

Brutality still plagues the police 'service' despite years of reform



CHANGES ONLY FAMILY MEMBERS ALLOWED TO ATTEND BURIALS, WHICH ARE CONDUCTED WITHIN DAYS

Virus sounds death knell for burial rites

Health CS Mutahi Kagwe says Covid-19 cases have risen to 110, warns of more pg2, 4,5 and 6



BURIED WITHIN HOURS: Former KPA employee Ursula Namuonja, 58, was laid to rest yesterday in a private ceremony at the Mbaraki Cemetery in Mombasa / COURTESY

SASA PAGE 24

Why Kenyans are still travelling upcountry despite state orders



CURFEW TRAGEDY

Barman, 23, dies in Diani after police tear-gassing, whipping

As at the night of April 1, Kenya had recorded one coronavirus death and three resulting from police brutality. On Wednesday night, hours after the President apologised for their brutality, a fourth was added to the list of police victims.

TIGHTEN YOUR BELTS

Prices of gas and bread to go up in Covid-19 tax proposals

Kenyans should brace for tougher economic times ahead following adjustments to tax laws removing exemptions that brought relief to traders. Changes in the Tax Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020, will herald a season of costly purchases.

PHOTO STORY



Radio Africa Group Head of Content Paul Illado ties a mask yesterday/ENOS TECHE



A commuter at Likoni, Mombasa, wearing a face mask that is compulsory for boarding the ferry/JOHN CHESOLI.

DEATH TOLL RISES TO THREE

Senior KQ pilot and port worker succumb to virus

Two other pilots confirmed positive admitted at Nairobi Hospital

STAR TEAM
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A 63-year-old pilot with Kenya Airways and a Kenya Ports Authority worker are the latest patients to die of coronavirus.

The pilot checked in at the Nairobi Hospital on March 29 complaining of difficult breathing.

His doctor recommended Covid-19 tests which turned positive.

The Star learned that he was taken to the isolation ward within the hospital until his death yesterday.

Two more pilots who tested positive are admitted at the same hospital.

The second patient to die was a 68-year-old female Kenya Ports Authority employee, who passed away on Wednesday night at the Mombasa Hospital's isolation ward.

She was buried in a low-key function at Mbaraki cemetery hours later. Her daughter has been

quarantined at the Coast General Hospital and will be tested.

Mombasa Governor Hassan Joho confirmed receiving reports about the death.

"Unfortunately, we know of a case where someone has passed on last night," the governor said in Mombasa.

He warned private hospitals against turning away Covid-19 patients or people presenting with symptoms.

"We are observing carefully the private hospitals in Mombasa. We are watching you. We know of cases that you have dealt with," he said.

Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe confirmed the two new deaths in his daily briefing on Thursday.

This brings to three the number of people killed by coronavirus since the disease was reported in Kenya on March 13.

The first Covid-19 death in Kenya was reported last week at the Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi.

POSITIVE NOTE

On a positive note, however, Kagwe reported that Kilifi Deputy Governor Gideon Sabuni had fully recovered from the virus after three consecutive tests carried on him turned negative.

The number of those who have fully recovered is now four.

Sabuni will face the law for defying the self-quarantine regulations.

The DG had been placed under mandatory quarantine.

"The situation in our country is not getting better; it is getting worse. As I have continuously told you in my daily briefings, this disease is a pandemic," Kagwe said yesterday.

"In the last 24 hours, we have managed to test a total of 662 samples. Out of this 29 people tested positive to the covid-19 disease. 28 are Kenyans while one is a Congo-

lese national. This brings the total number of positive cases in the country to 110."

He lambasted people who said Covid-19 was not serious because they did not know of anybody in their area who had either died or tested positive for the disease.

He said: "The effort is to ensure that you do not hear of death and you do not hear of a positive case. Please do not wait to hear of a death near you for you to realize that the disease is not a joke. By the time you are hearing of death near you it could well be your own death and, of course, you won't hear."

The 29 positive cases have been placed in various isolation facilities.

In terms of the distribution of the new cases according to facilities of admission, three of the cases were recorded at the Aga Khan Hospital in Nairobi.

Among those in quarantine, 11 were admitted at the Crowne Plaza Airport hotel, one at the Four Points Sheraton Airport, two at the Kenya Institute of Special Education, two at KITI Nakuru, two at KMTC, two at Pride Inn while Nairobi Hospital and Mathari recorded one case each.

"Those in quarantine should keep social distances because you are quarantined with people who themselves could easily be positive," Kagwe said.

In terms of gender, 13 were men while 16 were women.

Twenty three of the confirmed cases were from the designated quarantine facilities while six are from suspected cases admitted in isolation units.

Kagwe urged Kenyans to remain calm but warned that the numbers are going to increase exponentially.

"I do not wish to scare you but with the figures that I have just read to you there is no gainsaying that this is a very serious threat to our lives and to our nation," he said and called for a change attitude among

UNABLE TO RETURN

Kenyans stranded in Qatar cry for aid

BRIAN OTIENO/At least 15 Kenyans are stranded at the Hamad International Airport in Doha, Qatar, after they failed to get a flight back home.

They cannot get out of the airport as the Qatari government has put the capital, Doha, on lockdown. The Kenyans, some of who were on transit from other countries, have camped at the airport for three days now.

A Mombasa businessman and politician is among those stranded. Abdulsalaam Kassim, who vied for the Mombasa senator seat on a Jubilee ticket in 2017, told the Star via phone only a Sudanese cleaner at the airport had been helping him get a place to sleep.

