Africa, but without a massive mobilisation, we will have millions and millions of people contaminated, which means millions of deaths," Guterres said in a statement yesterday.

"Africa should be the priority of the international community as the continent does not have the resources to fight the COVID-19 pandemic."

"As the virus mutates, all the investment we are putting into vaccines will be for nothing because the virus will then travel from the south back to the north. So it is in the interest of countries in the north to help the south."

Last week, World Health Organisation director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus warned Africa to brace for the worst, claiming statistics were too understated due to unavailability of testing kits.

"The best advice for Africa is to prepare for the worst and prepare today," he said.

Meanwhile, government and the United Nations have launched a US\$715 million humanitarian response plan for 2020, which will see off the fight on effects of drought, Cyclone Idai and COVID-19, which has claimed thousands of lives globally.

The 2020 humanitarian response plan for Zimbabwe was launched yesterday, targeting 5,6 million people with food assistance and support in the areas of health, water-sanitation-hygiene, education, protection, nutrition, shelter and camp co-ordination and management.

The plan seeks to mobilise US\$715 million from the international community.

In a statement, the UN said the humanitarian response plan would play a key role in mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on vulnerable communities.

● feedback@newsday.co.zw

SA bars Italian, turns up in Harare

BY DESMOND CHINGARANDE

THE South African government yesterday turned back a Zimbabwean private charter aircraft on landing at OR Tambo International Airport carrying an Italian national, as the country continues to tighten its immigration laws following the outbreak of COVID-19.

In a statement, South Africa's Transport minister Fikile Mbalula called for investigations into the unauthorised landing of the chartered flight at OR Tambo International Airport.

"At approximately 1230 hours on Wednesday April 1, a private charter aircraft landed at OR Tambo International Airport from Harare, Zimbabwe, with one passenger on board," part of the statement read.

"The flight was not cleared by the Department of Transport as required in terms of the current protocols in

force during the lockdown. The passenger and crew were held at the airport while the airport sought guidance on how to handle the flight."

The statement further added: "A decision was made that the passenger, an Italian national holding a South African passport, would not be allowed to enter the country. The passenger initially refused to leave, but with intervention of the South Africa Police Services the flight left the South African airspace returning to Harare, Zimbabwe."

Transport minister Joel Biggie Matiza was not picking calls on his mobile phone for a comment.

Last night, the Italian's whereabouts could not be established.

The Health ministry also did not release a statement on whether he was quarantined or put in isolation.

● feedback@newsday.co.zw

Zanu PF distributes mealie-meal at night

BY GARIKAI MAFIRAKUREVA

CHIREDDZI Zanu PF supporters yesterday received subsidised mealie-meal under the cover of darkness following clashes with MDC supporters led by MDC MP (Proportional Representation), Mucharairwa Mugidho.

Mugidho, who was moving around with a truckload of party supporters, disrupted the distribution process until it was abandoned. The team maintained vigilance, tracking the truck ferrying mealie-meal. This forced the mealie-meal to be distributed at night.

Mugidho confirmed the clashes and vowed to continue disrupting the process as long as the Zanu PF leadership was running it.

"Yes, we forced the distribution to be abandoned after we realised that it was only meant for Zanu PF supporters," Mugidho said.

"They had to distribute at night because they were afraid of my team which was monitoring the whole process. I called the district development co-ordinator (DDC), Lovemore Chisema, complaining about the procedure."

Mugidho added: "I am happy he said everything is now reversed. Everyone is under the lockdown and is in need of food. Why should it be a Zanu PF project? COVID-19 affects everyone. So for the President's decree to be respected, all people should be accorded a chance to buy mealie-meal during the 21-day lockdown."

Chisema admitted that he received reports that mealie-meal was distributed at night and said his of-

fice regretted what transpired and added that he had resolved that there would be a committee which is apolitical, responsible for the distribution of mealie-meal.

"To be frank, I am not happy with what happened yesterday. That was a disaster. The whole thing was chaotic. I thought our leaders were going to show maturity and distribute food to everyone regardless of his or her political affiliation.

"Our main aim was to reduce movement and crowds during the lockdown as a measure to curb the novel coronavirus. I regret everything that happened. We have now given the mandate to councillors and the committees they are going to work with," Chisema said.

But Chiredzi MP Farai Musikavanhu went on to send a letter to his Zanu PF groups insisting that ruling party officials will remain in charge of mealie-meal distribution.

"Further to a resolution arising from a meeting held on March 30, 2020 and chaired by the DDC all four constituency MPs in Chiredzi district were mandated to be responsible for administering mealie-meal distribution at ward level in a drive to decongest selling points in Chiredzi town as part of the ongoing fight against the coronavirus pandemic," part of the letter dated April 2 read.

"Yesterday April 1, 2020, we launched the Chiredzi West constituency ward-based mealie-meal distribution programme: The MP's admin team distributed mealie-meal to 347 residents at no transport cost to the beneficiaries: Ward 5: 100, Ward 6: 65, Ward 7: 62 Ward 8: 120. Each person got 10kg mealie at the

gazetted price of ZW\$70."

The message further read: "The admin team was supported by the mealie-meal taskforce. The number of beneficiaries per ward was calculated by the MP based on statistics from (Zimbabwe Electoral Commission) ZEC and the available mealie-meal of 1 500 x 10kg bags.

Musikavanhu listed several wards which he said had not received the staple food, citing teething problems experienced on the first day of the lockdown (Monday) in the distribution of mealie-meal where soldiers were involved in running battles with residents at N Richards Wholesalers.

He said the decision to distribute the mealie-meal at ward level was meant to decongest the major outlets in Chiredzi to avoid the spread of the deadly coronavirus and ensure the success of the national lockdown proclaimed by President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Friday last week.

"Government food programmes will not be politicised and all forms of discrimination shall not be tolerated," Musikavanhu said, urging each ward to set up a five-member mealie-meal distribution committee. Membership shall be drawn from the following categories: veterans of the liberation struggle, pastors, social welfare workers, health workers and educationists," he said.

He implored the ward leadership to exercise maturity in ensuring that the selection of committee members was not politicised, advising wards to forward names of their committee members to the constituency manager Alphios Mugari by end of day today.

Chitungwiza residents sue council over water

BY DESMOND CHINGARANDE

CHITUNGWIZA Resident Trust (CHITREST) has filed an application at the High Court to compel the municipality to provide residents with clean and enough water during the 21-day COVID-19 lockdown.

The residents argued that police officers enforcing the lockdown were forcibly dispersing them from community boreholes, a move that could expose them to the deadly virus.

The residents said on March 30, police forcibly dispersed them from community boreholes in Zengeza 2, 4, 5 and Unit K where they were queuing to fetch water for domestic use.

In their application for a *mandamus* at the High Court, the residents cited Chitungwiza Municipality, Local Government minister July Moyo, Health minister Obadiah Moyo and Finance minister Mthuli Ncube as respondents.

The residents said Chitungwiza experienced erratic and at times no provision of adequate and safe water for domestic use. They said the right to water was a fundamental human right and the failure by the authority to provide running water to them was in breach of that right.

"Lack of water leads to violation of the right to life and directly or indirectly the contrac-

tion of deadly diseases that are water borne," the residents submitted.

"This risk is further magnified by the outbreak of the COVID-19 which requires greater personal hygiene that includes washing hands with soap and water which is only possible if there is water."

"In order for residents to comply with the spirit of the national lockdown as urged by the Health ministry through various platforms and the World Health Organisation, it is imperative that all people must exercise personal hygiene, hence measures must be put in place for them to access water in their homes."

The residents said the municipality had neglected and failed or refused to put such measures in place to comply with their constitutional obligation.

"In declaring the national, lockdown President Mnangagwa undertook that government and local authorities will ensure the availability of water, ablution facilities for all."

The residents demanded that Chitungwiza Municipality be ordered to ensure that there is adequate potable and uninterrupted water supply during the COVID-19 lockdown period and after.

Early this week, the High Court ordered Harare City Council to urgently address the water crisis after residents filed a similar court application.



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Local News

Zim has lost 40 years: Catholic bishops

BY VENERANDA LANGA

THE Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) says Zimbabwe has lost an opportunity in the past 40 years to redefine its history, foster national healing and to end corruption, international isolation and to save the collapse of the country's infrastructure.

In their 40th anniversary of Zimbabwe's independence pastoral letter yesterday, the ZCBC raised concern over the non-effectiveness of the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission (NPRC), which it accused of having an unclear mandate in the promotion of peace and reconciliation in the country.

This is a missed opportunity as the lifespan of the NPRC is almost coming to an end, the bishops said.

While the ZCBC acknowledged that the first decade of in-

dependence witnessed achievements in education and health sectors, they said there were still a lot of missed opportunities to seek a different political path from what colonialism had chartered.

"The NPRC gives hope to promote healing and reconciliation in our nation. However, the NPRC is still to be fully operationalised and the duration of its mandate remains unclear, apart from other grey areas, which is leading to loss of confidence in the commission," the ZCBC said.

"We have also failed to develop a political culture of tolerance. There are so many issues that need to be addressed like corruption, international isolation, collapsing infrastructure and emigration."

The ZCBC said Zimbabwe's gradual economic recession had led to closing of industries, foreign investor flight, job losses and seen a decline in agricultur-

al activity and escalation of poverty.

"There are so many things that need to be addressed like corruption, international isolation, collapsing infrastructure and emigration. The greatest asset of any nation is its people and we keep losing our people for various reasons," the cleric said.

Some of the lost opportunities, they said, were failure by government to acknowledge some of the country's dark episodes such as the Gukurahundi era that wiped out around 20 000 civilians between 1983 and 1987 in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces.

On COVID-19, the ZCBC warned it may spell doom given that hospital structures in the country were not well equipped to combat the spread of the disease.

The ZCBC also reiterated the need to align legislation with the Constitution.

Hospital stuck with COVID-19 suspect body

BY JAIROS SAUNYAMA

HEALTH officials in Mashonaland East province were yesterday reportedly stuck with the corpse of a man suspected to have succumbed to COVID-19 man.

The man, who had shown symptoms related to the deadly disease, died upon arrival at Makumbe Mission Hospital in Domboshava, the largest medical institution in Gomonzi district.

NewsDay is reliably informed that health experts from the province failed to secure testing kits on time and possibly dispose the body within 24 hours as per requirement.

It is reported that the province received only 10 test kits, despite having already tested 23 people using kits sourced elsewhere.

By yesterday, the family of the deceased was waiting for the body.

Provincial medical director Simukai Zizhou could neither confirm nor

deny the development, saying they "will bury the body after taking samples".

"We are collecting samples before burial," Zizhou said in a WhatsApp message.

The province has four COVID-19 patients, with all the cases in Ruwa.

Early this week, government revealed that 125 people were currently under COVID-19 surveillance in the province, with Marondera district constituting 30% of the cases.

Zimsec sets up registration portal

BY STAFF REPORTER

PREPARATIONS for the 2020 June and November examination registration are going on as scheduled despite the 21-day national lockdown which began on Monday, Primary and Secondary Education minister Cain Mathema has said.

To ensure candidate registration deadlines are met, the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (Zimsec) has set up an electronic platform for submission of candidates entry data and proof of payment for the two sittings.

"A call centre has been set up at Zimsec head office to support heads of examination centres when they encounter problems in uploading entry data," Mathema said in a statement.

"Candidates do not need to physically visit their examination centres to verify their individual registration data as this will be done using statements of entry."

"Heads of examinations who fail to access the online platform should phone Zimsec between 0800hrs-1600hrs for assistance."

