

**RETURNEES CONTINUE
TO ESCAPE FROM
QUARANTINE CENTRES**
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**MEDICAL STAFF
PROTESTS INTENSIFY**
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COVID-19 WATCH	716 cases	181 recoveries	8 deaths
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Cyber Security Bill public consultative process leaves out many

The Parliament of Zimbabwe this Monday rolled out countrywide public consultative meetings on the gazetted Cyber Security and Data Protection Bill.

The nationwide consultations are being held while most citizens had petitioned Parliament to reschedule until Covid-19 pandemic is over. Some civic society groups had also gone to court to try and stop the consultations on the bill for Constitutional Amendment 2.

Many citizens are not able to attend and contribute to the consultative process thus denying them their constitutional right to participate.

The consultative process is being held as many citizens are not able to participate

Today's meetings were attended by Honourable David Parirenyatwa, Senator Douglas Mwonzora, Honourable Jacob Nyokanhete, and Honourable Albert Nguluvhe who are all part of the committee that is doing nationwide consultative meetings. The hearing was held under strict World Health Organisation (WHO) standards where temperature checks, sanitization of hands and social distancing were observed. Only 50 people per session were allowed to enter the hearing.

"The Bill intends to provide security for all citizens. However under this Bill, data obtained can be used as evidence in court", he further added on.

The consultative process which is being done against a backdrop of traverse socio-economic



Dr David Parirenyatwa speaking during a Cyber Security Bill public hearing in Luveve

challenges that are bedevilling the country coupled with the rampaging Covid-19 pandemic has been received with mixed reviews by the general public.

Old people who were part of the hearing today lamented how the wording used in crafting the Bill was too complex for them.

"The jargon in the Bill has to be simplified so that it is compatible with the general populace. For example I hear people in this meeting talking about cyber-attack which is foreign language to us. We therefore appeal that you help us to decipher what is meant by such terms as cyber-

attack, we old people don't understand this", bemoaned a 70 year old man identified as Moyo from Luveve.

Meanwhile tech savvy youths that were present in the hearing queried how the identified regulatory authority, Postal and Telecommunications Regulatory Authority of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) was going to ensure the privacy of the end users who are the general public.

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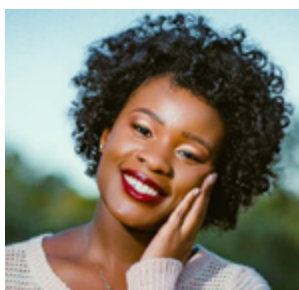
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“The government institution mandated with enforcing this bill if it makes into a law has powers under this bill to launch an investigation if there is suspicion of this new law being broken. Such an investigation involves the authority (POTRAZ) getting access to any data it requests from the entity under investigation”, said Mike Moyo (24).

“There is a real risk that the government can purport to be investigating any business they like just so they get hold of yours and my data. The bill does not fully stipulate how an

investigation should be carried out and under what circumstances data must be requested from the subject of an investigation. We usually hear people complain about unsolicited bulk advertisement messages that they receive from telecommunications networks like Netone, Econet and Telecel”, he said.

Meanwhile the public consultative process on the Bill continues tomorrow with public hearings in Gwanda, Birchenough Bridge and Bindura. On Friday the process is also stated to be held on social media platform.

Returnees continue to escape from quarantine centres

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services, Mr Nick Mangwana announced that there are some returnees who have escaped from the Beitbridge quarantine centre.

Writing on his Twitter page, Mr Mangwana said the names of the people who have escaped from the quarantine centre will be published in due course. A number of returnees continue to abscond from the quarantine centres and this is a big challenge as they risk spreading the virus.

“Several returnees have absconded from Beitbridge quarantine centre. We will publish their numbers and names when the information becomes available,” he said.

Responding to the tweet, one Mangurenje said it was inevitable for people to remain at the quarantine centre as there was no proper coordination and a lot of congestion.

“Someone at that centre said if you want to know what disorganisation looks like, come to Beitbridge Quarantine Centre. The place is congested, lacks coordination and results take too long. Communication is not done properly,” he said.

Charleen Ngazimbi said by the time the health officials publish the names of the people who have absconded, chances are that they could have mingled with others and spread the virus.



Nick Mangwana

She said there was need for such information to be readily available so that the public is aware and acts fast.

“By the time the information becomes available, how many people will they have infected? Is this information not supposed to be readily available since these people are recorded when they leave wherever they would have come from and when passing through the border,” she said.

Meanwhile a reliable source told The Christian Voice that there are seven returnees who also escaped from the Bulawayo Polytechnic yesterday.