"I am Type 2 diabetic. I need medication but the situation here is hard," Kassim told the Star on Thursday. He said he had to hide in a toilet to make the phone call. He said they have not had any proper meal for three days.

"This is our third day here. We are not supposed to be seen close to each other or even talking to each other. We are like in a prison here. Why won't our government come to our rescue?" pleaded Kassim.

The businessman and politician left Kenya 16 days ago for Tel Aviv, Israel, to purchase a milk pasteurizing machine.

He was however told the factories had closed and no transaction could be made. He then flew to Doha where he has been to date.

Kenya has banned all international flights amid the Covid-19 pandemic. Only cargo flights are allowed. This has complicated matters for the Kenyans.

Qatar does not allow inbound flights at the moment. The Gulf nations are reporting a rapidly growing number of infections with over 1,200 cases reported by Qatar, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the UAE.

"We do not have food. All shops here are closed. We only get small amounts of food from the cleaners here who empathize with us," said Kassim.

Most of the Kenyans stranded there are workers at the airport and other places who have been sent on paid and unpaid leave.

The Kenyan government had given citizens and foreigners two days to get back to Kenya before the ban on international flights was effected. However, Kassim said the two-day notice was too short.

"We rushed to book flights but they were all full. The prices had also shot up," Kassim said. Citizens of the US, Canada, China and other nations sent planes to evacuate their citizens.

35 YEARS FOR MURDER

Man wins death sentence appeal

CAROLYNE KUBWA/A man accused of killing his friend over two cows got a reprieve after the High Court in Mombasa reduced his death sentence to 35 years.

Msanzi Karisa had been charged with robbery with violence and giving false information to a public servant before he was convicted and sentenced to death in 2004.

Judge Eric Ogola, on Monday set aside the sentence and jailed Karisa for 35 years from the date of arrest.

Karisa had appealed the death sentence saying a Supreme Court decision delivered in 2017 ruled the mandatory death sentence unconstitutional.

He was accused of robbing his colleague of his two cows which they had gone together to purchase, causing the death of his colleague in the process.

The court had been informed that Karisa and Mangale Nyawa left their respective homes to buy cattle at an auction at Samburu market in 2004.

Karisa purchased one cow while Nyawa bought two. As the two headed back home, they were allegedly attacked by robbers and their cows stolen. In the course of the robbery, Nyawa was killed.



STAR SURVEY

TODAY'S QUESTION

Do you wear a mask to keep off coronavirus?

YESTERDAY'S QUESTION

Do you accept President Kenyatta's apology for police brutality and killings during night curfew??

YES 40%



NO 60%



CORONAVIRUS VS COPS

Barman, 23, dies in Diani after police tear-gassing, whipping

Officers say he was killed in a stampede, investigating; four killed by cops

STAR REPORTER
@TheStarKenya

As at the night of April 1, Kenya had recorded one coronavirus death and three resulting from police brutality.

On Wednesday night, hours after the President apologised for their brutality, a fourth was added to the list of police victims—a barman caught up at work.

Relatives of Erick Ng'ethe, 23, said he was beaten to death by police officers at Nyamira Bar in Mandigo, Diani.

Relative Edith Waithera said Ng'ethe was still at work when police officers arrived. The officers, who were enforcing the 7pm-5am curfew, lobbed tear-gas canisters into the bar.

Waithera said Ng'ethe and his colleagues had barricaded themselves inside. They were trying to escape when police broke in.

"Due to teargas chemicals my uncle and other people were suffocating and wanted to run away through the roof but they were unsuccessful," she said.

Waithera said her uncle was whipped until he lost consciousness while others were severely injured.

But Msambweni subcounty police commander Nehemiah Bitok denied the police killed Ng'ethe. He said Ng'ethe was injured in a stampede while trying to run away.

According to Waithera, police say Ng'ethe died as he was being rushed to Tiwi Hospital, but she thinks he died while he was being whipped.

Bitok said police officers had



Top, Erick Ng'ethe Bottom, Ng'ethe's sister Lydia Wanjiru and his father Daniel Ng'ang'a speak to the press at Kwale hospital mortuary in Matuga subcounty /COURTESY / SHABAN OMAR



taken him to a nearby health dispensary to save his life.

The other police victims are a 13-year-old boy playing at his balcony during curfew hours on Monday and two boda boda operators—one of them had taken a pregnant woman to hospital.

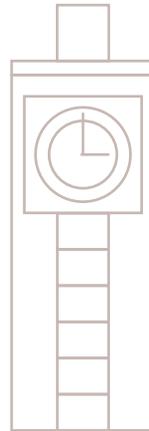
Muhuri rapid response officer Francis Auma condemned

the killing, saying police should be held responsible for Ng'ethe's death.

He said more than 200 people from Mombasa and Kwale are nursing serious injuries after being assaulted by police enforcing the curfew.

Police have begun investigating Ng'ethe's death.

CORRIDORS OF POWER



POLITICAL GOSSIP

Who is doing what and where in the world of politics

★ **SOME ELECTED SENATORS** who were locked out of Tuesday's sitting are not happy with the criteria used to pick members who attended the session. They were heard asking why they were barred and their nominated counterparts, who do not represent any constituency, given access to the debating chamber. The lawmakers said they wanted to raise pertinent issues. They are planning to petition Speaker **Kenneth Lusaka** (pictured) to consider reviewing the list of designated members before the next sitting on Tuesday.