WB approves US\$500m credit for Tanzania education

DAR ES SALAAM — The World Bank's board of executive directors have approved US\$500 million credit from the International Development Association (IDA), the bank's fund for the poorest countries, to improve secondary education in Tanzania.

A statement issued by the World Bank on Tuesday night said the new financing would enable millions of young Tanzanians to access and complete secondary education in safer and better learning environments.

The statement said the Secondary Education Quality Improvement Project will directly benefit about 6,5 million secondary school students by strengthening government-run schools and establishing stronger educational pathways for students who leave the formal school system.

"SEQUIP uses a disbursement mechanism that is phased and releases funds in tranches only when previously agreed results have been achieved," said the statement, adding that these included increasing access to schools, improving education quality for all public secondary education options, and supporting more children to re-enter the formal public system if they drop out.

"Every child in Tanzania deserves a good education, but thousands are denied this life-changing opportunity each year," said Mara Warwick, World Bank country director for Tanzania. "This is an important step in addressing the challenges that Tanzania's children face throughout their education. The World Bank will continue our dialogue with the government on broader issues concerning equal treatment of schoolchildren."

— Xinhua

Former Somali PM succumbs to COVID-19 in Britain

MOGADISHU — Former Somali Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein died on Wednesday in Britain, about a week after being diagnosed with COVID-19.

Hussein's family confirmed the death, at King's College Hospital in London.

The former prime minister served between November 2007 and February 2009 in the transitional government of Somalia.

The current Somali Prime Minister, Hassan Ali Khaire, mourned the death of Hussein.

"My deepest condolences to the people of Somalia and to the family of former Prime Minister Nur Hassan Hussein who died in London. I pray to Allah to let his soul rest in peace," Khaire said in a statement.

— Xinhua

Netanyahu quarantined for second time

JERUSALEM — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu yesterday went into isolation for the second time in a week after his health minister was diagnosed with COVID-19, the Prime Minister's office said.

Netanyahu (70) will stay in self-quarantine until next Wednesday, according to his office, as he had frequent meetings with Health minister Yaakov Litzman.

The move follows the recommendation of Netanyahu's personal doctor and

guidelines of the Health ministry, the office noted.

Litzman, leader of the Jewish ultra-Orthodox party of United Torah Judaism, is now in isolation with his wife, who has also contracted the virus.

On Wednesday, Netanyahu came out of two-day isolation after one of his advisors was diagnosed with the novel coronavirus.

— Xinhua

South Sudan's Kiir vows to address dispute with Machar

JUBA — South Sudan President Salva Kiir has pledged to peacefully resolve a running dispute with Riek Machar, his first vice-president and long time rival, over allocation of State and local government positions in a three-year transitional government of national unity.

The 2018 revitalised peace agreement allocated Kiir's ruling party, Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), 55% of State and local government positions and Machar's SPLM- In-Opposition was given 27 power-sharing ration, with the remaining slots going to other signatories to the pact.

But the parties have so far failed to

strike a power-sharing deal for State governors as several talks aimed at ending the deadlock concluded without progress.

"The issue of State governors is what we have been fighting over all these days," Kiir said on Tuesday during a delayed swearing-in ceremony of new Foreign Affairs minister Beatrice Khamisha Wani, who had been put under 14-day quarantine amid COVID-19 fears after returning home from Germany.

Kiir said the disagreement would not shatter the peace deal which is seeking to end over six years of brutal civil war.

— Xinhua

Interpol-led operation nabs suspects in Africa

NAIROBI — An operation led by the International Criminal Police Organisation (Interpol) has led to the arrest of several international suspects in Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, the agency said in a statement on Wednesday.

Aiming to strengthen counter-terrorism (CT), Operation Simba II has boosted frontline officers' ability to recognise a traveller as a potential terrorist or criminal using Interpol's wide range of policing capabilities installed at air and land border crossings, according to the Interpol state-

ment. From March 15-22, Interpol's General Secretariat and Nairobi-based Regional CT Node for Eastern and Southern Africa co-ordinated action with police, immigration, customs and CT units were able to detect criminals as they tried to cross borders, the Interpol said.

"Almost three million checks were carried out against Interpol databases over eight days resulting in the detection of men and women wanted for serious crimes," the agency said.

— Xinhua

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Wilkins reopens after refurbishment

BY PHYLLIS MBANJE

ZIMBABWE'S main COVID-19 isolation and treatment centre, Wilkins Hospital, will reopen its doors to the public at the weekend following a US\$500 000 upgrade initiated by the Chinese business community.

The facility, which now looks like a world-class hospital, has been fitted with new equipment and has functional ICU units complete with piped oxygen.

Harare City Council health services director Prosper Chonzi said the development would go a long way in ensuring critical patients got the best attention.

The facility had no critical care equipment but had been designated for management of COVID-19 cases. "We are very happy about this development and now we have some ventilators — about five. This facility can accommodate 10. We can now manage critically-ill patients," Chonzi said.

"We are just finishing up and maybe by Saturday we will be open."

The Chinese Embassy tweeted on their official account commending the good work.

"US\$500 000 and 18 days Wilkins Hospital upgraded and delivered into the service for the Zimbabwean people by the Chinese business community. Together we stand strong."

Meanwhile, the Health ministry has cautioned against wearing of masks by people who do not have COVID-19 saying this might create a false sense of security, forcing many to abandon the crucial preventive measures like handwashing and social distancing.

Of late, many people had taken to wearing masks when going into public spaces. Businesses took advantage and started selling the masks for as high as US\$5 each.

However, the ministry said according to World Health Organisation statutes wearing of masks in public places by persons without symptoms was not recommended.

"In addition to the cost burden, this may create a false sense of security that can lead to the neglect of other essential preventive measures," the ministry said in a statement.

On Tuesday, the National Reference Laboratory tested 33 samples which tested negative for COVID-19.

Meanwhile, the Health ministry received a consignment of personal protective equipment (PPE) from the Chinese government to help in fighting COVID-19.

Doctors and nurses at public hospitals have downed tools over lack of PPE. Worldwide, some nurses and doctors on the frontline in handling coronavirus cases, have died after being infected by patients.

Mutare former town clerk in fraud storm

BY KENNETH NYANGANI

FORMER Mutare town clerk Obert Muzawazi was arrested last week on fraud charges after he reportedly duped desperate homeseekers by selling them non-existent stands.

Muzawazi, who resigned in 2016 under pressure over abuse of office allegations, appeared before Mutare magistrate Tendai Mahwe on Saturday last week facing fraud charges.

He was arraigned before the court with his alleged accomplice former Mutare North aspiring MP Asham Mujuru and were granted \$1 000 bail each.

The two, who are denying the allegations, will appear for trial on April 22.

Muzawazi reportedly committed most of the offences when he was still at the helm at the local authority.

It is the State's case that Muzawazi sold several residential stands to many desperate homeseekers under unclear circumstances during and after his tenure in office.

Brenda Rupiya is one of the homeseekers who allegedly paid for a residential stand in Dangamvura suburb, a deal that never materialised.

Mujuru reportedly collected \$3 000 on behalf of Muzawazi from Rupiya.

It is the State's case that Rupiya recently visited council to make levy payments and found out that her name was not in the council's electronic database. She reported the matter to the police, leading to Muzawazi and Mujuru's arrest.

Muzawazi has been arrested several times for abuse of office since his resignation.

Before his resignation, Mutare residents demonstrated at Town House demanding his resignation over corruption allegations.

Norton MP launches COVID-19 isolation centre

BY DESMOND CHINGARANDE

NORTON independent legislator Temba Mliswa (*pictured*) has set up a coronavirus isolation centre in his constituency to fight the deadly pandemic that has claimed over 40 000 lives globally.

Mliswa also launched a COVID-19 taskforce for disaster preparedness and donated US\$1 000 towards the purchase of essential products and equipment to galvanise the constituency's state of preparedness.

The Norton Town Council has also offered Katanga Vocational Training Centre and a secondary school premises as isolation centres for COVID-19 screening.

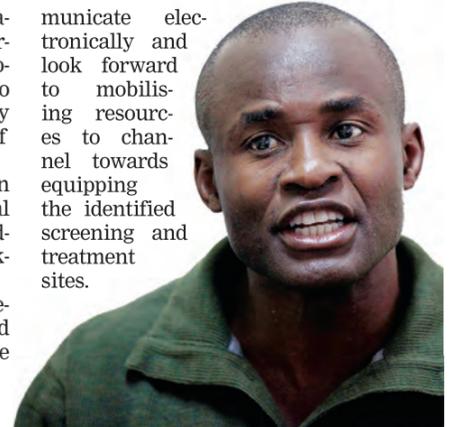
"Pursuant to my earlier communication to you all and correspondence to Norton Town Council (NTC) regarding the potential threat of COVID-19, I am pleased to update you that NTC has been extremely forthcoming," Mliswa said to members of the taskforce.

"The taskforce has already identified an isolation centre at the Norton Vocational Training Centre in Katanga and a secondary school in Katanga as a possible back-up facility."

The 14-member taskforce would be responsible for observing the situation and managing the COVID-19 outbreak in the constituency.

The independent legislator said due to the lockdown, the team will com-

municate electronically and look forward to mobilising resources to channel towards equipping the identified screening and treatment sites.



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BCC 2020 budget dealt blow by COVID-19 pandemic

BY NQOBANI NDLOVU

BULAWAYO City Councils' \$2,7 billion budget for 2020 which saw rates and tariffs shoot by 716% has been dealt a huge blow by the coronavirus pandemic, with mayor Solomon Mguni predicting tough times ahead.

Bulawayo has not recorded a COVID-19 case to date, according to the Health and Child Care ministry. Mguni told *Southern Eye* yesterday that unbudgeted funds have been diverted to combating the possible outbreak of the disease.

Service delivery will suffer the most "going forward," Mguni said, arguing this is because "our finances have suffered a huge knock; and for months to come" a situation that might force the council to seek a supplementary budget.

"It was unbudgeted for yet we need resources to be diverted to fighting and mitigating the impact of coronavirus, and worse still, under our poor performing economy where the majority are informal traders," Mguni said.

"We are committing unbudgeted funds towards this pandemic; our coffers will suffer a huge knock in the months to come. People are obliged to pay rates, but then the question is with what? It will take a lot of time for the businesses, informal traders and others to recover to start paying their bills.

Council has been relying on donations from individuals and companies in its COVID-19 fight.

Ratepayers were already clashing with council over its \$2,7 billion budget, urging the local authority to instead look for alternative revenue streams instead of punishing them with unaffordable charges.

In a memo to council last month, the Bulawayo Progressive Residents Association (BPRA) called on city fathers to stop funding the Bulawayo City Football Club and re-direct the resources to services that benefit residents.

"There is need for the BCC to urgently come up with alternative revenue sources. There is need to cut down on unnecessary expenditure and reduce overtime expenditures," the BPRA wrote to the council.

"In 2019, residents spoke against the continued funding of the Bulawayo City Football Club which is draining the council's coffers and bringing little to zero benefit for the residents. While grooming local talent is a noble idea, its timing is not strategic..."

Kwekwe imposes tough lockdown measures

BY BRENNA MATENDERE

THE Kwekwe district COVID-19 taskforce has imposed tough measures to combat the spread of the disease with the army and police instructed to use sweeping powers to enforce the orders.

In a statement, taskforce spokesperson and Kwekwe district medical officer Vitalis Kwashira yesterday said travellers from outside the city had been barred completely.

"All points of entry/exit will be moni-

tored/closed in Kwekwe for the 21-day period. No movements to other towns or districts (allowed), hence the sealing of all entry points into Kwekwe and all exit points out of Kwekwe," Kwashira said.

