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HARARE CHURCH CLOSES DUE TO COVID-19 RELATED DEATH >pg3

COVID-19 WATCH	1713 cases	472 recoveries	26 deaths
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Epicentre Bulawayo resorts to schools for quarantine centres

Bulawayo now the country's epicentre of the deadly Covid-19 pandemic has started to use government schools as quarantine centres.

So far the city has put two quarantine centres in former prestigious A Schools, Townsend High School for women and Gifford High School for men.

Both schools have boarding facilities which are being spruced for use as quarantine facilities.

Already 17 men have moved into Gifford High School while about 80 women are expected to move into Townsend High school facilities this Monday.

In an interview with CITE, Chairperson of Information and Publicity subcommittee of the Provincial Task Force on Covid-19 outbreak, Miriam Chigonde, confirmed the city needed more quarantine centres.

She said the Provincial Taskforce on Covid-19 is also going ahead with its plan to turn Rio Hostels in Ward 9, into a quarantine centre despite protests from the residents in Matshobana.

"Residents of the hostel said they cannot share the accommodation with returnees, as they fear exposure to Covid-19. But the plans are ongoing as the Provincial Administrator is carrying on with requisitions for repairs," said Chigonde.

Bulawayo has three quarantine centres for returning residents which are Khumalo Hotel, Insinga and Standard Hotel.



Hamilton High School

Other schools which had also been identified for use as quarantine centres include Milton High School and Evelyn High School. These were exempted as they are being used as examination centres.

Zimbabwe Christian Alliance has been working closely with the accommodation team in the city to assist with personal protective equipment and other essential needs to ensure that the quarantine centres become operational. There has been an outcry on the shortage of PPEs and sanitary wear in most of the quarantine centres.

"ZCA has mobilised for resources such as disinfectants for fumigating the centre, hand sanitisers, gloves and liquid soap. We hope that these will help in making sure that the centre is cleaned and the returnees are practising hygienic standards," said ZCA National Hub Coordinator Rev Shadreck Ncube.

Churches are holding urgent engagements also to explore which of their facilities could be easier and faster to convert into either isolation or quarantine centre as pressure mounts to find more facilities for the communities.

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Companies in Harare close as Covid-19 cases escalate



CIMAS headquarters in Harare

A number of companies and workplaces in Harare have closed down as staff members test positive to Covid-19 virus. Government through the twitter of Permanent Secretary Nick Mangwana has also advised that people who are not engaged in essential services should not enter the Central Business districts of towns and cities to avoid the spread of Covid-19.

Companies that have closed include ZIMSTAT that was forced to shut its doors after positive cases were reported at Kaguvi Building and Public Service Commission Harare- Chitungwiza bus.

“Following the incidents of Covid-19 positive cases at Kaguvi and in the Public Service Commission Harare-Chitungwiza bus, all ZIMSTAT staff are kindly requested to stop reporting for duty with immediate effect. We have engaged the City of Harare to disinfect our offices and they are yet to respond,” read the

memorandum.

NMB Southerton branch, also notified their customers and staff of the temporary shut down due to the infection of one of the staff members.

“As a result a decision has been taken to temporarily close the Southerton branch from 20 July 2020 to 3 August 2020 both dates inclusive. The branch staff are undergoing tests and have proceeded on a 14-day self-quarantine. As a precautionary measure, NMB Bank Southerton premises have been disinfected,” read the notice.

Other companies that were forced to close include CIMAS which has closed all its Medical Aid walk in Centres and also High Glen Clinic which remains open only for consultations. CIMAS is offering Dial a Doctor service which is available for virtual consultations.

PSMA was not spared; it had to close its head office in Harare after one of its staff members tested positive.

Workplaces hotspots for Covid-19

THE workplace has come under spotlight after a number of Covid-19 cases have been reported in offices, leading to temporary closure.

Last Thursday, 21 Cimas Medical Aid Society employees in Harare tested positive for Covid-19.

The Covid-19 patients shared transport, workstations, computers and telephone handsets.

Recently, some health workers at Mpilo Central Hospital and United Bulawayo Hospitals tested positive for Covid-19 while Zimbabwe Revenue Authority (Zimra) Bulawayo offices were temporarily closed after one of its senior staffers succumbed to Covid-19.