★ **A YOUTHFUL MP** nearly caused trouble at a city spa in Kilimani last week. The man is said to have gone for a massage in the high-end parlour that offers "happy endings" but refused to pay after the services, complaining they were unsatisfactory. The tipsy lawmaker threw Sh5,000 at the masseuse instead of Sh8,000 and began to walk away. At this point, one woman remarked that they "would see if the MP survives coronavirus". The MP and his bodyguard interpreted this to mean that the girls could have knowingly infected the MP. It's said the man caused trouble that drew everyone's attention. The owner of the parlour, a renowned businesswoman, had to be called to sweet-talk the angry mweshimiwa.

★ **TWO TEXTILE COMPANIES** seem to have defied government's directive to reduce the number of their workforce for purposes of social distancing. The entities in Nairobi are still operating normally with more than 1,000 workers at their premises nearly every day. Insiders intimated to Corridors that the bosses care less and are bragging of their connections with the powers that be. The companies also operate past 5pm, despite Interior CS **Fred Matiang'i** ordering companies to release employees by 4pm to beat the curfew. Residents of areas neighbouring the factories say they are at high risk of infection with coronavirus as they mix with the workers who have rented houses in the area.

★ **A SENIOR POLICE** officer in Western is on the spot over allegations that he effected the transfer of a junior colleague even after the headquarters made it clear no officer would be moved during the coronavirus pandemic. Police headquarters reportedly sent a signal on March 24 suspending all transfers because of the virus. However, a junior officer confided to Corridors that an officer in the region was transferred to a new station days after the directive was given. He said the area OCPD has even ignored the transfer but the new officer has reported and is waiting to be received and shown around

If you have any tips send them to
Tips@the-star.co.ke

CARTOON



COZINE '20

MOPPING UP CENTS TAX LAWS (AMENDMENT) BILL, 2020 TO HERALD SEASON FOR COSTLY BAS

Gas and bread to Covid-19 tax pro

Chunk of state resources will be dedicated to the Covid-19 emergency response

MOSES ODHIAMBO
@TheStarKenya



Kenyans should brace for tougher economic times ahead following adjustments to tax laws removing several exemptions that brought relief to traders.

The changes in the Tax Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2020, will herald a season of costly purchases for consumers already hamstrung by the coronavirus pandemic.

The National Assembly is expected to hold a special sitting next Wednesday to go through all stages of the bill by Leader of Majority Aden Duale.

The Treasury has been running low on cash for some time, with latest reports showing there was only Sh2.8 billion in the exchequer as of February 18.

With the coronavirus taking a toll on its revenue projections and income streams, Treasury boss Ukur Yatani said the National Treasury would have to mop up funds from other sources.

A chunk of state resources will be dedicated to the Covid-19 emergency response and to sustain operations.

In the wake of the strained cash flow, the government is going to extremes of taxing disturbance allowances, bonuses, overtime and retirement benefits for those paid more than Sh24,000 per month.

Monies paid to public officers in respect of allowances for foreign trips will also be considered taxable income. Interest on savings accounts held with the Kenya Post Office Savings Bank will also be included as taxable income.

Further, mortgages will attract tax as well as loans by county authorities and contributions paid into the Deposit Protection Fund.

Various state agencies that have been paying no tax on their income will be charged the same once the Bill is passed.

Car dealers will be charged a processing fee of Sh10,000 on all



motor vehicles prior to clearance, excluding motorcycles imported or purchased duty free.

President Uhuru Kenyatta recently spelt out reliefs to cushion the country's economy, among them a reduction of VAT to 14 per cent, rollout of emergency response fund, and tax holidays.

But the reliefs in the Bill are only for businesses with a turnover of less than Sh500,000, which will not be subject to turnover tax, and milk which remains VAT exempt.

The income of incorporated companies will be subject to turnover tax. The income tax bands have equally been adjusted so that the lowest - at Sh288,000, is subject to 10 per cent tax annually.

An array of medical equipment and medicines has also been granted tax waivers - ostensibly to boost supplies to hospitals.

The law further proposes the removal of presumptive tax -payable

by a resident whose turnover from business does not exceed Sh5 million during a year of income.

It seeks to remove the exemption on basic commodities in changes that will affect farmers a great deal.

The Bill proposes to remove VAT exemptions on ordinary bread, cassava and wheat flour, and maize flour containing cassava.

Bread containing wheat flour, sugar, salt, yeast, fat or oil, bread improver, preservatives and water will be affected.

Goods and services not exempt from VAT will attract a 14 per cent tax charge or duty as specified in related laws.

Prices of fertilisers, LPG cooking gas, power generators, fishing nets of man-made textile, animal feeds, and biogas as well as solar equipment will go up.

Makers of clean cooking stoves will also bear the brunt of the new tax measures which will also extend

to supplies of stoves, grates, barbecues, braziers, gas-rings, plate warmers and similar non-electric domestic appliances.

The government further targets to remove reliefs that were given to companies that supported President Kenyatta's green energy agenda. In this regard, supplies for use in the construction of power generating plant that feeds to the national grid will attract VAT.

The same will apply to companies that import or purchase machinery for exclusive use in geothermal, oil or mining prospecting or exploration.

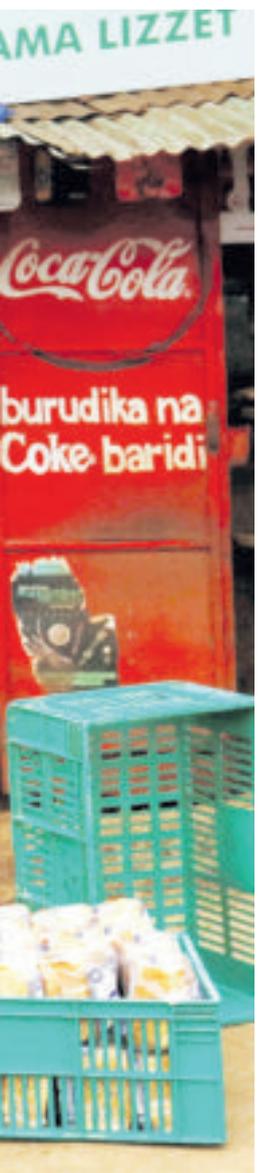
Tax holidays will also end for LPG gas storage facilities with a capital investment of Sh4 billion and storage of 15,000 metric tonnes.