"People should confine themselves to their homes and assign one family member to buy foodstuffs at the nearest shopping centre," he said.

The resolutions which were arrived at during the taskforce's urgent meeting held on Tuesday, also apply to surround-

ing areas including Silobela, Zhombe and Zibagwe.

Only two people are allowed in a vehicle while on errands and the driver "should not at any time disembark from the vehicle".

Gatherings should not exceed 50 people, "be it at a funeral, meetings or biras", Kwashira said adding, only personnel providing essential services will be allowed movement.

Vending has been banned; shops will operate four hours a day and "local au-

thorities should take the opportunity to provide services like clean water, sewage and refuse collection in order to ensure high hygienic standards".

Kwashira urged central government to assist Kwekwe in the procurement of water treatment chemicals, or alternatively the local authority should seek UNICEF's assistance. Redcliff and Zibagwe municipalities were ordered to provide sanitisers at water points, while Zesa was ordered to ensure uninterrupted power supply.



Pic: Patricia Sibanda

Police officers force a woman and a man to kneel on the roadside in Nkulumane, Bulawayo as they enforce the lockdown order yesterday. Residents are being accused of defying the lockdown by continuing to move around the suburbs and into the city centre.

Byo fears COVID-19 transmission

BY SILAS NKALA

BULAWAYO City Council is worried about possible active transmission of COVID-19 after the city received 1 125 visitors from hotspot countries.

Council said although the visitors were being monitored, residents should heed the lockdown order and other precautionary measures to avert an outbreak in the city.

Mayor Solomon Mguni revealed this during a full council meeting on Wednesday.

"The city has been conducting traveller surveillance from February to March 2020. There was a noticeable increase in the influx of travellers reported by the ports of entry from February — 498 to March 2020 — 627," Mguni said.

"The total number of visitors that have come into Bulawayo from areas with confirmed COVID-19 cases and possibly active local transmission is 1 125. 100% of all travellers that came into the city during the month of February have been followed up at least once and are all asymptomatic."

Mguni said the list of travellers that came into the city in March was received at the end of last week. Six-hundred and twenty-seven travellers are currently being followed up by environmental health practitioners.

"The City of Bulawayo continues to implement protective measures to reduce the general risk of transmission. These include activities such as contact tracing, active case finding, intensified shop inspections, health education on key messages that include self-isolation, social distancing, and hygiene practices,

with special emphasis on the importance of staying at home to break the chain of transmission," Mguni said.

Vending stalls are being placed a metre apart, at funerals only 30 mourners are allowed and for weddings only 50 people can attend, limiting of the number of customers in a shop, Zupco queues and passenger management, as well as provision of sanitisers.

"Risk communication team is on the ground engaging the Zimbabwe Republic Police to enforce and also educate the public on the disease," Mguni said.

"The city, through the call centre, receives on average 13 calls per day from members of the public who suspect others near them may have COVID-19. These are also followed up by the rapid response team. We continue urging members of the public to use

these platforms for obtaining information and also for making reports on suspected cases moving around and I also urge those on self-isolation to adhere to recommendations made by the health-care professionals."

Mguni hailed stakeholders who were contributing towards the COVID-19 fight and rehabilitation of Thorngrove Isolation Centre.

Qoki Zindlovukazi, a United Kingdom-based organisation and Thuthuka Matabeleland Trust donated groceries, Population Services International Zimbabwe — FFP2 face masks and liquid soap, OPHID Trust — sanitisers, surgical masks and latex gloves, Rainbow Hotel Bulawayo — bed sheets, pillow slips and bath towels, Bulawayo Babies — face masks, and Chloride Zimbabwe — solar back-up system at the isolation ward.

NEWS DAY

Business

Zimbabwe Stock Exchange

INDICES	VALUE	CHANGE (%)
All Share	456,21	0,78%
Industrial	1,512,46	0,67%
Top 10	370,74	-0,33%
Minings	720,47	6,04%

Currencies

CURRENCY	VALUE	CHANGE	NET CHANGE
EUR-USD	1,0968	-0,0080	-0,72%
USD-JPY	108,2800	0,5200	+0,48%
GBP-USD	1,2387	-0,0027	-0,22%
AUD-USD	0,6116	-0,0058	-0,94%
USD-ZAR	17,8220	-0,1148	-0,64%

Miners seek reprieve during lockdown

BY FIDELITY MHLANGA

SMALL-SCALE miners have applied for a reprieve to continue operating during the 21-day lockdown period, with minimum staff required for the care and maintenance of their operations to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Mining operations were not included in Statutory Instrument 83 of 2020 which prescribed essential services sectors that should remain functional during the lockdown which began on Monday this week.

These include pharmacies, laboratories, banking institutions, transport services, supermarkets and food outlets.

Individual small-scale miners, who operate under the banner of Zimbabwe Miners Federation (ZMF), have since approached the Mines ministry for a greenlight to continue operating during the period.

"Reference is made to an application

that had been made by the president of the Zimbabwe Miners Federation to the Minister of Mines and Mining Development, Honourable Winston Chitando that miners get reprieve and get waiver as a critical sector to continue operations during the 21-day lockdown in terms of Statutory Instrument 83 of 2020 Public Health (COVID-19 Prevention, Containment And Treatment) National Lockdown Order, 2020," ZMF said in a circular.

"Mining is an essential service whose operations require continuous process and may operate with the minimum staff required for the care and maintenance of its operations as stipulated in the SI."

This comes as the country's sole gold buyer and refiner Fidelity Printers and Refinery (FPR) has announced that its offices will be opened during the lockdown period.

In his response, Chitando said appli-

cations should clearly indicate the nature and modus of operation during the lockdown period and measures to be undertaken to safeguard employees and other stakeholders from the potential spread of COVID-19 virus.

Miners willing to operate were asked to write a letter that includes steps that will be taken to ensure compliance to fight coronavirus in accordance to guidance given by government.

Miners were also asked to provide an overview of operations, deliveries to FPR for the past 12 months, nearest police station, employment profile, location, distance of mine from houses, state whether they do underground or open cast mining operations, among other requirements.

Miners were given up to Wednesday this week to submit their applications.

"Mining operations which face implementation challenges are requested to apply for partial exemption to the

Ministry of Mines and Mining Development through the Chamber of Mines and ZMF. The application should indicate clearly the nature and modus of operation during the lockdown period and measures which will be taken to safeguard employees and other stakeholders from the potential spread of the COVID-19 virus. Once the application is

lodged with the Chamber of Mines or Zimbabwe Miners Federation, the mining company may be allowed to continue operating while awaiting a response from government," Chitando said.

Small-scale miners contribute significantly to gold production. However, gold deliveries have dropped due to the currency volatility in the economy.

BUSINESS IN BRIEF

Access Finance launches US\$200k COVID-19 relief initiative

ACCESS Forex, a unit of Access Finance Zimbabwe, has committed an initial US\$200 000 to assist the most vulnerable segments of society and communities across the country who are now reeling from the negative impact of drought and the global coronavirus pandemic.

The current drought, which has resulted in a food crisis in the country coupled with the economic slowdown, and the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the resultant subsequent lockdown have had debilitating effects on families and communities.

Access Forex, a bureau de change which provides remittance services for Zimbabweans in the diaspora, mainly in the United Kingdom and South Africa, has taken the move to compliment efforts by the government and various other humanitarian organisations to help mitigate the devastating negative impact of dry weather conditions, the pandemic and economic downturn.

In partnership with churches and the non-governmental organisation community, as well as government, Access Forex will provide food aid in the form of hampers to the vulnerable and needy in the society.

"Since most Zimbabweans are currently unemployed and are largely surviving on informal sector activities, they have been badly exposed to this situation and need help to go through these times of adversity," George Chirwa, the

executive director of the firm said at the virtual launch of the initiative yesterday.

The intervention will begin in Harare, Bulawayo and Victoria Falls before being rolled out to the rest of the country.

"Access Forex is a Zimbabwean business and as such it has some corporate social responsibilities. We believe that local organisations and people can play a big role in resolving Zimbabwe's current challenges," Chirwa said.

"This initiative is our small way as a responsible corporate to citizens of supporting the \$100 million fund recently announced by the Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Hon Prof Mthuli Ncube. Government needs help from all of us to deal with these challenges."

He also challenged other corporates and Zimbabweans in the diaspora to join the effort, and contribute to the goal of committing US\$1 million to serve those in need and help improve their lives.

While the initiative is primarily targeted at helping people affected by COVID-19, it would also be used to help underprivileged communities going forward.

"Through such strong partnerships, vulnerable people across Zimbabwe will receive food aid as we try to mitigate the impact of these combined adversities," Chirwa said.

— STAFF REPORTER

Local bourse urges caution

BY FIDELITY MHLANGA

THE Zimbabwe Stock Exchange (ZSE) says trading in securities of all issuers listed on the bourse will be done under caution until the expiry of the statutory lockdown period in a bid to protect investors during the period of uncertainty.

The bourse has also directed companies to issue special trading updates chronicling the impact of the coronavirus on their operations after the lockdown.

Government last week gazetted the Public Health (COVID-19 Containment and Treatment) National Lockdown Order, 2020 through Statutory Instrument 83 of 2020.

Section 4(1) of SI 83 of 2020 orders a lockdown for a period of 21 days with effect from March 30, 2020 to April 19, 2020.

"Following the issuance of the lockdown order, some listed entities have ei-



ther scaled down or completely halted their operations and the future remains uncertain. In the unfortunate event that the lockdown is extended, it is likely to put operational and financial pressure on many listed companies. We hope that we will not reach the worst of the pandemic," ZSE said in a statement on Wednesday.

"There is a need for the ZSE to protect shareholders and investors during this volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous time. For this reason, the ZSE has formulated the following directive and measures which are meant to protect the interests of investors and stakeholders in our market in light of the challenges."

Consequently, ZSE said there shall be no need for issuers to issue individual cautionary statements in respect of the circumstances affecting their businesses arising from the effects of the lockdown as this directive is sufficient in this regard.

ZSE said post-lockdown, all issuers

shall be required to publish special trading updates for the benefit of the investors and the market at large on or before May 15, 2020.

"The special trading updates shall, in addition to the previously given guidelines on preparation of trading updates, include the following; update on the effects of Covid-19 pandemic on the business of the issuer. Statement on the business continuity plan adopted by the issuer in light of the COVID-19 pandemic and the lockdown order. Statement on the solvency position of the issuer in light of the effects of COVID-19 and the lockdown order on its business," ZSE said.

Before the gazetting of the lockdown order, issuers of securities were struggling to finalise their half-year and full-year financial statements because of the unsettling effects of COVID-19.

The ZSE then issued a blanket dispensation to all issuers whose half-year and full-year financial statements were due for publication by March 31, 2020 to be published on or before April 30, 2020.

CABS appoints Mpofu as MD

CABS Bank has appointed Mehlu-Mpofu as managing director, replacing Simon Hammond who retires after more than five years at the helm of the Old Mutual Zimbabwe unit.

Mpofu served as the deputy managing director of the building society since 2015.

He will be deputised by Cecil Tanyaradzwa Ngoro.

CABS said Hammond went on pre-

retirement leave from Wednesday.

Mpofu has worked for Old Mutual in various roles, including as managing director of Old Mutual Investment Group (OMIG), chief investment officer in Old Mutual Kenya and head of research in OMIG.

Prior to his new role, Ngoro served CABS as head of corporate and institutional banking since the inception of the department in 2012.