Mpilo Central Hospital acting chief executive officer Professor Solwayo Ngwenya, said employees share a lot of materials making workplaces Covid-19 high risk zones.

“Because the virus is extremely infectious, if you get one person in a workplace, they can infect everyone. So, the threat is very high because in the workplace people tend to share common rooms. The virus can stay on utensils

and hard surfaces for a long time up to nine days. So, we can say workplaces are high risks,” said Prof Ngwenya.

“This virus is very difficult to manage, the only way is to put a distance from one person to the other. And the distance should be at least two metres and this is not possible in most workplaces for people to be two metres apart. If you are close and one person gets it, you are going to get it even if you are disinfecting the premises.”

Prof Ngwenya called for stringent lockdown measures.

“What I can tell you is that this is the reason why I have been squealing and making noise for four months because I know the huge impact of Covid-19. It’s a big blow to humanity. The ventilators we have are inadequate for our usual setting. They are not adequate for the usual settings, now imagine, we have this huge storm,” said Prof Ngwenya,

“We never had enough ventilators before and the answer I’m trying to tell you is that we will be unable to do anything and people are just going to die.”

Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare

Minister Professor Paul Mavima said when the Government reopened the economy it laid down regulations to minimise the Covid-19 infection rate at workplaces.

He said his ministry has deployed inspectors to randomly inspect compliance in companies and is largely satisfied with the level of compliance.

Prof Mavima said workers should also follow Covid-19 regulations outside the workplace so that they do not bring the virus at work.

“However, you ought to realise that once the workers have left the workplace they are also going home and to their communities. The precaution should not stop at work. People should be conscientise that when they are in the community, they also observe the same protocols. They should not go to places where they do not sanitise, do not go in places where people do not get screened as they go in, don’t go to places where people are not observing proper wearing of masks, and don’t go into a place where social distancing is not adhered to,” said Prof Mavima.

Source: The Chronicle

Harare church closes due to Covid-19 related death

The Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in Harare, yesterday temporarily closed its doors following a Covid-19 related death. The Church authorities have advised the congregants that the necessary procedures are being taken to disinfect the church premises.

Government had eased Covid-19 shut down regulations and allowed churches to open services with only 50 congregates at a time. The conditions of opening the service has been that churches will need to check the temperatures of the congregates, sanitise them and observe the social distancing regulations.

In a statement released by the Parish, it was revealed that one of the congregates had succumbed to Covid-19. Following this development, the church engaged the Ministry of Health and Child Care on procedures that need to be taken.

“Please be advised that the Parish has recorded a Covid-19 case and after consultation with the Ministry of Health we are temporarily closing the activities to allow necessary procedures to

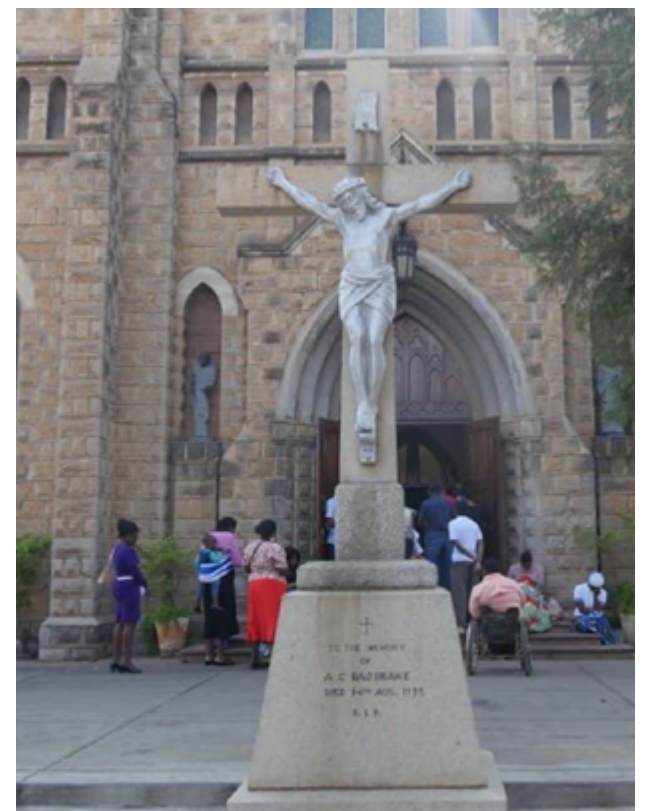
be carried out before we resume operations,” read the statement.