Animal feeds made from materials, waste, residues, and by-products will be charged VAT as well as specialised solar equipment and accessories.



AGRICULTURAL COMMODITIES

Proposals go up in



A man arranges crates of bread outside a shop at the end of a night-long curfew in Nairobi on March 28
/REUTERS

This will affect solar water heaters and deep cycle-sealed batteries which exclusively use or store solar power. ICT companies that have enjoyed tax holidays on parts imported or purchased locally for the assembly of primary school laptop tablets will also lose.

Tractors, plastic bag biogas digesters, leasing of biogas producing equipment, and goods for special economic zones of more than 100 acres will no longer be VAT exempt.

Inputs or raw materials locally purchased or imported by manufacturers of agricultural machinery and implements will also be charged tax.

Taxes will also be charged on chemicals, reagents, films, film strips and visual aid equipment imported or purchased by the National Museums of Kenya.

Investors putting up hotels will be required to pay tax for materials for direct and exclusive use in the

construction of tourism facilities, recreational parks, convention and conference facilities.

Inputs for the manufacture of pesticides and materials for the construction of grain storage that have been duty-free will now attract tax. Insurance agencies and brokerage, stock exchange brokerages will also attract a tax charge; reliefs only extended to tea and coffee brokerage services.

The government is also seeking to tax services provided to aid the construction and infrastructural works in industrial parks of over 100 acres.

In the proposal, entry fees into the national parks and reserves, services of tour operators, excluding in-house supplies, will be taxed.

State corporations that now face taxation include agencies that were turned into directorates of the Agriculture and Food Authority (AFFA).

They include Tea Board of Kenya, the Pyrethrum Board of Kenya, the Sisal Board of Kenya, and the Kenya Dairy Board, the Pineapple Development Authority and the Horticultural Crops Development Authority.

Income earned by Kenya Tea Development Authority, National Irrigation Board, Mombasa Pipeline Board, Settlement Fund Trustees, Kenya Post Office Savings Bank, and the Cotton Board of Kenya will now be taxed.

In the bid to expand revenue from income taxes, the National Treasury also wants the inclusion of certain items that are normally deducted from income.

Incomes by those dealing in securities exchange operating in Kenya will now be subject to taxation.

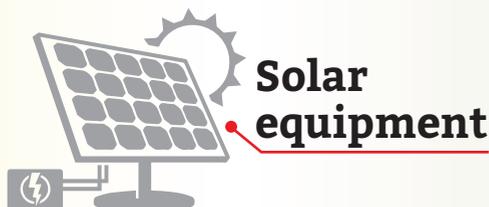
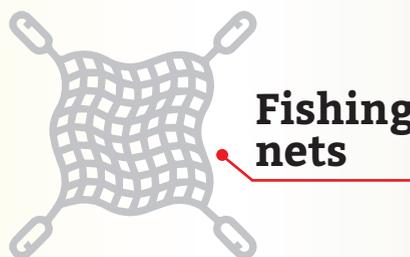
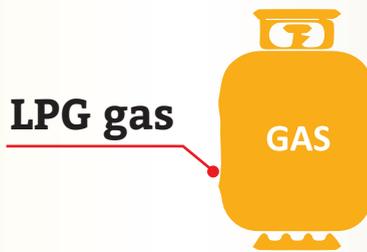
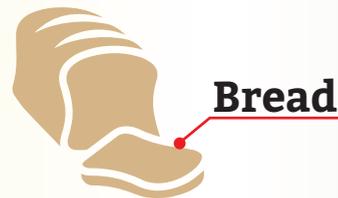
This will extend to income by contractors taking part in the construction of a public school, hospital, road or any similar kind of social infrastructure.

Club subscriptions paid by an employer on behalf of an employee will now be included as income as well as annual subscriptions to trade associations. Legal costs relating to the authorisation and issue of shares, debentures or similar securities offered for purchase by the general public will also be treated as taxable income.

This will be the case of expenditure on legal costs and other incidental expenses, for the purposes of listing on any securities exchange operating in Kenya.

Reliefs on deposits in a registered home ownership savings plan have also been scrapped, save for hotel buildings certified as industrial buildings.

PRODUCTS WITH VAT EXEMPTIONS REMOVED



STAR · ILLUSTRATED



EXPERT COMMENT
JOHN MBADI

Proposals not clear on stimulus package

I thought the proposals should be in line with what the government had announced. But some are completely unwelcome. I heard that they are going to remove some exceptions which are mostly on essential commodities, and then it will affect the poor who are supposed to be cushioned.

My view is that the government has not come out consciously and properly organized in terms of what they want to do. There is need for clarity on what the government wants to achieve. There is a need for the government to project the actual projected expenditure as a result of this Covid-19.

If for instance, if we are going to have 10,000 (Covid-19) cases by the end of April, how much is it going to cost us as an economy to manage that health and economic crisis? That is not coming out in terms of figures and finances.

Then we get to ask where we are getting that money. Yes, we got some money from the Emergency Fund, but going forward we cannot rely on philanthropy.