— BY STAFF REPORTER

EVERYDAY NEWS FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE

NEWS DAY

Zimbabweans to pay heavy price for not taking lockdown seriously

YESTERDAY, the United Nations secretary-general António Guterres warned that millions of people in Africa will die from COVID-19 because of a severe shortage of resources such as test kits, masks, ventilators and protective suits for health workers.

Today marks day five of Zimbabwe's 21-day lockdown. Many people seem to think that by the end of the period, the threat will have subsided and they can get back to their normal routines. Far from it, as the country is only at the beginning of the curve and the worst is yet to come. It is likely that government will introduce much more severe measures, including an extended lockdown.

We are seeing this across the world, where the spread of COVID-19 is yet to peak despite the shocking numbers. Zimbabwe has limited means to fight the spread of the disease and is among those that have no capacity to test the thousands of people, risking the pandemic to spread quickly.

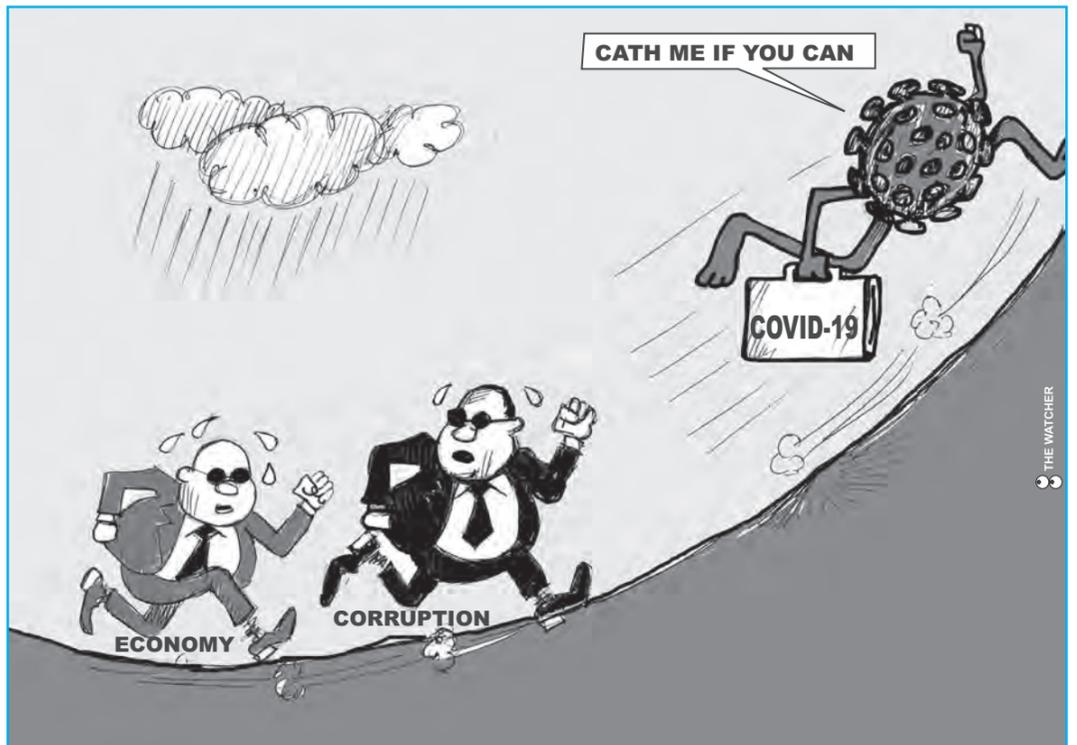
But what it has is as effective as anything out there and its mostly personal: staying at home and practicing social distancing and good hygiene. It's a message that ought to be a part of our everyday prayer. For most part, the country is still at the incubation period of the coronavirus.

On Sunday, Health minister Obadiah Moyo expressed fears that the nearly 14 000 Zimbabweans that crossed the border from South Africa last week fleeing that country's 21-day lockdown were not tested, raising fears that new infections could rise.

Most of these found their way to their homes in Zimbabwe's rural areas and densely populated suburbs such as Mbare, Dzivarasekwa, Highfield, Mabvuku, Glen Norah, Glen View, Rugare, Kambuzuma, Mufakose in Harare; Zengeza, St Mary's in Chitungwiza; Bulawayo's Makokoba, Mpopoma, Mzilikazi, Pelandaba, Lobengula, Cowdray Park, Njube, Nketa, Magwegwe, Luveve, Pumula, Emakhandeni; Gweru's Mambo, Mtapa, Ascot, Mkoba, Senga, Woodlands and Nehosho; Dangamvura, Sakubva, Chikanga, Hobhouse in Mutare; Rimuka in Kadoma; Mbizo in Kwekwe; Rutendo in Redcliff; Mandava, Maglas, Highlands, Makwasha, Kandodo in Zvishavane; Rujeko and Muccheke in Masvingo; Tshovani in Chiredzi; Beitbridge's Dulivhadzimo and Jahunda as well as Spitzkop in Gwanda.

These are overcrowded potential hotspots for the spread of COVID-19 and most of these people are not taking the lockdown seriously and are going about their business. Our appeal to you is to love yourself and neighbour by staying at home: it's the only way we have to keep the curve flat and manageable.

Zimbabwe has so far registered eight confirmed cases of COVID-19 and one death. Let's keep the numbers low for our sakes.



OPINION

guest column



Tendai Ruben Mbofana

THE March 31, 2020 verdict by the Supreme Court, over the opposition Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) leadership wrangle, between Thokozani Khupe and Nelson Chamisa, came a day too early — since, as far as I am concerned, it would have been a most befitting hilarious April Fool's jest.

This is so considering that it was nothing more than a damp squib, without any significant impact on the ground.

The two protagonists who had been deputies to the late founding leader Morgan Richard Tsvangirai, had sought to take over the MDC-T — which had been so-named to distinguish it from other similarly named MDC breakaway factions — after his passing away on February 14, 2018.

Soon after Tsvangirai's death, the MDC's national standing committee appointed Chamisa the interim leader, pending an elective congress later on.

However, this did not go down well with Khupe, who successfully challenged this decision in the High Court, thereby effectively rendering her the new interim president.

Needless to say, Chamisa appealed this verdict in the Supreme Court, whose judgment was issued on March 31, 2020, in which the High Court ruling was upheld confirming Khupe as the interim president of the MDC-T, concluding that Chamisa's appointment was not procedural.

Normally, this should have been a day of unlimited jubilation for Khupe, as it would have marked the end to a two-year-long bruising battle, but, alas, since this verdict could potentially signal the start of the end of her long political career.

Why would I say so, considering that the country's highest court of appeal effectively declared her the leader — for the interim, at least — of the largest opposition political party in the turbulent southern African country?

Well, for starters, events on the ground, during this long court tug-of-war, have substantially evolved, with

Khupe has more to worry over MDC leadership than Chamisa

Chamisa moving on to lead his own political party, the MDC Alliance, which successfully registered for the 2018 harmonised elections, whereby it performed outstandingly, with Chamisa officially receiving nearly half of the popular vote against the country's President and ruling Zanu PF party candidate, Emmerson Dambudzo Mnangagwa.

The MDC Alliance still disputes the result as it believes Chamisa actually obtained far much more than 50%, and won the presidency, despite a Constitutional Court ruling declaring Mnangagwa the winner.

On the other hand, Khupe proceeded to be elected the substantive MDC-T president at a party congress in Bulawayo in April 2018, after which she similarly contested in the harmonised elections, but only managed to garner a paltry 0,5% votes.

Chamisa was also elected substantive leader of the MDC Alliance in May 2019 at a party congress in Gweru.

As can be clearly determined, while the issue of who was the legitimate interim leader of the MDC-T was still pending in the courts, the two contenders had proceeded to lead their own separate political parties, held elective congresses — in which they were elected their respective parties' substantive leaders — and, even contested in the country's harmonised elections.

This effectively meant that the Supreme Court decision came rather late, as even the judges themselves attested to in their judgment, saying, "the imbroglio that the party's leadership has become entangled in may be water under the bridge", as "rendered moot and academic by political events that have taken place".

This court verdict also instructed that an elective congress be held by the MDC-T to choose their substantive president, rather ridiculously reversing Khupe to being an acting president of the party that had chosen her as its president in April 2018. Thus, where does this leave both these bitter rivals?

For Chamisa, he has no cause for concern, as he has since moved on to become the president of his own party, the MDC Alliance, and is no longer interested in leading the MDC-T, since this judgment has absolutely nothing to do with the goings on in his "new" organisation.

His life should go on as normal. The same, however, can not be said for the apparent winner of this court case (Khupe), who, instead of jubilantly celebrating her much-awaited "victory", she now has to contend with facing another bruising fight for her party's leadership, in accordance with the Supreme Court ruling, for an elective congress to be conducted within three months.

Unlike in 2018, when emotions were very high, after the perceived usurping of power by Chamisa following the passing on of Tsvangirai, which played a huge part in Khupe being supported by a section of the MDC-T hierarchy, as the legitimate heir apparent, this time around, she is potentially faced with a whole new set of challengers who could be greedily eager to take over the reigns.

Already on people's tongues are the likes of Morgen Komichi and Douglas Mwonozora, both of whom were also effectively reinstated in their former positions within the MDC-T by the same court verdict (as chairperson, and secretary-general, respectively), and are known for their ambitious nature.

These are the same fellows who did not take their defeat at the May 2019 MDC Alliance elective congress very well.

Although, they appeared to furtively back Khupe's fight in the courts — subsequently, coming out in the open after the Supreme Court judgment — this should never be mistaken as unequivocal support for Khupe to be their leader.

Similarly, the two previously appeared to favour the ascension of Chamisa as interim leader of the MDC Alliance, refusing to align themselves with Khupe's MDC-T, yet Mwonozora was more than ready to challenge him at the party's elective congress, and after failing to garner enough provincial structures' support, became a bitter loser.

As such, Khupe would be very foolish not to know what awaits her at her party's elective congress as these two (Mwonozora and Komichi), who may appear to be celebrating with her, could be her greatest headache, who may even potentially kick her out of the political game completely ... or, at least, the echelons of power.

Such is the game of politics, as they say, "there are no permanent friends, or permanent foes".

Of course, those who do not understand the larger implications of this Supreme Court judgment would want to jubilate over their misconstrued belief that this was a censuring of Chamisa, as not being the legitimate president of the MDC-T yet it is not, as this pronouncement only affects the happenings in the MDC-T, which Chamisa is no longer part of.

This verdict, in fact, is a potential "nail in the political coffin" for Khupe.

Maybe, it was not a damp squib after all!

● **Tendai Ruben Mbofana is a social justice activist, writer, author, and speaker. He writes in his personal capacity.**

Daily View

COVID-19, child protection and social media: We have to be responsible

SOcial media refers to websites and applications that are designed to allow people to share content quickly and efficiently, and in real-time. Platforms answering to this description include, *Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram* and others. These platforms can be put to many uses such as marketing, information sharing, updating people about one's progress in life. What one uses social media platforms for really depends on what they want to communicate and for what purpose. The most common and accessible social media platform is *WhatsApp*; this can be accessed by anyone with a basic smartphone. *WhatsApp* will form the focus of this discussion.

I have observed that *WhatsApp* can be a very useful tool for real-time communication. It can be used to educate the populace on important issues. Organisations, families, professional bodies form *WhatsApp* groups and use them to keep in touch and share relevant communication. I have seen *WhatsApp* groups used to co-ordinate activities by sparsely situated players and I have seen *WhatsApp* groups used to manage crises. I have also been happy to see *WhatsApp* used to promote child protection, HIV/Aids treatment adherence and for campaigns against gender-based violence. I have, however, been gravely concerned to see *WhatsApp* being used to circulate harmful information and unacceptable graphic material.

