

CITY WATER SHORTAGE PERSISTS
>pg2

OVERWHELMED ZUPCO ANNOUNCES NEW BUS TERMINUSES >pg3

Covid-19 WATCH	314 cases	46 recoveries	4 deaths
-----------------------	---------------------	-------------------------	--------------------

Constitutional Amendment outreaches rejected

Civic societies and Church organisations are taking a firm position against the proposed Constitutional Amendment Bill No. 2 public consultation process that was recently announced by Parliament.

Amid the Covid-19 complex regulations that are still in place, the Parliament of Zimbabwe yesterday released proposed dates for the public consultative meetings on the Constitutional amendments. Initially the public consultative process was supposed to be carried out in February, March this year but were shelved due to the coronavirus and subsequent lockdown that was declared by the Government.

Civic society and Church organisations nationwide have queried that since the lockdown restrictions are still in place such as the limitation in the numbers of people who can attend public gatherings it is strange why the government is insisting on going ahead with the constitutional amendment public consultations.

Crisis Coalition, National Convergence Platform, Matabeleland Forum, a coalition of CSOs coordinated by the Zimbabwe Institute and Churches have asked the government to stop the process of public consultations as this will endanger the lives of thousands of people as Covid-19 virus might spread through that.

The constitutional amendments according to analysis done by Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, Veritas and

other CSOs will erode the gains made by the new 2013 Constitution on protecting the rights of citizens and curtailing the powers of the executive.

This, they state, will thus be achieved through a Constitutional amendment scheme that will see the president wielding too much executive powers in relation to the appointments of Vice Presidents, a shift from the current running mate provision in the 2013 Constitution, a provision which guarantees that the country does not go back to the one party state period.

The proposed amendments also relate to the appointments of the Prosecutor General, Public Protector, and promotion of judges and the terms of office of judges, all of which is evident of the strong desire to impose the views of the ruling elite in all these appointments.

In a n

interview with the Christian Voice, the Executive Director for Habakkuk Trust, Mr. Dumisani Nkomo categorically dismissed the exercise as merely a farce.

"It's highly unfeasible and irresponsible because only fifty people are allowed to attend public meetings. In principle the public needs to actively and fully participate in any major constitutional amendment. Currently the lockdown content limits public access to meetings and decision making", said Nkomo.

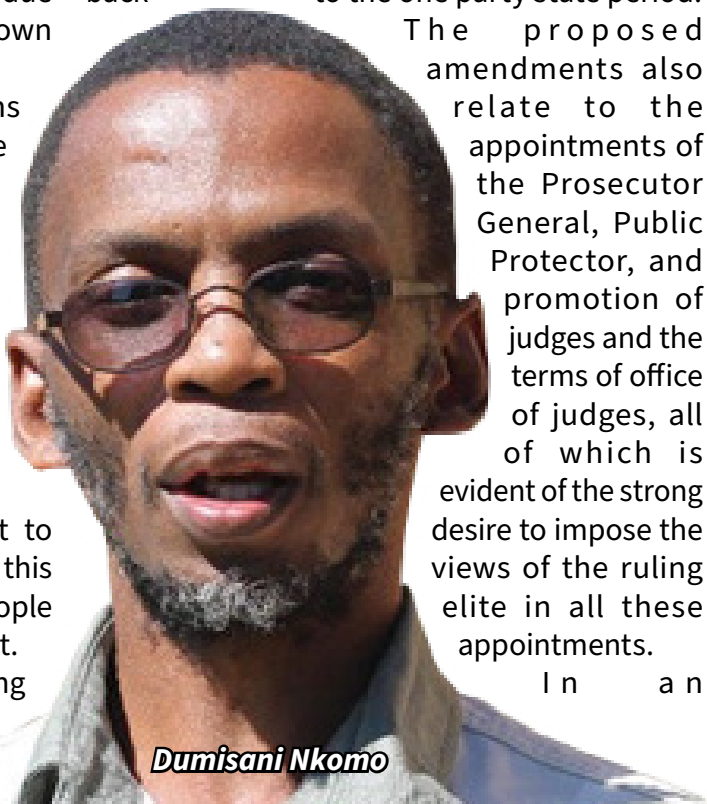
He further reiterated that as an organisation they are vehemently opposed to the proposed amendment process as it was an 'assault to the democratic processes'.