They went on to urge all the people who had been in close contact with the parishioner to take necessary measures of self-isolation. They also revealed that the source of the infection was not yet known hence people had to adhere to the Covid-19 guidelines.

“As a precautionary measure, all persons who could have got in close contact with the deceased, to take necessary measures of isolation. The deceased’s family have been communicated to and they are also liaising with the Ministry of Health for funeral arrangements which they are yet to communicate to us as the church,” read the statement.

The President Emmerson Mnangagwa eased restrictions on movement implemented in March to curb the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, to revive the nation’s struggling economy in June. Churches were also allowed to resume operation however this has proven to be a risky move as churches are now recording infections.

According to media reports, on Saturday, the police dispersed more than 5 000 members of



Sacred Heart Cathedral in Harare

the Johane Masowe Apostolic Church who had gathered on the outskirts of Masvingo for their annual Passover ceremony.

The worshippers were ordered to return to their homes after violating Covid-19 social distancing rules which do not allow a group exceeding 50 people to congregate.

Malawi's new President, a Christian theologian, confronts corruption and coronavirus

Lazarus Chakwera, an Assemblies of God minister and alumnus of TEDS and Haggai International, hopes his servant leadership will restore faith in government of struggling country.

In his second week in office, the new president of Malawi—theologian and former Assemblies of God leader Lazarus Chakwera—has called on the African nation to join in three days of prayer and fasting against the spread of the coronavirus.

Despite the challenges of the current circumstances, with the pandemic taking a significant economic toll on one of the world's poorest countries, Christians across the region are hopeful about Chakwera's leadership.

He pledged in his inauguration speech: "With your help we will restore faith in having a government that serves; not a government that rules, a government that inspires, not a government that infuriates, a government that listens, not a government that shouts but a government that fights for you and not against you."

The pastor spent more than 20 years as the head of one of the country's largest denominations, the Assemblies of God, before he entered politics as the Malawi Congress Party leader in 2013. In the presidential election held last month, following more than a year of political protests, Chakwera won with 58 percent of the vote. It was the first time in Africa that a court-overturned vote resulted in the defeat of an incumbent president.

Describing his political ambitions as a divine calling, Chakwera said, "God spoke to my heart.... He said, 'I am not pulling you out of ministry. Instead I am extending your ministry. I

want you to get into politics.'"

The new president has repeatedly targeted the corruption, nepotism, and injustice that has plagued his country and said he wants to work for economic progress that allows everyone to prosper.