We must provide budgetary allocation, we must clearly indicate through a supplementary budget which is coming next week, I would want to see where the money is coming from and going to. These tax proposals we must be interrogated if we are reducing VAT to 14 per cent which is a modest reduction from 16 per cent to 14 per cent, the two per cent is not very significant but it is better than nothing.

Let us not again interfere with other existing tax reliefs which were already cushioning or helping reduce the burden on the ordinary mwananchi.

If they are introducing that (burdening the poor) would hurt the economy, in my view then what are we doing? Are we not being counterproductive?

In my view, I don't think we have come out with concrete measures that are going to help stimulate our economy or avoid us going into recession. As a country, there are certain things we would have done especially how we are dealing with Small Business Enterprises (SMEs) which are the biggest contributors to our economy.

The proposals we have we are looking at, how effectively are they going to cushion our SMEs.

We need a stimulus package that will give the SMEs some impetus.



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The National Assembly Minority leader spoke to the Star

NEWS GENERAL

COVID-19 'CLOSURE'

Pandemic tolls death knell for burial rites

Coronavirus has heralded a painful paradigm shift in the mourning and burial culture of loved ones

STAR TEAM AND AGENCIES
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Funerals and mourning that go on for days are supposed to bring some kind of closure, bring families and friends closer together, let them remember the departed, forgive and forget.

A proper send-off.

Covid-19 has upended all of that, however, for months to come. Burials must be fast, within 48 hours. The government has banned big gatherings, only about 15 family members may attend. Social distancing is mandatory.

Many people miss the big gatherings, the long-drawn-out eulogies, the embraces, the big crowds, the feasting—and the funeral committees that raise money for it all.

Nyabituwa village in Kisii county is mourning a matriarch.

Mama Lucy Okioma who died of cancer three days ago has to be quickly buried within 48 hour, on Friday.

However, her three sons are stuck in Massachusetts, USA, without any flights to Kenya so they can bid their mother farewell.

This is in stark contrast with their father, Alijah Okioma, whose burial last August brought the sleepy Nyabituwa village to a standstill for days.

In fact, during Mzee Okioma's burial, a passerby would easily confuse the ceremony with a carnival of sorts, rolled out in a grand celebration for villagers.

On Friday, Mama Lucy is being laid to rest not only in the absence of her sons but also in the absence of the many people who loved her and whose lives she touched.

Mama Lucy's burial is just one example of how the coronavirus pandemic has turned upside down the treasured elaborate burial rites, especially in Western Kenya.

SUCH LONELINESS

The Luo and Luhya communities are known for intricate funeral ceremonies and strict practices.

If the death occurs at home, the body is transported to the morgue as the extended family comes together to fundraise and plan on how to take care of the mourners.

Occasionally, the body will lie in the morgue for weeks, before being taken home for a night's stay over. A bull must be slaughtered on the burial day. It's a whole-day event.

Relatives, villagers and politicians from far and wide to attend.

Last Thursday, police chased away villagers who were headed to attend the burial of a Form 2 student who died of leukaemia in Benders village in Sabatia subcounty, Vihiga county.

The villagers complained that they could not be allowed to attend the funeral so they could eat afterwards. A family member



Burial ceremony of Ursula Namuonja, 58, at Mbaraki Cemetery in Mombasa / COURTESY

sent texts that they would not be allowed. "We are doing this as a government policy, as political leaders, we should be in the vanguard to ensure these guidelines are followed," a legislator told the Star.

The pandemic has heralded a painful paradigm shift in the mourning and burial cultures.

Funeral costs have been slashed drastically.

Bereaved families are also being forced to endure the agony of mourning alone and burying their departed loved ones in deserted homesteads.

The new order according to Gusii Council Elders chairman James Matundura runs counter to the community's burial traditions.

"The order is strange and caught many people by surprise. We advise our people to abide by the order to avoid infection," he said.

The burial of retired Catholic Archbishop Raphael Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki next Tuesday is the clearest signal that times have indeed changed.

Only about 100 people will be allowed to the ceremony, locking out politicians and even Catholic clergy and faithful, whom the late archbishop mentored and led for more than 60 years.

Bereaved families are bearing the heaviest brunt of the government's tough measures against the virus.

They have been pushed to the edge and are now begging for help in WhatsApp groups—at least from those who can accept their invites—with traditional harambees no longer tenable.

The ban on social gatherings has by extension taken a toll on the ordinary understanding of burials for loved ones, with funeral processions and services as well as ordinary harambees suspended.

For some families coming from

AUTHORITIES HAVE DISALLOWED NIGHT VIGILS WITH BODIES BEING FERRIED FROM MORGUES AND BURIED IMMEDIATELY. MANY MORGUES HAVE SHUT DOWN

communities with a passionate attachment to cultures like the Luyha, Luo and Kisii—where mourners grieve for days—the meaning of burial has changed.

Burying the dead within less than 48 hours was unheard of as elaborate funeral programmes were drawn up, no expenses spared.

The measures have drastically changed the burial rites within the Luhya community.

Chiefs and their assistants are partnering with police to stay at funerals to ensure burials happen fast.

In most cases, the burials are over by 10am.

The regulations have slashed the cost of funerals as traditionally, the family has to slaughter a cow during funerals to feed mourners.

During the burial of a renowned Kakamega lawyer Gilbert Imbenzi in his Nalianya village home, the 15 people in attendance were

supplied with packed queen cakes and a bottle of water or soda.

Under normal Luhya burials, the dead body is kept for three days for relatives to view before burial takes place.

In normal times, Mama Moraa Nyambogi's burial could have been attended by thousands of mourners given that her husband-Samwel Nyambwogi has been a long-serving KTDA director.

