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COVID-19 FIGHT >pg2**

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ORGANISATION
HOST MILESTONE
SUMMIT >pg3**

Covid-19 WATCH	56 cases	25 recoveries	4 deaths
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Roman Catholic Church bishops are calling for the suspension of ongoing constitutional amendments by the government saying focus should instead be on addressing Zimbabwe's dire economic situation.

In December last year, the government gazetted the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 2) Bill, which comes with 27 proposed amendments.

In a statement Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference (ZCBC) president, Archbishop Robert Ndlovu, said the decision was taken after considering the obtaining economic situation in the country.

Zimbabwe commemorated the 7th anniversary of the new Constitution, which was adopted in 2013, on May 22.

"The church respects and acts collaboratively and consistently with all people

Catholic Bishops call for the suspension of constitutional amendments

committed to the creation and promotion of a better world where there is peace, social justice and existence of a dignified life for all," said Archbishop Ndlovu.

"This amplifies the respect of human rights and good governance practices that include the participation of human beings in institutions and social processes that affect their lives. The process of amending the Constitution should be suspended."

He added: "Wide consultation of citizens should be conducted to ascertain public support and interest in changes. Extensive public education is required in the country's Constitution. There is an urgent need to prioritise implementation and alignment of the Constitution in its current form before the amendment."

Archbishop Ndlovu encouraged the government to intensify efforts that address the well-being of members of the public,

especially the impoverished masses and vulnerable groups such as economic stability, health service delivery, food security, employment, unity and peace.

He said the proposed changes were largely taking place with limited public input and concurrence of the ordinary people of Zimbabwe who are currently overwhelmed by several difficulties in the very basic aspects of their lives.

"The 2013 Constitution is a major breakthrough in the country's constitution making process and its implementation should be expedited," he said.

"Whilst the Amendment Bill has proposals that promote democracy, it unravels the huge amounts of progress stemming from extensive input, public interests wide consultations, negotiations and broad based compromises. Our call to the government is that it should consider suspending the amendment of the constitution and focus on fixing economic issues."

He added: "This is an immense undertaking entrusted to people of good will. It is precisely that of establishing justice, charity, liberty, and new methods of relationships in human society."

Source: CITE



Archbishop Robert Ndlovu

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Limited information hampers Chirumhanzu Covid-19 fight

Chirumhanzu churches benevolence towards 92-year-old granny



Many people in the rural areas of Zimbabwe are the most affected when it comes to Covid-19 as there are many gaps that are still yet to be addressed by the government.

Many of the community members go about their daily normal business as they have limited access to information on the impact of the coronavirus. A little has been documented on how the pandemic has affected rural dwellers as much focus is on urban areas.

Just like their urban counterparts, people in the rural areas have been hit hard by the prevailing drought conditions and the high cost of living as shops continue to hike prices.

In Chirumhanzu, the Zimbabwe Christian Alliance hub structures mobilised fellow clergymen in raising awareness on covid-19. The main mandate of the hub is to increase awareness amongst rural people on how to deal with the pandemic.

Besides raising awareness and prevention methodologies of Covid-19, the hub has also partnered with the Methodist Church in Mvuma to offer support to vulnerable families in the community. One of the recipients of the programme was Gogo Takwara (92) from ward 16 in Chinegomo who stays with her daughter and grandchild who are mentally challenged.

Gogo Takwara has been through a lot of challenges and has been finding it hard to cope

during the national lockdown as there is no one who is taking care of her. Currently she has been in the care of her daughter and grandson. Last year she was rendered homeless after her mentally ill grandson burnt down their home. In an effort to restore part of her lost home, the church is currently rebuilding their home with only one hut being built so far.

Gogo Takwara fellowships with the Methodist Church under Reverend Kudzanai Muzariri. Speaking on the initiative that they have begun as church leaders, Rev Muzariri said the story of Gogo Takwara is very sad as there is no bread winner with all home duties and responsibilities resting on her.

“When I shared the story with other members of our circuit, we agreed to rebuild the houses and to mobilise groceries for her during this lockdown. The Church is working closely with her to make sure that she is well taken care of at this difficult time for everyone,” he said.

Rev Muzariri said they have managed to rebuild one of the huts and they are working on gathering more resources to construct another hut that was damaged through the fire.

