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DECLARES NATIONAL
DAY OF FASTING AND
PRAYER >pg2**

**'CHURCHES CRUCIAL
IN THE FIGHT
AGAINST COVID-19'
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Covid-19 WATCH	332 cases	51 recoveries	4 deaths
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Beitbridge illegal settlers aiding contraband smugglers

Illegal settlers in Mawane, Fountain and Msasani area of Beitbridge are alleged to be working in cahoots with locals in helping illegal transportation of people and goods across the Limpopo River.

This was mentioned by the Beitbridge Rural District Committee representative, Mr Peter Ngamula Moyo during a Zimbabwe Christian Alliance engagement meeting in Beitbridge. He however said that though the matter has been reported to the police nothing tangible has been done.

"These illegal settlers come from places as far as Chipinge. We have engaged the police as the RDC and we do have the documents proving that we have engaged about this matter but we are yet to see results from the law enforcers," he said.

It is also alleged that the Beitbridge locals are working with these illegal settlers to cross cigarettes, groceries and people from South Africa. The community has been complaining of these people as they are stealing people's livestock as well.

"We are sure that the police are able to remove these people because they are also stealing goats from the nearby community. A lot of illegal activities take place in that area, if we are not careful they will also spread Covid-19 as they are in contact with people whom they do not know their Covid-19 status," he said.

Responding to this issue, the Beitbridge district



A South African police officer confiscates smuggled goods in a donkey cart headed for Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) representative Thabani Mkhwananzi said they cannot remove the illegal settlers unless they get a directive from the responsible authorities.

"If a report was lodged with the police then we will surely look into the matter. If we could get an instruction from the local government to remove these people, we will gladly do that," he said.

Mkhwananzi also urged community leaders to report issues of corruption that they see in their areas so that the police are aware and can act on it before it causes more harm. The residents association should work together and make sure

that corruption is dealt with.

"Community leaders you need to lead by example. Report any misdeeds that are happening in the community so that the police will efficiently do their work," he said.

The Beitbridge East Member of Parliament, Honourable Albert Nguluvhe said there was need for the police to restore law and order in those settlements. He also alluded that corruption and illegal activities are rife in those areas.

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Beitbridge illegal settlers aiding contraband smugglers

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“We know that people are hungry and are finding alternative ways to deal with the financial inflows and the hunger in their homes. We cannot afford to have people coming from other parts of the country to breed corruption in our area. However, it is very sad that even the locals are joining hands with them,” he said.

MP Nguluvhe mentioned that chiefs and headsmen in that area have approached him about the issue and have complained about the behaviour of these illegal settlers.

“I will take this matter to the defence committee which I am also a part of. They will look into the

matter and see how it can be best solved,” he said.

The Ministry of health has tried to reach out to this community but with no success. They found armed soldiers at the place and could not reach them.

“We tried to raise awareness to these people but we could not access them. We were not allowed into the settlement and we had to leave. This is a risky move because without knowledge there are chances that they will spread the virus to each other and many more people they interact with,” said Mr Raymond Mafu.

President declares national day of fasting and prayer

As part of efforts to fight the outbreak of a new coronavirus, President Emerson Mnangagwa has declared Monday, 15, 2020, as a national day of fasting and prayers.

Addressing the nation on measures taken so far by the government, the President appealed to all Zimbabweans in the country to seek the face of God while adhering to the strict personal hygiene protocols.

Speaking during a televised address to the nation, the President declared that the prayer and fasting initiative was meant to bring together the nation

“As your President during this very difficult season in which our nation and indeed the world face the challenge of the Covid-19 pandemic. I am humbled to invite you all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to take time in prayer and fasting as a nation before the almighty God to seek his mercy, wisdom, help and healing to overcome this deadly pandemic. In doing so we however diligently continue to observe every precaution necessary to prevent the spread of coronavirus” read part of the statement.

Meanwhile the President has relaxed some of the regulations pertaining the resumption of the congregation

of churches with the number of congregants set not to exceed 50 people.

I also urge all on this day, to join us in giving up some meals in fasting. It will be best to arrange this service as families, small groups or church services not exceeding 50 people, and observing the precautions we have been taking to prevent the spread of the Coronavirus”, the President was quoted as saying.

However with the relaxation of these measures the question remains whether churches will be able to adhere to the strict Covid-19 hygienic protocols.



‘Churches crucial in the fight against Covid-19’

The Member of Parliament for Beitbridge East, Honourable Albert Nguluvhe has praised churches in Beitbridge for the work they are doing towards the fight against Covid-19.

MP Nguluvhe said this during community leaders an engagement meeting that was organized by the Zimbabwe Christian Alliance, Local Advocacy Champions in Beitbridge. He said the church was very crucial in spreading the message on this virus.

“The Church plays a crucial role in the fight against Covid-19. Three quarters of the population in this country goes to church. I appeal to the church to educate people in their churches about this virus through the various channels that you are currently using to worship,” he said.

He said this was not the time for people to start playing the blame game but it was crucial that different stakeholders come together and find ways that can help to curb the spread of this pandemic.

“Much appreciation goes to the Zimbabwe Christian Alliance for convening such a meeting. This is the first time that we are meeting as community leaders to discuss issues that are pertinent to the community. We need to ensure that people understand the implications of this virus,” he said.

Present at the meeting were representatives from different resident associations, women’s and youth groups. The MP urged the associations to raise awareness and educate people on the preventative methods that people need to take in order to stay safe.

“Residents associations have a responsibility to educate people and raise awareness on this pandemic. We encourage people not to take in people who are coming into the country through illegal entry points, even if it is your loved one,”



he said.

MP Nguluvhe also encouraged members of the community to use the resident association to engage on the challenges that they are going through.

“I have heard complaints on the issue of shortage of drugs which is causing people to cross the border to purchase them. These are some of the issues that we need to engage in and find solutions so that people do not have to defy the lockdown directive,” he said.

Police representative, Thabani Mkhwananzi

also urged people to report all those who are entering the country through illegal means, he said this was not being done so that people get arrested but it was a precaution.

“Please do not keep people who have been out of the country without taking them to your nearest health facilities for testing. We are not doing this so that we get fines from them or arrest them but we are preventing the spread of this virus,” he said.

Cities and Towns Updates

MASVINGO: Police have intensified roadblocks. People are denied access to the CBD especially those who do not have exemption letters. City council is confiscating wares from vendors who are selling from their homes even though markets that were used by these vendors were destroyed.

TSHOLOTSHO: people are sleeping queues to buy subsidised mealie-meal which came through GMB. People are coming from as far as 58km and they are adamant that they will not go back home till they buy mealie-meal. Tsholotsho registry is not offering other services but burial orders only.

BEITBRIDGE: The Local Advocacy Champions

(LACs), held an engagement meeting with community leaders to discuss on how to stop the porous border entries and escapades from the quarantine centres which is now a threat to the community due to Covid-19.