Almost every adult in every household has a phone and most are on *WhatsApp*. Children also have phones and are on *WhatsApp*. Most parents and caregivers don't monitor what their children receive on *WhatsApp*, yet phones have replaced televisions for our children and some of the graphic material that we receive on the various groups that we are on end up in our children's phones. Most people just forward information, video voice notes without thinking of the impact the shared piece of information might have.

A case in point is the information that has child abuse connotations and information on public health. These are topical issues for Zimbabwe today. A few weeks ago, I received from a certain group that I am on a video of private parts of a very traumatised child. As is typical with videos shared on *WhatsApp*, this video went viral. The video shows the private parts of an apparently sexually abused girl child on what looks like a hospital bed.

Some gloved hand is trying to examine her and each time the hand touches her, the child screams in agony. The pain in the child's voice left a mark on my mind although I could not watch the video to completion. The video was accompanied by an allegation that she had been raped by her mother's boyfriend. Someone must have thought by recording this video and circulating it they were fighting child sexual abuse.

I am not sure, however, if this is a very effective and harmless way of fighting child abuse. In the first place, recording the video completely takes away the child's right to privacy and confidentiality. Granted, the child's face is not shown on the video, but what we are being shown are her privates, which

guest column



Sibisisiwe Marunda

should remain private. The child was obviously not in a position to give any consent to have any part of her body recorded and circulated on *WhatsApp*, but someone just took the liberty to do so. I am not going to talk about the heartlessness of recording such pain and circulating it, I will accept we are different. I, however, have no apology in stating that in this case *WhatsApp* became a tool for secondary trauma to the child and she might find it difficult to recover from the double trauma. This is one of the examples where *WhatsApp* has been used to re-traumatise survivors, particularly children, of violence and this practice does not look set to stop.

Now to the second issue of public health, Zimbabwe has joined the world in being one of the countries facing COVID-19 and *WhatsApp* has again become a vehicle for transmitting information. I do concede, the platform has been used to circulate a lot of useful information on the virus and communities have benefited from the information. The challenge has been the use of *WhatsApp* to circulate unverified information at best and outright untrue information at worst.

Everyone has become an expert on the virus and everyone wants to educate people. My concern is how much of the information we are circulating finds itself influencing our behaviour positively. For instance, how many of us have handwashing points at our house entrances as a way of ensuring no one enters our house without washing their hands? How many of us are staying home as advised by the experts? My second concern is the harm done by the alarmist messages that find themselves on *WhatsApp* groups.

I have seen messages that try to confine the virus to a particular ethnic group, thereby promoting stigma and discrimination. Some messages purport to contain recipes for concoctions that supposedly cure the virus and others, supported by verses from the Bible, allege that the virus is a form of punishment from God! Some have had the audacity to craft and circulate jokes about the virus. I have read, I have listened, I have watched and I have lamented the fact that our fellow humans are dying

in thousands, we are faced by a threat to human existence and all we can do is pretend to be experts instead of supporting experts! Forwarding every joke and every piece of information that you come across about something as serious as COVID-19 does not reflect a serious perception of personal danger. It does not reflect that we are seriously thinking about the fact that we can get infected neither does it indicate a serious introspection about how we can support those battling the virus.

The tragedy of such irresponsible use of *WhatsApp* is that an opportunity to use the platform constructively and to make a real difference is lost as we pass time by overloading inboxes with unverified and at times offensive information. *WhatsApp*, because of its accessibility has potential to reach everyone across the divide. It, therefore, can be a very useful tool. Used wrongly or irresponsibly it can cause fear and despondency and it can destroy hope and confidence. It can also fuel stigma and discrimination and yet used responsibly it can also promote love, care and support.

We have to make a choice on how we are going to use the platform, but in making that choice, let's keep in mind there are people out there who have tested positive for the virus and have had to go into isolation. They need messages of hope. There are brave men and women who are fighting to save the lives of those who are ill. They need our encouragement and support. When someone is affected by an illness that requires them to be quarantined, they lose a very important part of the healing process, community and family support, they will battle alone without the hugs and warmth of family. With social media, particularly *WhatsApp*, they don't have to. *WhatsApp* is one platform that can be used to encourage communities and families to support those in isolation. It can also be used to reach those in quarantine without those reaching out putting themselves at risk. It can be a way of supporting those in isolation to keep in touch, share their thoughts, fears and hopes.

Have we ever thought about how we can use *WhatsApp* to serenade our frontline healthcare workers instead of spreading rumours? The 21-day lockdown might mean more time on our hands and therefore more time on *WhatsApp*, let's use it constructively, let's desist from causing more harm than good by indiscriminately forwarding everything that comes to our inbox.

As I conclude this article I urge everyone to pause and reflect on what one can personally do to reduce harm as our nation and the world face this pandemic. Next time we have unverified information on the virus, let's think before we press the send button. Let's generate personal messages of hope, love, care and support and circulate those instead. Let's use *WhatsApp* to support children and portray them as heroes who are resilient. Let's support our communities to build and nurture their own resilience as they try to prevent and survive this epidemic. We have to take responsibility and make *WhatsApp* work for us.

We will beat this!

● **Sibisisiwe Marunda is the REPSSI Zimbabwe country director. She writes in her personal capacity.**

MDC judgment sets tongues wagging

guest column

Sibanengi Dube



ZIMBABWEANS woke up from their coronavirus slumber to read an ambiguous judgment designed to discredit Nelson Chamisa's MDC-A presidency. The judgment, which was passed a few hours before April Fool's Day by judges Bharat Patel, Paddington Garwe and Antonia Guvava, ignited blistering deliberations.

The content of the judgment is as confusing as its tone. As to how the judgment coincided with coronavirus lockdown and April Fool's Day confirms the derision surrounding this issue. Misinterpretations, analyses and insights are flying back and forth as Zimbabweans try to make sense of this "pandemic" judgment which many dismissed as *Kurumen fulmen* (meaningless).

Some could not resist the temptation of taking snap volleys at Chamisa, demanding his exodus from the MDC-T leadership. As to how he should leave a party that he is no longer a member is too preposterous to merit even a passing sneer. Some are conveniently calling Chamisa to respect the courts and do the honourable thing. None of them are unpacking the so-called honourable action? What should Chamisa do?

Shockingly, others expect Chamisa to submit himself to Thokozani Khupe and participate in an inevitable MDC-T extraordinary congress. Is the judgment ordering Chamisa to submit himself to another congress of the MDC which will be convened by a political protagonist? Yes! The judgment literally nullified MDC-T's congress, so an extraordinary one should be on the cards, since Khupe was rendered an acting president of her party.

Judging from social media exchanges and informal discussions I had with a cross-section of Zimbabweans, what came out is the fact that the elusive judgment disturbed the citizenry, leaving everyone more distressed by the economic meltdown and coronavirus pandemic.

The majority of sober-minded Zimbabweans who opted to interrogate the case are asking correct questions. Which party was in court between MDC-T and MDC-A? What everyone cannot run away from is the fact that the MDC-T leadership wrangle spilled into the courts. The question is how then has that to do with MDC-A, a stand-alone party which is constitutionally defined outside Khupe's party? Chamisa ceased to be an MDC-T member and leader, so how is he supposed to submit himself to a party that he is not a member?

The judgment also seems to have blurred two political parties into one, which they preferred to call MDC. The only MDC party which existed was led by Welshman Ncube, which dissolved when it joined the MDC-Alliance prior to the 2018 elections.

The judgment is not taking judicial notice of political realities which crystallised in 2018 and 2019 when both MDC-T and MDC-A held separate congresses. The courts ignored what State organs accepted as reality. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission accepted and registered MDC-T and MDC-A as separate political parties they were allowed to contest the July 2018 elections.

Then there is another brigade that is outrageously calling for Chamisa to leave the MDC-A presidency. Why? What has the "coronavirus judgment" to do with MDC-A? One would be pardoned for

thinking that the judgment was purely limited to MDC-T and not any other political parties. It would be understandable if this gang was asking for Chamisa to leave MDC-T leadership. Then the response would have been a clear reminder that Chamisa abandoned Khupe's party long back. Information deputy minister Energy Mutodi was the first to fire such an injudicious shot and was followed by other apparatus in the mould of Morgen Komichi and Douglas Mwonzora, who shall be immediately joining Khupe in the political wilderness. What immediately followed served to expose the objectives of the sponsors of the court case. The case also exposed the sell-outs who came out of their closets ululating and gyrating before *uhuru*. State media outlets then followed by spewing and screaming all kinds of deceitful headlines displaying flagrant disregard of facts. The erudite Zimbabweans are, however, smart enough not to believe anything reported by the State media. The majority of Zimbabweans, however, came to terms with the fact that the judgment is purely academic as it was overtaken by events. The political contest was civilly corrected by the MDC-A Gweru congress. The courts made a decision based on an expired set of claims brought before it by Political Actors Dialogue kingpin Lovemore Madhuku.

The judgment instantly jumpstarted gluttonous claims by MDC-T outfits. One wonders why they are bereft of any sophistication in concealing their intents and partners in this project of destabilising MDC-A. It is clear twaddle for anyone to expect the MDC-A leadership to register any party properties, if they are any, in the name of MDC-T. Attempts to deliver fatal blows have been stepped up. A false statement attributed to Chamisa was crafted and circulated in social media a few hours after the judgment. The statement falsely claimed that Chamisa was about to step down because of the judgment. Chamisa dismissed the statement as a hoax.

Calls are slowly gaining momentum for Parliament to pay MDC-T parliamentary funds meant for MDC-A. The Political Finance Act allows funding of political parties with more than 15 MPs from the national Treasury. MDC-T falls short of the minimum political threshold, while MDC-A is almost at par with the ruling Zanu PF. How does the judgment make MDC-A MPs to be MDC-T legislators? The level of desperation being displayed here serves to expose everything that is atrocious with this judgment.

The MDC-A leaders consistently sang from the same hymn book, maintaining that the judgment was not speaking to their party and will be ignored.

"It is of no effect at all. We will just ignore it and move on," said the part vice-chairman Job Sikhala.

MDC vice-president Tendai Biti said they will read the judgment and shelve it.

A law eagle and vice-president of the party Welshman Ncube said: "Legally MDC-Alliance was not before the court and cannot be bound by a judgment to which it is not a party and which in any event is not directed at it. Politically, the people always decide. Period."

● **Sibanengi Dube writes in his personal capacity.**

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Let's make the African dream a reality

OUR African dream is to stop being subordinates of our former oppressors.

Africa is a rich land full of natural resources. Unfortunately, we export raw materials and import finished goods made from our resources. Let us utilise our raw materials to develop ourselves and our continent.

Our African dream is to see the people love and embrace who they are. Our women and sometimes men must stop bleaching their skins and be proud of who they are.

Let us welcome and make use of technology and globalisation, but we mustn't let our culture take the back seat while we adopt other cultures.

History has it that technology began in Africa along the Nile River in Egypt, but we as Africans seem to forget all that and let others take credit for our efforts.

Let's not look down upon ourselves.

Africa has had some of the greatest leaders, but it is the least developed continent because its people always find fault in their leaders while praising Western leaders.

Let's make use of the knowledge, wisdom and good leadership in our midst and develop Africa.

Africans, let us stop being myopic and make our African dream a reality, let us join hands and work together and make our great land a paradise for ourselves.