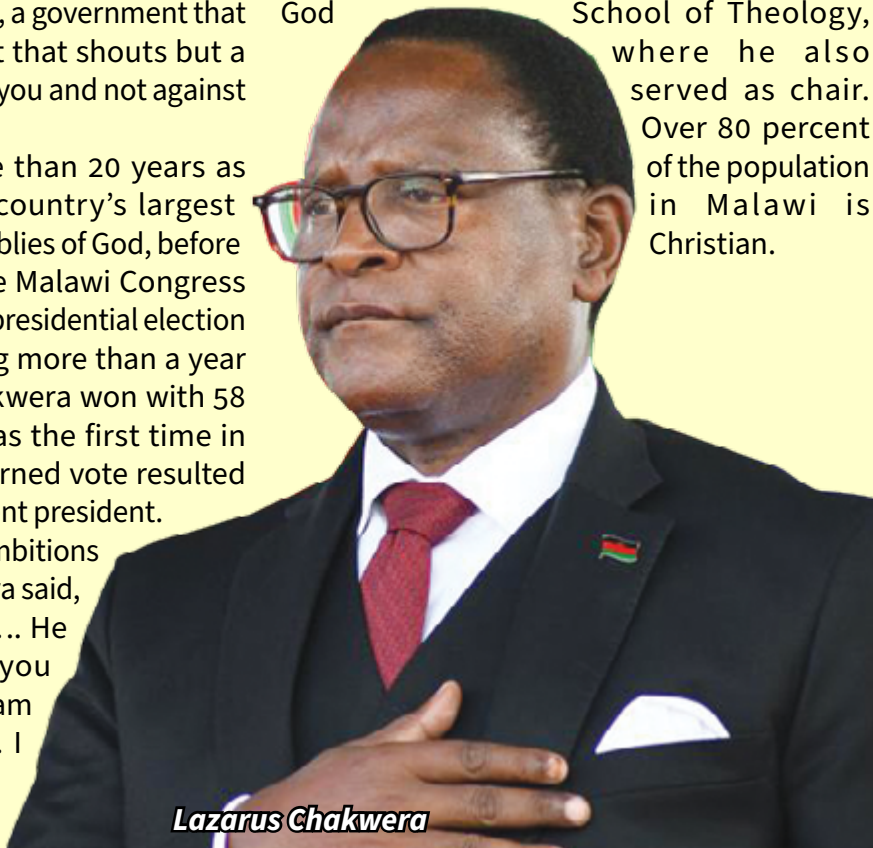
"Christians dream for a better country and an improved leadership," said Matilda Matabwa, secretary general of the Malawian Assemblies of God. "We expect to see and experience the birth of a new nation, and are excited to have a highly respected man of God as the head of state."

The 65-year-old leader had trained with the ministry Haggai International, attended Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and worked in partnership with the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, whose president Franklin Graham congratulated him on Twitter.

Chakwera taught at the Pan African Theological Seminary and the Assemblies of God School of Theology,

where he also served as chair.

Over 80 percent of the population in Malawi is Christian.



Lazarus Chakwera

Cities and Towns Updates

KWEKWE: Security agents tightened lockdown today making it difficult for people to travel from Kwekwe to Redcliff. There were four roadblocks that one had to be cleared to pass through. Reports are that the same security checks were being done from Mbizo to Amaveni.

HWANGE: It was business as usual, most of the informal traders are back into business. Street trading has been revived and people are selling their wares and most of the vendors are selling from their cars. Transport remains a big challenge, Zupco buses are overwhelmed and are failing to meet the demand.

LUPANE: Flea markets stands were relocated to a new place. A new building which was built sometime ago was opened for business. Considering distance some vendors were allocated stands outside the building. Concern has been raised on the buses plying the St Pauls, St Lukes, Jotsholo and Lupane centre. The buses are carrying passengers at full capacity. The hub has highlighted this to the local authorities and it will be addressed soon. Two cases of Covid-19 have been reported and they are border jumpers who have been taken to isolation centres. The quarantine centre has been empty for two weeks.

PLUMTREE: Water in other high areas is a challenge due to electricity cuts that took place few days ago. This afternoon, the Hub coordinator was invited to a donations hand over meeting at the DDC's office where a local family residing in the diaspora donated to Plumtree district hospital newborn baby clothes, milk, blankets, surgical gloves among other things. Fuel is not available for the past 2 days. Most churches are now open for worship.

TSHOLOTSHO: It was a busy day as usually people coming from the surrounding wards to buy basic commodities. All of them were wearing masks. Transport around the district is a challenge as people cannot get transport to various places. The few cars that operate illegal charge exorbitant prices and people have no choice but to pay. Fuel prices seem to be going up on a weekly basis.

Nkayi Policeman shoots himself, found Covid-19 positive

ANkayi policeman who had shot himself for unknown reasons and rushed to Mpilo Hospital in Bulawayo tested positive to Covid-19.

This incident has left many people in the Nkayi community traumatised because contact

tracing had to be done with all the people who had interacted with him.

Speaking to The Christian Voice, Pastor Thandeka Sithole, Nkayi Local Peace Committee leader, after the policeman was referred to Mpilo, she received a message that he had tested positive and all those who had been in contact

with him should do tests.

"It is really sad indeed and many people were in shock why the policeman could have shot himself on the shoulder. On Saturday I got a phone call that he had tested positive and his contacts were called to the hospital to do tests," she said.