Echoing the same sentiments, the coordinator for Greater Hwange Residents Trust, Mr. Fidelis Chima said that for people in Hwange it will be a disadvantage if the process does go ahead as they will have to travel to Lupane where most of these sessions take place.

"It is not feasible to conduct public consultations on the constitutional amendment as the number of people permitted is just 50 per gathering and ironically Matabeleland North will be done only in Lupane excluding Hwange and Victoria Falls which were used for consultations", he said.

On the question of whether they are congenial to the proposed amendments, Chima fervently stated that they are against the move and are mobilising residents to oppose the process.

To Page 2



Dumisani Nkomo



EDITORIAL STAFF



EDITOR:
Rev. Useni Sibanda



PROOFREADER:
Runyararo Chilenje



SUB-EDITOR:
Nqobizitha Donga



WRITER:
Rumbidzai Mbewe



CORRESPONDENT:
Godswill Muzarabani

CONTACT DETAILS

Phone: 0292 231213

E-mail: zcaprog@gmail.com

Facebook: Zimbabwe Christian Alliance

Twitter: @zcalliance1

Website: www.zimbabwechristianalliance.org.zw

Constitutional Amendment outreaches rejected

From Page 1

“Greater Hwange is mobilizing citizens to reject the proposed amendment as it weakens the role of parliament in playing its oversight role as the executive will have the power to contract loans with foreign institutions without scrutiny from parliament. It also seek to centralise power to the president as he will appoint judges without going through public interviews”, said Chima.

The Director for Bulawayo Vendors and Traders Association Mr. Michael Mdladla Ndiweni stated that they are however carrying out consultative processes on how to create dialogue regarding the proposed amendments,

Meanwhile the national chairperson for Zimbabwe Christian Alliance, Reverend Obert Shatai said that there was no urgency in

carrying out the process as they have cancelled and suspended events such as ZITF and Independence as well as the opening of schools, universities. He also said that holding such a process might expose people to the coronavirus as there won't be enough PPEs to cater for them.

“Doing public consultations on Constitutional Amendments will place many people under risk as most communities do not have the necessary PPE and other preventative equipment. Government has already cancelled other events; there is no urgency to continue with this”, he said.

The proposed public consultations are scheduled to start on the 15th of June in Chinhoyi and then spread to other.



City water shortage persists

Erratic water supply and continuous days without running water continues to be some of the major problems that people in Bulawayo are faced with. Residential areas such as Pumula, Emganwini and Cowdray Park have been hard hit as compared to other areas.

A resident from Emganwini told the *Christian Voice* that they have been without water for the past five weeks. He also mentioned that due to low pressure, water was no longer reaching all upstream houses.

“Water is essential; we cannot survive without it. The economy is not good to us all as such not everyone can afford to buy sufficient water daily,” he said.

Currently, the Bulawayo City Council (BCC) supplies water through bowisers but it is still not enough to service the whole community. Community members in Emganwini are complaining that even though they have approached their Councillor, Hlabano, about the issue nothing tangible has come out of it.

To Page 3

City water shortage persists

From Page 2

“Water bowzers do come but they are not enough for all of us. One gets to fill a few containers because the city council also allows you to pour water in a limited number of containers. We have tried to approach the Councillor but nothing meaningful has come out of the discussions with him,” he said.

Thabani Joshua another resident of Emganwini said the distribution of water through bowzers is erratic.

“*I-bowser lifika lime phambi kwezindlu ezithola amanzi, bathathe amanzi bathelele ngawo. I-bowser aliyehle libuye phansi.* The bowser usually goes to houses that already have water and those people then use the precious liquid to water their gardens.

The bowser must come to other areas too,” he said.

Lastborn Dube from Cowdray Park also mentioned that they are also facing the same problem and some of the households have been without water for more than two months. Citizens have resorted to digging wells near sewer streams so that they can have water to use in their homes.