That is not the case, though, for Moraa's final rites on April 1 were marked by extraordinary proceedings and roiled by scores of culture lapses. At Bomagena village in South Mugirango, only a couple of relatives and neighbours are attending the burial of the wife of the ex-director of Ogembo Tea Factory.

TOUGH CHOICES

Politicians, who usually grace such occasions especially in 'high-profile funerals like this one, have given Moraa' send-off a wide berth.

Local administrators have allowed the funeral but issued tough guidelines both on social distancing and hand washing.

Authorities have also banned night vigils, funeral processions and allowed burials immediately bodies are brought from morgues.

No one wants to take any chances even as the family is torn between adhering to the tough regulations and according to mama a befitting send-off.

At around 8.30am mourners start arriving and one after the other they walk towards water tanks that have been stationed strategically

for people to thoroughly wash their hands.

There are no close contacts. People mourn individually as they slowly retreat to specified sitting areas not to listen to any speeches but a short sermon and prayer before the burial.

Some old women try to roam freely trying to find a sitting place but they are reminded by orderlies that they would have to contend with the provided sitting arrangement after washing their hands with plenty of soap.

"We have less than two hours to make sure that all our programmes are complete and mama is laid to rest. Kindly follow instructions on hand-washing and social distancing. We are sorry because that is what the government has told us," announced the day's master of ceremonies.

It is an extraordinary funeral getting underway at the heart of one of the communities that usually roll out elaborate burial plans that include night vigils, robust speeches, and some wining and dining.

Ordinarily, the Kisii community's culture could have required that Mama Moraa, being an elderly wife and mother, would be buried near sunset, preferably between 2pm and 5pm.

"We are grateful to our relatives, friends and neighbours who went out of their way to firm up a fairly respectable send-off to my wife," says Mzee Nyambogi in his vote of thanks appreciating support harnessed from WhatsApp fundraising.

NEWS GENERAL

TO RAMP UP CONTAINMENT

Kenya to benefit from Sh210m AfDB Covid-19 grant for Africa

Funds to be channelled to countries through the WHO Africa regional office

GIDEON KETER
@TheStarKenya

Kenya is among 41 African countries that are likely to benefit from a Sh210 million grant by the African Development Bank to combat coronavirus.

The bank announced the grant on Wednesday. The money will be channelled to the countries through the World Health Organization regional office for Africa.

"The grant, which is in response to an international appeal by the WHO, will be used by the UN body to equip regional member countries

to prevent, rapidly detect, investigate, contain and manage detected cases of Covid-19," the bank said in a statement.

The WHO Africa region office will use the funds to bolster the capacity of the countries on infection prevention, testing and case management.

The bank said the funds will also boost surveillance systems, procure and distribute laboratory test kits and reagents, and support coordination mechanisms at national and regional levels.

"This grant will enable regional member countries to put in place robust containment measures with-

in 48 hours of case confirmation and also increase public awareness in communities," the bank said.

The grant will contribute toward a \$50 million WHO Preparedness and Response Plan, which is also supported by partners including the United Nations.

It is estimated that Africa will require huge amounts of money to cushion residents against the impact of the disease as many countries scramble to put together contingency measures, including commercial lockdowns to contain the virus.

Globally, factories have been closed and workers sent home, dis-

rupting supply chains, trade, travel, and driving many economies toward recession.

The bank said it will soon be unveiling a financial assistance package that will enable governments and businesses to undertake flexible responses to lessen the economic and social impact of the pandemic.

Meanwhile, President Uhuru Kenyatta on Wednesday chaired the first meeting of 10-member Emergency Response Fund board through video-conference where he assured them that senior government officials and governors will remit their pay cut pledges.

'IN CASE HOSPITALS CROWD'

Nyamira identifies schools to serve as quarantine centres

ANGWENYI GICHANA/ The Nyamira county government has identified five schools to be used as quarantine centres in case health facilities are overwhelmed by the coronavirus pandemic.

Governor John Nyagarama said the schools include Sirona Girls, Kebabe Girls, Nyambaria Boys, Menyenya High and Riyabe Mixed.

"We have set up forced quarantine rooms at the Kenya Medical Training College in Nyamira for suspected cases. Quarantine rooms have been set up in all the eight subcounty hospitals," Nyagarama said.

He said a five-bed isolation unit has been set up at Bombagi dispensary. "Renovation of a 17-bed isolation unit with five ICU beds at Nyamira County Hospital will be completed in two weeks."



EPRA
Energy & Petroleum Regulatory Authority

PUBLIC NOTICE

USSD Short Code Query and SMS Services to Enhance Service Delivery

With the USSD query service, customers will have access to:

- 1. Pump prices**
• Dial *363#, press 1 then enter the name of the town e.g. Kilifi then press send
- 2. To check the details of a licence for example expiry date**
• Dial *363#, press 2 then enter the licence number then press send
- 3. License Application status**
• Dial *363#, press 3 then enter the reference number obtained after submitting your application then press send
- 4. To see scheduled exams**
• Dial *363#, press 4 then enter the reference number obtained after submitting your license application
- 5. To check exam results**
• Dial *363#, press 5 then enter the reference number obtained after submitting your license application
- 6. To verify employee details**
• Dial *363# press 6 then the employee's national ID number. You will receive an SMS with key employee details such as name and designation.
- 7. To check the status of your Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) application**
• Dial *363# press 7 then the PPA ID
- 8. To report a complaint**
• Dial *363#, press 8 then choose the nature of complaint from the list provided e.g. If it is billing complaint press 1 then click send. Our officers will call you to get more information about your complaint
- 9. To report an accident**
• Dial *363#, press 9(more), then press 9, then choose the nature of accident from the list provided e.g. If it is reporting work related accident press 1 then click send. Our officers will call you to get more information about the accident
- 10. Truck verification**
• Dial *363#, press 9(more), then press 10, then enter the truck's registration number e.g. KCG 254N