Kuda Mufaro

Zim is still a safe destination

IT is an oversimplification of a rather complex issue to say that Zimbabwe is among the worst tourism destinations. In actual fact, Zimbabwe is one of the safest countries in the world.

Its infrastructure is better than that of most countries in Africa. It should be known that information technology and the economy have nothing to do with whether a tourist will enjoy themselves or not. A tourist enjoys the beautiful lodges and hotels in Hwange, Victoria Falls and Kariba. In terms of natural beauty, the country has endless safari destinations such as Mana Pools, Matopos, Chinhoyi Caves, Victoria Falls and Kariba. Tourists can enjoy themselves with no fear of being abducted or mugged.

We know that there are always misguided people in society who portray the wrong image in order to fortify their positions and those of their Western masters.

Tatenda Mapo

Talking Point

Govt should ban smoking in public places

IT is unfortunate that our economy relies on tobacco farming and selling when other countries are moving away from its use due to the serious health problems it causes. The government must move with speed to control smoking in public places.

Health researchers say non-smokers are affected more when exposed to cigarette smoke.

Passive smoking, which refers to indirect smoking by non-smokers, is prevalent in Zimbabwe, so the government must enact

a law that makes public smoking a crime.

Dangerous products must be banned from public places.

Smoking in beerhalls must be banned.

To show the danger of smoking, in a hall of 100 people if 10 decide to smoke, the smoke will affect everyone.

Smoking is very dangerous. Some governments have moved to force the producers of cigarettes to inform the public on the dangers of smoking in their adverts.

Smoking laws must be en-

acted to protect the public.

The effects of smoking are dangerous as the diseases are difficult to cure even in developed countries.

Now with local and international football watched in bars, young people are thronging such places to watch soccer, wrestling and movies.

Laws not to ban, but control smoking in confined places must be enacted to protect non-smokers who go to beerhalls only to drink, play games or watch television.

Takura Dambi



Energy minister Fortune Chasi

Zesa plunging Zim into darkness

IT is grossly disheartening to observe the incompetence that is being exhibited by our sole power utility, Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (Zesa).

For the past months if not years, the whole country has experienced serious power cuts.

Our schools, homes, hospitals and industries have been plunged into total darkness by this failed power utility and amazingly without any apology to the suffering populace.

To compound this perennial failure on the part of

Zesa, winter load-shedding is just by the corner and it will only exacerbate an already volatile situation.

What boggles the mind is the perpetual silence from the responsible authorities on measures being taken to

stop this nonsense.

Where is the responsible Energy minister Fortune Chasi when all this is happening? Does the power utility have a board of directors? What is their mandate?

Were they chosen to enjoy the benefits that come with being board members — hefty packages and luxury cars while the whole country languishes in darkness that has engulfed the entire country?

Lord save us from these incompetent leaders.

Concerned

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IN response to *MDC leaders rally behind Chamisa*, **TAMBAI** says: Unfortunately, I see some people celebrating the MDC leader Nelson Chamisa's demise, but they are day-dreaming. What matters in politics is numbers and that is where the votes come from. When courts stripped Chief Felix Nhlanhlay-amangwe Ndiweni of everything, we never heard him begging or did his support dwindle, no! Chamisa is there to stay, he got more than 2,6 million votes which will never be blown away by the courts. Such desperation by Zanu PF will backfire. They have just propped up Chamisa's political position as a truly credible leader. What a poor strategy! I think Chamisa is having a good morning. Deservedly so.

FUNDAI says: If such constitutionalism is being applied to MDC leader Nelson Chamisa then President Emmerson Mnangagwa is illegally leading the country. Mnangagwa was fired by the late former President Robert Mugabe as his deputy in November 2017, two weeks before their party congress. At the time of Mugabe's resignation, Mnangagwa was no longer the Vice-President and constitutionally, the then Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko should have taken over. The army did all it could to stop Mphoko from taking over, thus violating the Zanu PF constitution. We are watching from the terraces, only time will tell.

IN response to *Court orders council to urgently address water crisis*, **LOUD** says: Water is a vital commodity, therefore the government should not ignore the ratepayers' complaints. It is in everyone's interest to continuously deliver clean water. The government should avail funds for the implementation of the programme to cater for such an essential service.

IN response to *Nyaradzo suspends buses, sets up COVID-19 testing clinics*, **MANENJI** says: This is what we expect from big companies to plough back into the community by assisting where it matters most. As of now, we have realised that all those people who brag about having money are liars. This is where they have to show the nation that they have it.

IN response to *Zanu PF hijacks mealie-meal distribution*, **TONGAI** says: Zanu PF officials are a threat to our health. Despite the 21-day national lockdown they are still behaving in such a wayward manner. It is clear they are not taking the deadly coronavirus pandemic seriously. Our country is sitting on a ticking time bomb.

Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe

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FOR MORE INFORMATION ON COVID-19 AND HIV:

Website: www.nac.org.zw

National AIDS Council of Zimbabwe

@NACZIM

+263-719 70 70 32 - Text HI to this number

What People Living With HIV Need To Know About HIV and COVID-19

What people living with HIV need to know about HIV and COVID-19

COVID-19 is a serious disease and all people living with HIV should take all recommended preventive measures to minimize exposure to, and prevent infection by, the virus that causes COVID-19.

As in the general population, older people living with HIV or people living with HIV with heart or lung problems may be at a higher risk of becoming infected with the virus and of suffering more serious symptoms.

We will actively learn more about how HIV and COVID-19 together impact on people living with HIV from countries and communities responding to both epidemics. Lessons in rolling out innovations or adapting service delivery to minimize the impact on people living with HIV will be shared and replicated as they become available. Until more is known, people living with HIV—especially those with advanced or poorly controlled HIV disease—should be cautious and pay attention to the prevention measures and recommendations. It is also important that people living with HIV have multimonth refills of their HIV medicines.



Precautions that people living with HIV and key populations should follow to prevent COVID-19 infection

Stay safe

- Clean hands frequently with soap and water (for 40–60 seconds) or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer (for 20–30 seconds).
- Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue away after use.
- Avoid close contact with anyone who has a fever or cough.
- Stay home when you are ill.
- If you are experiencing fever, a cough and difficulty breathing and have recently travelled to, or are a resident in, an area where COVID-19 is reported, you should seek medical care immediately from your community health service, doctor or local hospital. Before you go to a doctor's office or hospital, call ahead and tell them about your symptoms and recent travel.
- If you are ill, wear a medical mask and stay away from others.



Stay informed

- Know the facts about COVID-19 and always check a reliable source, such as the World Health Organization: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>.

Be prepared

- You should have a supply of your necessary medical supplies on hand—ideally for 30 days or more. The World Health Organization HIV treatment guidelines now recommend multimonth dispensing of three months or more of HIV medicines for most people at routine visits, although this has not been widely implemented in all countries.
- Know how to contact your clinic by telephone in the event that you need advice.
- Know how to access treatment and other supports within your community. This treatment could include antiretroviral therapy, tuberculosis medication (if on tuberculosis treatment) and any other medication for other illnesses that you may have.



- Key populations, including people who use drugs, sex workers, gay men and other men who have sex with men, transgender people and prisoners, should ensure that they have essential means to prevent HIV infection, such as sterile needles and syringes and/or opioid substitution therapy, condoms and pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Adequate supplies of other medications, such as contraception and gender-affirming hormone therapy, should also be obtained.
- Not all countries have implemented policies to allow for longer prescriptions. Be in touch with your health-care provider as early as possible. Consider working with others in your community to persuade health-care providers and decision-makers to provide multi-month prescriptions for your essential medicines.



- Discuss with your network of family and friends how to support each other in the event that social distancing measures are put in place. Make alternate arrangements within your community for food, medicines, care for children or pets, etc.
- Help others in your community and ensure that they also have an adequate supply of essential medicines.
- Check that you know how to reach your local network of people living with HIV by electronic means. Make a plan for telephone and for social media connections in the event that public health measures call for people to stay home or if you become ill.

Support yourself and people around you

- The outbreak of COVID-19 may cause fear and anxiety—everyone is encouraged to take care of themselves and to connect with loved ones. People living with HIV and their communities have decades of experience of resilience, surviving and thriving,



and can draw on their rich shared history to support their families and communities in this current crisis. Pay particular attention to your mental health by:

- > **Avoiding excessive exposure to media coverage of COVID-19. Only read information from trusted sources.**
- > **Taking care of your body. Take deep breaths, stretch or meditate. Try to eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise regularly, get plenty of sleep and, where possible, avoid alcohol and drugs.**
- > **Making time to unwind and reminding yourself that negative feelings will fade. Take breaks from watching, reading or listening to news stories—it can be upsetting to hear about the crisis repeatedly. Try to do some other activities you enjoy in order to return to your normal life.**



- Connecting with others. Share your concerns and how you are feeling with a friend or family member.

Stop stigma and know your rights

- Stigma and discrimination is a barrier to an effective response to COVID-19. This is a time where racism, stigma and discrimination can be directed against groups considered to be affected.

- Your workplace, access to health care or access to education, for you or your children, may be affected by the COVID-19 outbreak if social distancing measures are put in place in your community. Find out your rights and make sure that you and your community are prepared.

Treatment of COVID-19

- Treatment of COVID-19 is an active area of research and several randomized clinical trials are ongoing to determine whether antiretroviral medicines used for treating HIV might be useful for treating COVID-19. Many other



- possible treatments are also being tested in well-designed clinical trials. Since those trials have not ended, it is too early to say whether antiretroviral medicines or other medicines are effective in treating COVID-19. A recent clinical trial showed that there was no substantial benefit of using Kaletra to treat COVID-19.



Life & Style

Wenera strikes UK TV deal

BY WINSTONE ANTONIO

THE executive director of local popular soap opera *Wenera* Eddie Ndhlovu has struck a screening deal with *VoxAfrica Television UK*, a United Kingdom Pan-African bilingual television channel for the screening of the production from Season 1 starting this month.

Ndhlovu told *NewsDay Life & Style* yesterday that the deal was part of efforts to reach out to a wider audience.

"*Wenera* was only on ZBC TV since its premiere in July 2015. Now in season 12, we are trying to penetrate outside markets and getting *Wenera* out there. We have just signed a deal to start screening *Wenera Season 1* on *VoxAfrica SKY 193* and Free view 271 and it will premiere on April 16 at 8:30pm and will be showing every Thursday night," he said.

Ndhlovu said they had also inked another deal with TelOne's online Deod television, where they have since launched *Wenera Seasons 1 and 2* which are already screening.

"Most people in the diaspora have heard about *Wenera* and never got an opportunity to watch it as it was only showing locally," he said.

Ndhlovu said the developments presented an opportunity to get Zimbabwean products out into the world.

"We are producing competitive programmes locally and I believe with such developments, more doors will be opened for Zimbabwean programmes on the international platforms," he said.

Ndhlovu said the re-branding of *Wenera* to *Viva Wenera* to capture regional and international markets was at an advanced stage.

He said *Viva Wenera*, would be a blend of new and old cast members and their main focus was to have a variety of actors from different backgrounds.

"With *Viva Wenera*, our intentions are to include tourism aspects, anti-poaching plots in the new storylines as we want to be relevant with what is happening and moreover keeping and maintaining our identity as a project from Zimbabwe," he said.

Ndhlovu said they were happy that stakeholders had agreed to partner with them.

"We do not have timelines for the premiere yet, but we will begin from episode one, season one as we have begun appealing to sponsors so that we are able to bring out a more modest programme in terms of quality and a product that will be able to compete with other regional television shows," he said.

