

**SECURITY TO BE  
INTENSIFIED AT  
QUARANTINE CENTRES**  
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**WATER CRISIS:  
HEALTH TIME BOMB  
FOR CHEGUTU  
RESIDENTS** >pg2

<b>Covid-19 WATCH</b>	<b>132</b> cases	<b>25</b> recoveries	<b>4</b> deaths
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# Minister Mliswa engages Church, Chiefs on Covid-19

**T**he Minister of State for Provincial Affairs in Mashonaland West, Honourable Mary Thandiwe Mliswa held an engagement meeting with chiefs and pastors on how they can play a pivotal role in handling Covid-19.

Speaking during the meeting at the Government complex in Murombedzi, Hon Mliswa said there was a need for pastors to continue offering pastoral and psychosocial support to the community. She acknowledged the role being played by the church in supporting the vulnerable members in the community.

“Domestic violence is also on the rise hence the great need for traditional leaders and religious leaders to continue serving the community diligently. We appreciate the role that the church has and continues to play in taking care of the vulnerable in our various communities

“The government is doing its best to make sure that the vulnerable people are taken care of during this lockdown through social welfare. Traditional leaders and the churches can also come in to compliment what we are doing as well as help identify beneficiaries in your structures” she said.

She also mentioned that since the beginning of the national lockdown, cases of gender-based violence have been on the increase. Hon Mliswa said this was a worrying situation as the lockdown has been declared indefinite which meant that these cases will continue rising if not dealt with.

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Minister Mary Thandiwe Mliswa



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# Minister Mliswa engages Church, Chiefs on Covid-19

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Social distancing proves to be a problem that many citizens in the country are failing to adhere to. Hon Mliswa said the enforcement of these regulations and crowd controlling should not be seen as the duty of the police only but a duty of every leader in the community.

“As leaders as we serve the nation, let’s also practice social distancing and wear masks so that we protect ourselves,” she said.

Hon Mliswa urged community leaders to guard against those who are trying to abscond quarantine. She said office bearers have the responsibility to pass on information and also enforce the law so that the province is safeguarded from the pandemic.

“It is the responsibility of the Chiefs as they are leaders in the community and make sure that everyone who is supposed to be on quarantine is quarantined. There are some who are absconding the quarantine process,” she said.

The pastors present requested that they be added to the list of essential service providers so that they can fully assist the community. Another key issue raised was for pastors to be included in the district Covid-19 task forces.

“Pastors need to be educated so that they in turn educate their constituencies. As an essential provider, it is crucial for them to be trained and

equipped to serve in this environment. The call to pray was emphasized and we have been given the green light to mobilise not more than 50 people to gather and pray across the province in consultation with the office of the Dispol and the District Medical Officer,” said Pastor Tafadzwa Mafukidze.

Concern was also raised on the opening of schools with leaders present at the meeting mentioned that it was risky for the children to go back to school as some of the schools are used as quarantine centres. They also mentioned that the clinic at the Presbyterian Church was overwhelmed with patients as Mzari clinic was turned into a quarantine centre.

“We are requesting the government to look into the issue of hospitals and clinics in our area. The clinic at Presbyterian Church is overburdened and cannot assist everyone because of the pressure they have,” said Pastor Mafukidze.

It was also noted that the police are in dire need of vehicles to use so that they help in enforcement of the lockdown regulations. The department of Social welfare was also urged to also find ways of involving the Church leaders when it comes to the identification and distribution of food to the vulnerable. The chiefs present requested to be assisted with food aid as they are also facing challenges due to the pandemic and the drought.

## Cities and Towns update

**HWANGE:** Today shops received mealie-meal that was delivered at most shops but it’s being sold at ZWL\$320. The price of sugar has gone up as well, 2kg is ZWL\$134. The only garage with petrol is Zuva. A new case of Covid-19 has been recorded.

**MASHWEST:** Pastors and Traditional leaders met with the Minister of State to discuss how they can complement each other’s work in the fight against Covid-19. The church was given a green light to hold prayer meetings with not more than 50 people across the province.

**PLUMTREE:** Police are arresting people who are not wearing masks in public spaces. There are no mealie-meal and sugar deliveries in the urban areas whilst in the rural areas drought relief maize is being delivered on a daily basis. Returnees that were quarantined at Allen and Plumtree High School will be moved to a new quarantine centre as schools are opening soon. Plumtree High School, Beit Hall was gutted by fire this afternoon and there was no life lost.

# Security to be intensified at quarantine centres

**T**he provincial Covid-19 taskforce is on a tour of quarantine centres in Bulawayo with a view of separating ex-convicts from other returnees following the escape of three ex-convicts at Bulawayo Polytechnic last week.

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Service Mr Nick Mangwana said they are working at intensifying security at quarantine centres so as to curb escaping. On Monday, 18 people who returned from Botswana and South Africa escaped from Mkoba Teachers college quarantine centre.

Following the escape of these returnees, the Gweru urban Member of Parliament, Mr Brian Dube advised the people of Gweru to exercise vigilance and alertness in light of the imminent risk and danger of Covid-19 pandemic.

“The fears raised in my last Covid-19 alert message a few days ago, arising from insecurity

at the quarantine centre in Gweru have been confirmed. So far about 19 people whose Covid-19 status is not known have escaped from the facility. As I write to you, the 19 people still remain at large as their whereabouts are not known,” he said.

MP Dube said there was danger as these people could be mingling with other people exposing them to the virus. The 19 returnees include 15 men, three women and a baby.

“They are likely to be mixing with people and exposing the majority of the people to Covid-19. No family member, relative or friends whom you have not been together for the past 21 days should be accommodated without first notifying authorities to verify their status,” he said.

He urged the residents of Gweru and other parts of the country to report people who are border jumping or are escaping from quarantine centres.

“Report any such person to the nearest police station or base. Report to the authorities any



*Nick Mangwana*

person that you see in your neighbourhood whom you have not seen within the last 21 days,” he said.

The country has been declared to be on lockdown indefinitely and remains on stage 2. However, in many provinces’ things have returned to normal and people have gone back to their jobs and daily routines.

“Cabinet emphasized that the country is still under lockdown and as such, exemption letters for essential services are still required for movement,” said Mr Mangwana.

## Water Crisis: Health time bomb for Chegutu residents

### Raw sewer, errant water supplies order of the day

**A**s the country is in the throes of the worst drought in the past four decades, provision of portable water for human beings and livestock in both rural and urban areas, has become desperately urgent.

Chegutu is one of the towns that has been adversely affected by the severe shortage of water.

Speaking during an advocacy training conducted by Zimbabwe Christian Alliance, the Chegutu hub coordinator Pastor Brian Magwenzi noted that the current water crisis poses a health risk.

“A disease outbreak will cost the country more to contain and will put a strain on the country’s health delivery system, therefore I call upon the relevant authorities to address the situation before it gets out of hand”, said Pastor Magwenzi.

He also noted that the current water problem has also seen council failing to repair burst sewer pipes

As a result, in the past three weeks tapes in most suburbs have run dry..

This has caused significant disruptions to most people’s lives. For many students who are supposed to be studying during this lockdown, they spent time fetching water.

Cleopas Phiri, one of the youths who attended the training lamented that the current water situation has adversely affected his studying rhythm.

“It is really affecting my education and I am worried about my grades this term once school resumes,” he said.

It is a similar ordeal for Muchena, 35, who has had to juggle onerous tasks between sourcing water for her family and minding her backyard store.

It is also feared that if the current water shortage persists, it would inevitably result in an outbreak of waterborne diseases and also fuel the rise of Covid-19 cases.