With the SMS service, customers will have access to:

- 1. Pump prices**
• Type the word price space town then send the message to 40850 e.g. Price Kilifi
- 2. To check the details of a licence for example expiry date**
• Type the word licence then the licence number and then send the message to 40850 e.g. Licence 1234
- 3. License Application status**
• Type the words application status then the reference number obtained after submitting your application and then send the message to 40850 e.g. Application status 123456
- 4. To see scheduled exams**
• Type the words exam details followed by the reference number obtained after submitting your license application then send the message to 40850 e.g. Exam details 12345678
- 5. To check exam results**
• Indicate the type of exam you undertook for example written exam followed by reference number obtained after submitting your license application then send the message to 40850 e.g. Written exam 12345678
- 6. To verify employee details**
• Type the word employee followed by the national ID number then send the message to 40850 e.g. Employee 12345678
- 7. To check the status of your Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) application**
• Type the words PPA progress followed by the PPA ID then send the message to 40850 e.g. PPA progress 123
- 8. To report a complaint**
• Type the word complaint and then send the message to 40850. Our officers will call you within 24 hours on weekdays to get more details of your complaint.
- 9. To report an accident**
• Type the word accident then send the message to 40850. Our officers will call you within 24 hours on weekdays to get more information about the accident.
- 10. Truck verification**
• Type the word truck followed by the registration number then click send. E.g. Truck KCG 254N

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NEWS GENERAL

DID SHE PAY FULL PRICE?

Aisha Jumwa embroiled in Sh11 million land tussle

Landowner says property changed hands without full payment, his knowledge

LUKE AWICH
@AchiaAwich



Malindi MP Aisha Jumwa is entangled in a feud over an Sh11 million land deal after the owner claims she improperly transferred the property to herself without his knowledge.

Through his lawyer Evans Oruenjo of Orwenjo Kibet and Khalid Advocates, Devshi claims the Malindi lawmaker only paid Sh6.5 million and declined to pay the remaining Sh4.5 million due on July 15, 2018, under the agreement.

According to the agreement, dated April 16, 2018, Aisha bought the land, GEDE/MJIMBONI/755 measuring 5.2 hectares for Sh11 million and was to pay the balance in two instalments of Sh5.5 million each.

According to demand letter to the MP – seen by the Star – she only paid Sh 6.5 million and declined to make the remaining payments. During the period of transactions, the land's title deed was deposited with her advocate for safekeeping. It is from here, Devshi claims, that the land was transferred without his approval.

Devshi first reported the alteration at Malindi police station and then to the Director of Criminal Investigation, Land Fraud Unit.

“For two years you have refused and ignored demands to make payments of the balance being Sh4.5 million and now interest has accrued to Sh1,080,000,” read the March 27, 2020 demand letter copied to DCI.

“Our client believes that you deliberately refused to pay the full purchase price despite transferring the property in your favour without his approval. The land title deed was deposited to your Advocate for safekeeping until completion date but you went ahead to transfer the



Malindi MP Aisha Jumwa at a press conference on March 12 last year
/JACK OWUOR

property without completing the transaction.”

Contacted, Aisha dismissed the alleged improper land transfer claims saying it is not possible to transfer without the owner first approving the transaction.

“How can a transfer of a title deed be done at the land board without the consent of the first owner? Get your facts right, enquires about this to the relevant authorities e.g. the Land Board,” she said.

Devshi through his lawyers wants Aisha to settle the remaining balance within one week or he says he will sue her to repossess the prime land.

The letter read, “...unless we receive the said sum, within seven days of [this date] ... together with our debt collection fees of Sh837,000, our peremptory instructions are to institute legal proceedings against yourselves without any further recourse to yourselves whatsoever for the recovery of the said amount.”

SOCIOECONOMIC SHOCKS

Sakaja-led Senate team summons CS Kagwe's committee to shed light on response measures

JULIUS OTIENO/The National Emergency Response Committee on the Coronavirus is to appear before a Senate panel on Friday to shed light on the measures put in place to combat the disease.

The committee chaired by Health CS Mutahi Kagwe will appear before the ad hoc committee formed to oversee measures to contain the virus and cushion Kenyans from its health and economic effects.

Kagwe's team will explain the plans they have rolled out and propose policy and legislative frameworks needed. Some 110 cases have

been confirmed in Kenya. Three people have died and four patients recovered. The first case was reported on March 13.

The pandemic has brought the country to a near standstill, with many businesses closed for fear of the contagious virus.

Globally, about 50,000 people have died and close to one million others have been infected since the disease broke out in Wuhan, China, in December last year. The ad hoc committee chairman, Johnson Sakaja, said they have cast their net wide and will be looking at a broader

spectrum to safeguard the masses.

“We are looking at economic and finance issues, that is: How to cushion Kenyans economically, food and water provision issues, health issues and support and auxiliary services issues,” Sakaja said.

The Nairobi senator said the team – which has held three meetings since its formation on Tuesday, two of them virtual – has also invited experts in various fields such as finance, economy and health to submit their proposals on legislative interventions that can be put in place to fight the disease.

THREE DEATHS IN 4 DAYS

Hippo kills another man on the shores of Lake Naivasha

GEORGE MURAGE/ Operations in Lake Naivasha were disrupted after a hippo killed another man, bringing the death toll to three in just four days.