"The quality of the pictures, setting and the direction of the plots will also be different. The aim is to make the new production better in any way we can. We are still in the development stages and soon we will be able to shed light on other major changes."

Wenera has been showing on national television since July 2015 up to October 2019 when the producers agreed to take the production off air to rethink and re-strategise to meet regional and international television standards.

Eddie Ndhlovu

'Lockdown a wake-up call for artistes'

BY PHILLIP CHIDAVAZENZI

TOP gospel artiste Mathias Mhere yesterday said the 21-day lockdown effected by President Emmerson Mnangagwa on Monday in a bid to curb the spread of the virulent coronavirus (COVID-19) had provided a learning curve for artistes to make hay while the sun shines.

Mhere said

Easter Holiday was usually a busy season for gospel artistes and he was set to perform in Harare, Beitbridge and Masvingo during the global Christian commemoration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but all the shows had to be cancelled.

"The lockdown has affected us in a big way because we had shows lined up for Easter cancelled and we can't work. We are stuck at home. You can't even record a coronavirus song; you can't do it," he said.

"During the Easter period, I had four shows; two in Harare, one in Beitbridge and another in Masvingo."

The musician, however, admitted that

the lockdown was necessary as it was important to halt the spread of COVID-19

"But these are good measures to stop the spread of the disease. It came unexpectedly, but it has affected us business-wise," he said.

Mhere highlighted that the development had shown that it was important for artistes to have tangible investments to cover their backs during such trying times.

"An artiste should be focused, consider tomorrow and invest in tangible things," he said. "If we don't invest, we may end up with no homes, and leave a bad legacy for our families."

Meanwhile, sultry songbird and fashionista, Cindy Munyavi, said it was important not just for artistes but everyone to have some savings to hedge themselves against such shocks.

"I am just indoors, sitting it out and waiting, nothing is happening," she said.

"I think everyone should save regardless of their profession in case of times like these. It is a universal problem that goes beyond artistes."



Mathias Mhere

China-based writer releases debut book

BY TAFADZWA KACHIKO

CHINA-BASED Zimbabwean writer Ashton Bvute has released his debut novel, *The Contested Diamond*, which touches on the dynamics of Zimbabwe's socio-economic and political trends by revisiting the land reform programme and discovery of diamonds in Chiadzwa.

Bvute, a former teacher, told *NewsDay Life & Style* that he started writing the book in 2015 and completed it recently while in self-isolation following an outbreak of COVID-19.

"My aim was to complete the book in 2016, but this could not materialise because of some hiccups. I am excited that finally I am done with the book. I

finished the book under self-isolation because of COVID-19. It's now on online platforms that include *Amazon* and it will soon be in Zimbabwe's bookshops," he said.

"The book portrays the fiction and real-

ity of life during and after the land reform programme up to the discovery of diamonds in Chiadzwa. If you have an interest in Zimbabwean activities, events, lifestyle and history this book is a must-read."

Having witnessed the death of his parents during the land reform programme, Petro finds it difficult to make ends meet.

In pursuit of wealth and

fortune, he gets involved in cross-border trading and tactfully steals the well-protected matchbox with a diamond from seasoned dealers, Nilly, Solo and Jerry. The contested diamond had been panned illegally in Chiadzwa.

However, the diamond fails to turn around Petro's life as he loses it and the proceeds in a botched deal and ends up at Mutimurefu Prison. Coincidentally, Petro and Nilly share the same cell at Mutimurefu.

"I dedicate this book to all Zimbabweans for their tolerance and adaptation to the socio-economic and political hardships. For this reason, we have seen peace prevailing," Bvute said.



Ashton Bvute



Rihanna

I'll have kids: Rihanna

RIHANNA is opening up about becoming a mom.

The *Love On The Brain* singer is British *Vogue's* May 2020 cover star, and she told the magazine she plans on having "three or four children" in the future.

The 32-year-old spoke about how busy her life is, but said: "I'm working like this now so that I don't have to in the future."

"I know I will want to live differently," she said, which to her means having children within the next ten years.

"I'll have kids — three or four of 'em," she added.

Rihanna recently split from longtime boyfriend, Hassan Jameel, and though there have been rumours she's dating A\$AP Rocky,

on raising children on her own she said, "Hell, yeah."

She added: "I feel like society makes me want to feel like, 'Oh, you got it wrong ...' They diminish you as a mother if there's not a dad in your kids' lives. But the only thing that matters is happiness, that's the only healthy relationship between a parent and a child. That's the only thing that can raise a child truly, is love."

Rihanna also spoke about her new music dropping soon, after *PartyNextDoor* just released their track *Believe It* with the singer.

She teased fans once more saying, "I can't say when I'm going to drop, but I am very aggressively working on music."

— Citizen



Van Gogh painting stolen from Dutch museum closed by coronavirus

LAREN, Netherlands — Thieves stole a painting by Dutch master Vincent van Gogh early on Monday from the Netherlands' Singer Laren Museum, which is currently closed to the public because of the coronavirus.

The painting "Lentetuin", or "Spring Garden," which dates back to 1884 and depicts the garden of the rectory at Nuenen, had been on loan from the Groninger Museum.

"I feel incredibly angry and now I'm starting to feel sadder too," Jan Rudolph de Lorm, director of the Singer Laren Museum, told *Reuters* in an interview.

He appealed to those who had taken the painting to treat it with care "so that sooner or later it can be shown to the public unharmed".

Van Gogh, who struggled with mental illness throughout his life, was staying with his parents when he painted "Spring Garden".

His father worked as a minister in Nuenen.

De Lorm described the painting, which depicts a woman in a gar-

den with red-flowered bushes and with a church in the background, as "an image of silence, of reflection and of tranquility, which undoubtedly offered him comfort and inspiration".

"Through him, it gave us and our audience the same emotion," de Lorm added.

The museum, located in the town of Laren to the east of Amsterdam, has appealed for the swift return of the painting, which has been added to Interpol's list of stolen artworks.

In a statement, police said the thieves had entered the museum by breaking its glass doors at around 3:15am.

"The culprits were gone by the time police responded to the alarm," the statement said.

Investigators are searching for security footage and witnesses, and are examining forensic evidence, it added.

Dutch museums have been closed because of the coronavirus outbreak since March 12.

— Reuters

EDITORIAL VACANCY

Department: Editorial
Post: News Editor (All publications)

Key Responsibilities

- Managing the newsroom as a content creation hub
- Give assignments to all reporters and do follow ups on key assignments/stories
- Maintain a record of key sources for use by all reporters, multimedia journalists and photographers
- Must meet deadlines for timely production of all publications and key targets for the role
- Maintain good rapport with all publications Editors
- Edit copy for all group titles including digital platforms and Heart and Soul Broadcasting Services
- Maintain AMH values and guiding principles including putting accuracy to the test
- Assist reporters in coming up with investigative and in-depth stories
- Give photographic and digital/multimedia assignments for all diaries
- Provide leadership, communication and maintain discipline in the newsroom;
- Maintain a follow up diary;
- Train and mentor junior reporters and interns
- Must attend diary meetings with Editors for all titles and digital platforms as required

Key Attributes

- Must have proven leadership qualities
- Excellent communication skills
- Good temperament
- Ability to work under pressure and without supervision
- Must be a hard worker, innovative and tech savvy
- Multimedia and digital skills are an added advantage
- Must understand the psychology of the different AMH titles

Educational Qualifications:

- 5 "O" level passes including English & Maths
- 2 "A" level passes including a commercial subject
- Media Studies Degree/Diploma in Media from a recognized institution of higher learning
- A post-graduate qualification is an added advantage

Experience:

- 3 years' experience in a supervisory role

If you meet the above requirements, send your CV at vacancieszw2016@gmail.com

Closing date of applications is 05 April 2020

EDITORIAL VACANCY

Department: Editorial
Post: Photographer/Photo Journalist
Report to: News Editor

Key Responsibilities

- Taking pictures of political and human rights activities
- Taking pictures of social, sporting, humorous, and human nature for both the Zimbabwe Independent and The Standard
- Taking photographs at functions as instructed by marketing and editorial departments
- Must be able to write stories when required
- Must have multimedia/digital skills
- Must maintain a good rapport with all publications Editors
- Must maintain photographic and digital/multimedia assignments for all publications and digital platforms
- Provide leadership, communication and maintain discipline in the photographic section
- Maintain a follow up picture diary;
- Train and mentor junior photographers and interns
- Must attend diary meetings with Editors for all titles and digital platforms as required
- Must have videography skills including photo-shop and video editing

Key Attributes

- Must have own camera
- Must have proven leadership qualities
- Excellent communication skills
- Good temperament
- Ability to work under pressure and without supervision
- Must be a hard worker, innovative and tech savvy
- Multimedia and digital skills are an added advantage
- Must understand the psychology of the different AMH titles

Educational Qualifications:

- 5 "O" level passes including English & Maths
- 2 "A" level passes including a commercial subject
- Diploma in Photo-journalism
- Media Studies Degree/Diploma in Media from a recognized institution of higher learning will be an added advantage.

Experience:

- 3 years' experience.

If you meet the above requirements, send your CV at recruitmentm2020@gmail.com

Closing date of applications is 05 April 2020

EVERYDAY NEWS FOR EVERYDAY PEOPLE

NEWS DAY

PUZZLES

Spot the difference

Find five differences in this picture of essential services staff waiting for Zupco buses to ferry them to their various workstations in Harare yesterday. Check for the answers in Monday's *NewsDay*.



Crossword with Jemina 996

1		2			3		4		5
					6				
7				8					
				9					
10									
					11	12		13	
	14		15		16				17
							18		
19									
						20			
21									
					22				

Across

- 1 Frenzied (7)
- 6 Astuteness (6)
- 7 Accumulate (5)
- 9 Inconveniences (8)
- 10 Fad (5)
- 11 Strayed (5)
- 14 Stalks (5)
- 18 Beneath (5)
- 19 Bringing (8)
- 20 Swarm (5)
- 21 Virtuous (6)
- 22 Takes in (7)

Down

- 1 Debacle (6)
- 2 Inflexible (7)
- 3 Wheedle (6)
- 4 Numeral (6)
- 5 Fable (6)
- 8 Vapour (5)
- 12 Crude (5)
- 13 Lasts (7)
- 14 Boil (6)
- 15 Alibi (6)
- 16 Captured (6)
- 17 Crawls (6)

SUDOKU

The aim of Sudoku is to enter a number from 1 through to 9 in each cell of a grid, most frequently a 9x9 grid made up of 3x3 sub-grids. Each row, column and region must contain only one instance of each number.

Medium

	8	3				4		
			2		8		3	6
	1							
1	3		7					
		9		8				7
7					9			4
	6	2	8		4	1		
	9			6	1			5
3					2			9

Hard

					8			
	4				5	1		
1					9	5		3
	7				6			
	5		9					2
3			8		4	7		
		6		7	3	8		
		5				6	3	
		7						9

sudoku-puzzles.net

Thursday April 2 Answers

SIMPLE 995

ACROSS: 1 Basic, 7 Toiled, 8 Chopper, 9 Entail, 10 Grime, 11 Tinted, 15 Dashed, 19 Unpin, 20 Falter, 21 Bedding, 22 Cinema, 23 Sagas.

DOWN: 1 Buckled, 2 Sponges, 3 Captive, 4 Street, 5 Bitten, 6 Device, 12 Impedes, 13 Tending, 14 Damages, 16 Adagio, 17 Hatred, 18 Durban.