“Resources permitting, we will be constructing the other hut this Friday. So far, we have 2 bags of cement, we are expecting 6 bags, a door and some funds to buy poles for the roofing,” he said.

So far Chirumhanzu and Mvuma have not recorded any cases of Covid -19.



No masks for children under 3 years

After the announcement by the President of Zimbabwe that it was mandatory for everyone to wear face masks in public places, doctors have however advised against having masks for children under two years.

According to a report done by Medlane, children under two years are advised against wearing masks as their airways are smaller. The research also found out that children under this age are not able to process carbon dioxide the same ways as adults.

“If they are struggling to breathe wearing the masks, younger infants are unable to take the mask off themselves and could suffocate,” read the report.

Older infants or young toddlers are not likely to keep the mask on and will likely remove it, as well as touch their faces more due to the mask annoying them. It is therefore advised that parents should avoid going into public spaces with infants, toddlers as much as possible.

“If you do go into public spaces, you should keep outings short as possible and maintain a 1-meter distance between people. You should always wash your hands before touching your child and keep your baby in a pram or baby carrier and place a lightweight breathable baby carrier over the pram and never leave your child unattended,” read the report.

Civil organisation host milestone summit

The National Convergence Platform (NCP) held an online summit yesterday where 85 civic society organisations (CSOs) around the country deliberated on attempts to launch the National Settlement consultation process as well as mapping actors to the dialogue processes.

The Summit which ran under the theme “Resolved to build a united, just and prosperous Zimbabwe”, also focused on ensuring that there is a broad national consensus on what should constitute the agenda towards a Comprehensive National Settlement Framework (CNSF).

According to a press statement issued by the NCP, the participants of the summit, led by the thematic technical committees deliberated on five priority areas towards resolving the national question namely

- A broad based and evidence based national humanitarian and emergency response to address food insecurity, education, health, social service delivery crises.
- A new social contract on the basis of an inclusive national economic vision
- A broadly agreed reform process towards constitutionalism

- A mutually acceptable closure of the long past and recent human rights

- Restored and normalized regional, continental and global relations

The summit agreed that the nation is gripped by an interconnected set of challenges that have now been exposed and compounded by Covid-19. They also noted broken relationships, economic meltdown, failure to entrench constitutionalism, international isolation and the humanitarian crisis characterized by severe food and human insecurity, as well as a broken health system as some of the challenges that are affecting the country.

“The participants agreed on the value of citizen driven processes hence the need to further refine the details of the proposed CNSF on the basis of a broad national consultation,” read the press statement.

In the next few days, the NCP will engage stakeholders in and outside the government on the CNSF. Thematic technical committees will start refining the draft CNSF so that it becomes the basis of the national engagement.

The Zimbabwe Christian Alliance was part of the 85 CSOs who participated in the summit.

Cities and Towns update

GWERU: People are not adhering to the lockdown restriction. In Chiwundura there are some people who play football every Sunday and some of them come as far as 12km. Most of the people in Lalapanzi and Hozheri Clinic were wearing masks and observing physical distance as they went on with their business.

KWEKWE: People in farms seem not to take heed of the precautions that have been put in place to prevent covid-19. There is a need for awareness raising as they seem not have enough knowledge on how deadly this pandemic is.

MASVINGO: Vendors are now selling from their homes following the dismantling of the market area by the Council. Shops were open yesterday despite it being a holiday. Quarantine centres are overwhelmed as people have surpassed the capacity of the centre.

BINGA: 15 people were trained on how to use the tippy tap as a way of maintaining hygiene during covid-19. Every trained member is expected to go and construct 4 or 5 tippy taps

around the community.

PLUMTREE: the CBD is getting busy every day and the situation is slowly returning to normal. All shops are open except for bottle stores. All service stations received fuel today after two weeks of not receiving any. Mealie meal has not been delivered for the past three weeks.

TSHOLOTSO: Shops in the outskirts are empty and people are resorting to buying at Tsholotsho centre. People are buying expensive groceries as there are no other shops where they can buy groceries at a cheaper price. Bottle stores and restaurants have opened, people are buying food and eating at those restaurants. Most shops are selling mealie meal and it is being sold in forex.

CHEGUTU: There was chaos at the Total and Engine garage and motorists were scrambling to buy fuel. Soldiers and police officers had to control the queue. Illegal vendors who were stationed 1 km away from the CBD were selling their wares and most shops were open.