“Cowdray Park 9500-10000s, the houses last had water more than two months ago. People are digging wells along the sewage stream and thus the water they are using to cook and drink. Basically they use it for every household chores,” he said.

Last week, the Bulawayo City Council identified 25 sites where they will set up water kiosks in areas that are mostly affected by water shortages. The

kiosks will be scattered mainly in Emganwini, Pumula, Nkulumane, Magwegwe and some isolated areas including low density areas such as Saucerstown.

According to the Bulawayo City Council Director of Engineering Services, Engineer Simela Dube the council has received financial aid from Danish Church Aid and Netherlands Embassy to construct some of the kiosks. So far the installation of six sites is in progress of which three have been done.

“The other four kiosks were made possible with the Netherlands Embassy through our partnership. The stands are on the ground and the material for installation of tanks and piping for plumbing have been received, said the Engineer.

Cities and Towns Updates

BULAWAYO: There are still police roadblocks on all roads that lead to the central business district. Citizens that are going into the CBD using Zupco buses are being asked to produce their exemption letters. Members of the police and soldiers are seen patrolling in town and several people are being arrested for being in town without valid reasons.

MASVINGO: Members of the Covid-19 taskforce have been raising awareness, reminding people of the importance of observing social distance in public spaces. Police have intensified on the lockdown directive and are not allowing people to get into town without a valid reason. The City Council is confiscating goods of vendors who have resorted to sell from their homes due to the lockdown. There are rumours of a demonstration on the 10th and the 11th in the city.

BEITBRIDGE: People are wearing masks just to avoid being arrested. Some residents are holding birthday parties at their homes and shebeens are also operational in some areas. A new Covid-19 case has been reported in Musina which continues to be a danger for the people of Beitbridge.

Overwhelmed Zupco announces new bus terminuses

ZUPCO buses are the sole official public transporter during the national lockdown but is failing to cope.

Many citizens have expressed concerns over the cooperation being able to stand up to the task of serving the thousands of workers that move around the city on a daily basis. One of the reasons why most citizens have opted for their service is the implausible subsidized cost which is ZWL\$2 for buses and ZWL\$4 for kombis.

Meanwhile, the Bulawayo City Council has identified seven bus terminuses that will be used by Zupco buses and kombis as designated picking and dropping points to decongest the central business district (CBD) in compliance with the city's Covid-19 guidelines.

Prior to the latest development, buses and commuter omnibuses operating under the Zupco franchise had no designated pick up and drop off points resulting in them causing congestion and disrupting the free flow of vehicular and human traffic in the CBD.

In an interview with The Christian Voice various residents shared concerns on the new dropping and pick up points citing that these new areas could be a breeding place for Covid-19. Mrs Sithabile Msimanga said although it was a good move to decongest the CBD, the danger was the use of public toilets.

“Since we spend a long time in the queues, there will be a need for us to use the nearest toilets and the available toilets are usually dirty. Is there a way that the city council will make sure

that these facilities are clean and safe for people to use,” she said.

Another Zupco passenger who declined to be named was of the opinion that many people in the city stand a risk of contracting Covid-19 at these buses as they do not have all the necessary protective equipment that is necessary when one is boarding the bus.

“If I were to contract Covid-19, it would be in a Zupco bus. I have not witnessed the disinfection of the buses after every trip they do. People drop off and the next passengers are next on board without any precautions being taken. Plus, none of the buses have thermometers to test the temperatures of the passengers.

The buses are proving to be a risky means of transport, I am considering taking the option of walking or hiking in open air trucks as they are way safer”, he said.

Another issue that was raised by this passenger highlighted that there was a need for the police to man these bus ranks as people are in danger of being robbed. He said due to the disorder that happens at these bus ranks, thieves take advantage of the situation and steal from people.

“In most cases police officers are busy with checking for passes and whether people are observing social distance. They hardly stick around to monitor possible thieves and crooks. In areas such as Cowdray park and Emganwini where people wake up early in the morning they are not guaranteed any safety from the police and often have to rely on other citizens,” he said.