Sudoku Answers

Easy

3	4	1	9	2	5	8	7	6
2	8	5	4	6	7	3	9	1
7	9	6	3	8	1	2	4	5
1	2	7	5	4	8	6	3	9
8	5	3	2	9	6	4	1	7
4	6	9	1	7	3	5	2	8
9	3	8	6	1	2	7	5	4
5	7	4	8	3	9	1	6	2
6	1	2	7	5	4	9	8	3

Hard

4	7	5	2	1	9	3	8	6
6	9	1	4	3	8	7	2	5
2	8	3	6	5	7	4	1	9
7	5	9	3	8	2	1	6	4
1	4	2	9	7	6	5	3	8
3	6	8	1	4	5	2	9	7
8	1	7	5	9	3	6	4	2
9	3	6	7	2	4	8	5	1
5	2	4	8	6	1	9	7	3



Sport

Son set for military training during virus shutdown

LONDON — Tottenham Hotspur's South Korean striker Son Heung-min will report to a marines boot camp later this month to fulfil military service duties, a report said yesterday.

All able-bodied South Korean men are obliged to serve in the military for nearly two years, making up the bulk of Seoul's 600 000-strong forces — who face off against North Korea's army of 1,3 million.

But Son was spared a career-threatening stint as a conscript when South Korea took gold at the 2018 Asian Games in Indonesia, earning the team an exemption.

The Spurs star broke down in tears of joy after the 2-1 extra-time win over Japan, which meant he could fulfil his obligations with just three weeks' basic training

and around 500 hours of community service.

The 27-year-old's Premier League season ended even before the coronavirus outbreak spread to Europe when he broke his arm against Aston Villa on February 16 and Spurs said he returned to South Korea for "personal reasons".

Son will report to a marines boot camp on the island of Jeju on April 20 for his basic training, an industry source told the South's *Yonhap* news agency.

He posted images online on Wednesday of himself exercising on what appeared to be a large balcony, skipping and stretching.

The Premier League is postponed until at least April 30 because of the pandemic and is likely to be delayed even longer when the English game's stakeholders meet today.

— AFP



Son Heung-min

Sunshine Tour pros, caddies to receive monthly stipend

PRETORIA — The Sunshine Tour, in support of President Cyril Ramaphosa's call for social solidarity from all South Africans in the fight against coronavirus, has announced a comprehensive financial relief programme for South African men's and women's professional golf.

In an unprecedented move in South African professional golf, the Sunshine Tour will pay a monthly stipend to its member professionals, and on a scale according to their various categories of membership, for the months of April and May 2020.

The Women's Professional Golf Association (WPGA), in partnership with the Sunshine Ladies Tour, announced a similar financial programme for the top 25 South African professionals on the Sunshine Ladies Tour.

The Sunshine Tour has also committed to paying a monthly stipend for April and May 2020 to all the caddies who are registered with the South African Caddie Association and who have been active in the 2019-2020 Sunshine Tour season.

This is to assist them in meeting their financial obligations at a time professional golf worldwide has been suspended because of COVID-19.

The Sunshine Tour, in accordance with world golf, has already suspended all of its activities as of 16 March 2020.

The executive and staff of the Sunshine Tour, as well as the execu-

tive of GolfRSA and the WPGA, have also agreed to a voluntary salary reduction, based on what is affordable to each staff member, for the months of April and May 2020.

"As our President has stated, these are extraordinary times for our country, and they require an extraordinary response from all South Africans," Sunshine Tour commissioner Selwyn Nathan said.

"Our board has fully endorsed and approved this financial plan for our members, and those of the WPGA and the Sunshine Ladies Tour, as we believe wholeheartedly that this is the right course of action to support our membership base in a manner and on a level that will ensure the longevity of our Tours and help our members through these trying times.

"I would like to thank GolfRSA and the WPGA for the solidarity they have shown in this regard, and also say a special thank you to all the staff of the various Tours for the financial sacrifice they are willing to make in what are clearly very difficult and uncertain times for them as well.

"South African professional golf is a very close family, and as such we will stick together in times of crisis. To quote our President, 'our success relies on the effort and energies of every citizen and their commitment to help assist others'. As the South African golf family, we are united in making this commitment."

— AFP

NRSL to honour Manyengavana

BY HENRY MHARA

THE Zifa Northern Region Soccer League (NRSL) Division One are planning a tournament in honour of their former chairperson Willard Manyengavana, who died last year.

The Willard Manyengavana memorial tournament will involve all the NRSL teams this season and is one of a number of tournaments planned by the league when it kicks off later this year, including an FA Cup.

The NRSL season was set to kick off this weekend, but has been postponed indefinitely because of the coronavirus outbreak which has put many sporting events around the world on hold.

Ruyamuro Holdings, who are the league's principal sponsors, will bankroll the Willard Manyengavana tournament.

"The (NRSL) chairperson Martin Kweza approached me sometime to consider bankrolling the Willard Manyengavana memorial tournament. I gave it a long thought and managed to convince my business associates to buy into the idea," Ruyamuro Holdings managing director Taurai Maurukira said.

"He was such a great guy who lived football all his life. This is the little I can do for him. The details of the package will be agreed at a launch whose date will be agreed. The most important thing is that Manyengavana's children

must benefit and enjoy the legacy that was left by their father," he added.

Manyengavana, credited for revolutionising the NRSL, collapsed and died in a gym in Harare last year.

Under his stewardship, the league managed to secure lucrative sponsorships including rewarding their player and coach of the year with cars. They are the only Zifa affiliate that gives such huge incentives.

"I must hasten to say that as Ruyamuro Holdings, we are delighted with the professionalism and the way football is administered in the league. Our brand will not hesitate to be associated with the Northern Region brand. They must harness what Manyengavana created and use it as a platform to even grow the brand bigger," Maurukira added.

Kweza, who took over from Manyengavana said they would carry on Manyengavana's legacy.

"This was the brainchild of the gallant and adventurous chairperson Willard Manyengavana. He left a legacy and we will continue with his legacy," Kweza said.

He also gave the league's

plans for the future, including setting up junior football structures for the teams (Under-15) to complement Zifa's efforts to launch junior leagues in all the country's 10 regions.

The NRSL congress last month set an ambitious programme to play an FA Cup in the upcoming season, which will be another first for the league.

To add on to their player and coach of the year awards and the golden boot award that they have held annually, the league announced further sponsorship packages at their congress including the player, coach, top goalscorer and goalkeeper of the month. The goalkeeper of the year will also be rewarded at the end of the season.

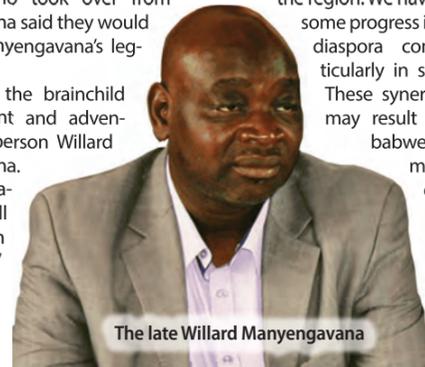
Kweza added: "We have also started engagements with regional partners to foster relationships that will benefit

the region. We have already made some progress in engaging the diaspora community, particularly in southern Africa.

These synergies, we hope, may result in some Zimbabweans who have

made it big in foreign countries deciding to partner football back here.

This is not just a dream, but a reality."



The late Willard Manyengavana

EDITORIAL VACANCY

Department: Editorial
Post: Business Editor (All Publications)

Key Responsibilities

- Gathering and writing business and financial news for all titles and digital platforms including Heart and Soul
- Broadcasting Services;
- Analyzing and interpreting economic data
- Give assignments to all business reporters;
- Edit business stories
- Managing the business desk as a content creation hub
- Give assignments to all business reporters and do follow ups on key assignments
- Maintain a record of key sources for use by all reporters, multimedia journalists
- Must meet deadlines for timely production of all publications and key targets for the role
- Maintain good rapport with all publications Editors
- Edit copy for all group titles including digital platforms and Heart and Soul Broadcasting Services
- Maintain AMH values and guiding principles including putting accuracy to the test
- Assist reporters in coming up with investigative and in-depth stories
- Give photographic and digital/multimedia assignments for all diaries
- Provide leadership, communication and maintain discipline on the Business Desk;
- Maintain a follow up diary;
- Train and mentor junior reporters and interns
- Must attend diary meetings with Editors for all titles and digital platforms as required

Key Attributes

- Must understand the psychology of the different AMH titles
- Must have proven leadership qualities on the market
- Excellent communication skills
- Good temperament
- Ability to work under pressure and without supervision
- Must be a hard worker, innovative and tech savvy
- Multimedia and digital skills are an added advantage

Educational Qualifications:

- 5 "O" level passes including English & Maths
- 2 "A" level passes including a commercial subject
- Media Studies Degree/Diploma in Media from a recognized institution of higher learning
- A post-graduate Business/Economic qualification is an added advantage

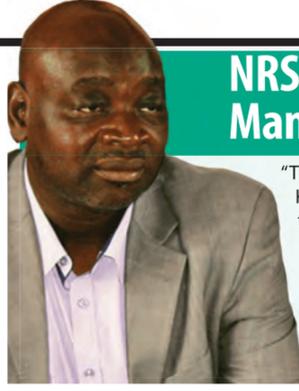
Experience:

- 3 years' experience.

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NRSL to honour Manyengavana

“THE NRSL chairperson Martin Kweza approached me some time to consider bankrolling the Willard Manyengavana memorial tournament. I gave it a long thought and managed to convince my business associates to buy into the idea.”

Page 15



Nakamba linked with Villa exit



BY FORTUNE MBELE

TURKISH Super Lig title contenders Trabzonspor are reportedly after the signature of Warriors and Aston Villa midfielder Marvelous Nakamba in the next transfer window.

A media outlet in Turkey, *Sabah*, on Tuesday claimed Trabzonspor wanted Nakamba to replace former Chelsea midfielder John Obi Mikel.

Mikel is reported to have mutually agreed to terminate his £5 million contract with Trabzonspor last month after the Turkish Super Lig continued to play amid the coronavirus pandemic and the Nigerian fled back to the United Kingdom with his family.

The Turkish Super Lig continued with action behind closed doors after most European leagues had suspended play, only to postpone the programme on March 19.

A report in *Sabah* on Tuesday read: “The new candidate number six in Trabzonspor is Marvelous Nakamba from Aston Villa. After the departure of Obi Mikel, Trabzonspor followed six stars for the next season, Marvelous Nakamba, star player of Aston Villa. Trabzonspor accelerated the transfer of the next season in the meantime given to the Super

Lig . . . Bordeaux-Blues are looking at the number six after the Nigerian football player Obi Mikel left the team . . .”

Birminghammail in England amplified the story from Turkey on Wednesday saying the 26-year-old Warriors midfielder is linked with a shock move Trabzonspor.

“Marvelous Nakamba has been linked with a shock exit from Aston Villa. According to reports in Turkey, the 26-year-old is a target for Turkish Super Lig club Trabzonspor. He is the third Villa player to be linked with a move to Turkey by the Press there, with Mbwana Samatta (Galatasaray) and Trezeguet (Besiktas) said to be interesting clubs over there,” *Birminghammail* said.

Nakamba was signed by Birmingham-based Aston Villa from Belgium’s Club Brugge in a £12 million deal, becoming the fourth Zimbabwean player to feature in the English Premier League after Bruce Grobbelaar, Peter Ndlovu and Benjani Mwaruwari.

Nakamba made 21 appearances for Aston Villa in the current EPL season before it was suspended.

Trabzonspor rule the roost in the Turkish Super Lig which also has Yeni Malatyaspor, home to Warriors defender Teenage Hadebe.

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