Medical staff protests intensify

Nationwide strikes by medical staff have intensified with running battles in Harare between nurses and riot police.

Twelve nurses were arrested by the police in Harare according to a report from the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights.

Nurses in Harare also claimed that the government has retaliated by evicting them from their accommodation and alleged harassment.

In Mpilo nurses and other medical staff went into a spontaneous demonstration demanding salaries to be paid in forex and also for harassment against their colleagues in Harare to stop.

For the past five months doctors and nurses around the country have been demonstrating against the government demanding salaries in United States Dollars amid the rise in Covid-19 positive cases.

Speaking during the demonstration one of the nurses preferred anonymity for fear of victimisation said they always get in contact with patients without the required PPE. She said their lives are at risk, yet they are being ill treated by the government by paying them money that was not enough to cover their needs.

“We work hard and risk our lives to save other people, but our effort is not being recognised. Some of the nurses have contracted Covid-19



Police chase away nurses at Harare Hospital (Credit: Tsvangirai Mukwazhi). INSET: Nurses strike at Mpilo Hospital in Bulawayo (Credit: Newlight Films Africa)

because we are not supplied with the required personal protective clothing,” she said.

The nurses said they are struggling to survive and they cannot afford to pay their rentals which are in USD and they are incapacitated to report for duty on a daily basis. According to a press statement that was released by the Zimbabwe Nurses Association, the nurses at Harare Central Hospital were arrested before the demonstration began. It also stated that the attempts by the government to silence their voices by force was not new.

“Indications are that the arrests were done allegedly for the purposes of avoiding a demonstration at Harare Hospital. As we have

always stated, we have lost our earnings already through slave wages and so we have nothing to lose,” read part of the press statement.

They called upon all the nurses to remain resolute and continue to fight for better wages. The press statement also reflected that the government had not lived up to its promise of reviewing the salary and Covid-19 allowances of the medical personnel to United States Dollars.

“Government proceeded to refuse to discuss improving the reviews and instead rendered the Bipartite Negotiation Panel useless by unilaterally declaring that it was not willing to negotiate for the next three months,” read the statement.

Cities and Towns Update

PLUMTREE: Most of the basic commodities are available except for brown sugar. The goods are very expensive when you are buying in ZWL\$. Quarantine centres are still in Matopos Research and Esigodini while renovations are being done at Avoca training centre. Churches are slowly opening doors although some still have challenges in accessing infrared thermometers. All Church services range from 30 minutes to 2 hrs.

TSHOLOTSHO: People continue to come to the small town on a daily basis to look for basic commodities whose price rises each day. All shops are accepting ZWL\$ but their prices are very high beyond the reach of many villagers. R5 is rated at ZWL\$25. Fuel is no longer sold in ZWL\$ but in foreign currency. Wearing masks still remains respected by the community as police officers move around daily arresting those without. Most churches have begun meeting on Sundays and are trying to meet the WHO requirements. Those who haven't started

state that they are waiting for a directive from their headquarters.

HWANGE: Transport has become a challenge after small commuter buses under Zupco withdrew their vehicles citing unfair payments. People wait for hours to get transport. There are two buses that are plying routes such as Empumalanga, St Marys, Number 2, Number 3 and Number 5. Only Glow garage has fuel being sold at USD 1.20 a litre.

BULAWAYO: There has been a buzz of activity in the city as vendors and flea markets are slowly converging to sell their wares. The disturbing thing is that citizens have become so relaxed on the effects of Covid-19 by not observing precautions. Transport problems have also emerged rendering the public stranded.

CHINHOYI: Police officers and army personnel are seen moving around the city talking to citizens in a very civil manner as they enforced the lockdown regulations. Fuel is an issue, only available at the two service stations that sell

in USD.

Zupco is now overwhelmed as they are failing to handle the pressure. It also seems that after 430 pm, it is difficult to get transport as Zupco staff knock off after 4:30 pm even before clearing the commuters.

Yesterday, churches had their services and some of the churches did not have infrared thermometers. Police are worried and we are hoping that the church leaders will come in their numbers for the meeting that has been set for Thursday. This meeting will see pastors and the Covid-19 Taskforce meeting to discuss the issue of churches opening.

KWEKWE: The Market for Farmers (Musika) is still closed. Since the start of Covid-19, Redcliff has been getting water from Kwekwe Municipality despite the large sum of money that Redcliff municipality is owing Kwekwe. The Residents of Redcliff are now farming vegetables in the backyard of their houses due to constant supply of water.