The attack took place near Karagita landing beach. KWS officers moved in and killed the animal, which had been causing fears as it charged towards boats and those operating in the area.

Last week, the same hippo attacked and killed two fishermen near the same area in two separate incidents. Cases of human-wildlife conflict around the lake have been on the rise.

988 FOR SMS

Kisumu residents get toll-free phone number to report crime

FAITH MATETE/ Kisumu county commissioner Susan Waweru has provided a toll-free telephone number so residents can report crime during the curfew.

This comes following public outcry that thieves take advantage of the curfew to terrorise people on Lolwe, Migosi, Carwash and Mamboleo estates. They cited break-ins. The number is 988 for SMS. “Send a message to this number and tell us where you are. Officers will be dispatched to that place immediately,” she said.

Residents are also allowed to send information that would contribute to the war on Covid-19. “If you know someone or your neighbour who recently came from abroad and has not self-quarantined, you can alert us.”



UoN's Lincoln Ndogoni /COURTESY

MEDICS TO BE WORST AFFECTED

Virus creating a huge mental health crisis

JOHN MUCHANGI/ A mental health crisis is slowly growing as the country deals with the coronavirus.

Healthcare workers are likely to be most affected, followed by about 2,000 people in quarantine and their families. University of Nairobi's mental health specialist Lincoln Ndogoni says Kenya will require the kind of psychological support given to victims of wars and natural calamities. “The distress among healthcare workers is going to be higher because they have fear of being infected,” says Lincoln Ndogoni, a UoN lecturer and consultant psychosocial and trauma processing advisor.

Ndogoni was involved in providing psychosocial support to survivors of the Rwanda Genocide in 1994. He says Kenya's frontline healthcare workers are likely to experience significant long-term stress knowing that they are at higher-than-average risk of contracting Covid-19.

“We advocate the integration of mental health and psychosocial support services for all health workers,” he said.

A study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association on March 23 showed 50 per cent of all the frontline health workers in China were depressed and 71 per cent were severely distressed.

“Women, nurses, those in Wuhan, and front-line health care workers have a high risk of developing unfavourable mental health outcomes and may need psychological support or interventions,” the study says.

SOME 110 CASES HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED IN KENYA. THREE PEOPLE HAVE DIED AND FOUR PATIENTS RECOVERED

NEWS JUDICIARY

Special courts to hear curfew defiance cases, says Maraga

Laments spike in sexual offences in many parts of the country in the last two weeks

GORDON OSEN
@TheStarKenya



Persons who defy directives to contain the coronavirus including the curfew will be charged in a special court, Chief Justice David Maraga has said.

Maraga said the courts will be convened at short notice to handle such cases in consultation with the police and the Director of Public Prosecution.

He said the office of the DPP will have one officer in charge of every regional office to process files for plea-taking and other urgent matters.

The CJ said court stations bosses across the country will, in consultation with regional prosecutors, facilitate plea-taking for serious offences that are not subject to police bond.

"Magistrates across the country continue to review and revise bail and bond terms for petty offenders to facilitate their release from prisons as they await trial," he said.

The CJ spoke on behalf of the National Council of Administration of Justice which he chairs.

The remarks make it clear that defying the curfew and Covid-19 control directives would not be classified as petty offences hence not benefit from free or police bond without arraignment.

Spike of sexual offences

Maraga also said that the council has noted a significant rise in sexual offences in many parts of the country in the last two weeks, constituting 35.8 per cent of all criminal reports made to the police.

The offences were committed by close relatives including guardians and foster parents of the victims.

The CJ said that the council, which met virtually on Tuesday, resolved to bar the detention of petty and traffic offenders at police stations for more than 24 hours.

They should be released on either cash bail or free police bond, he said.

Police will be required to establish centralised records showing the number of people arrested and handled in all police stations and the



A police officer confronts a man found on the streets during curfew hours on March 27
/FREDRICK OMONDI

terms of their release on bail or bond.

"This will be regularly monitored by the office of the DPP and periodic reports submitted to the NCAJ members," he added.

The CJ also announced that the release of petty offenders for the last two weeks will be escalated.

Inmates jailed for less than six months have been the main beneficiaries.

Others who have less than six months to complete their jail terms have been presented to the High Court for review of their sentences, he added. "This has led to the release of 4,800 inmates, significantly help-

ing to decongest the prisons. The exercise is continuing," he said.

Maraga said new inmates are being isolated to reduce the risk of infection and movement in prisons has been highly restricted.

Prison visits have been suspended, including visits to the staff quarters. Prison labour has also been reduced to a bare minimum.

In its directive on Wednesday, the Judiciary put out a contact list of court stations and specific individuals who will be working to enable Kenyans file urgent matters which will then be attended to by duty judges. The CJ also indicated

that the rest of judges and magistrates will be working on their decisions from home in order to render judgments without delay.

For example, in the next two weeks, the Supreme Court will deliver one judgment and 10 rulings and the Court of Appeal will deliver more than 45 judgments and rulings of appeals and applications heard in Nairobi, Kisumu, Mombasa and Eldoret through email on Friday. The council also gave a reprieve to those who have not paid their debts by suspending warrants of arrest, court decrees made prior to March 15.

TOUGH MEASURES

Prisons in lockdown to contain spread of virus on inmates

GEORGE MURAGE/ The Prisons department has directed warders to limit movement within the facilities and placed those who live outside on leave to contain the coronavirus.

Motorcycle operators have been banned from the facilities while warders' family members who work outside the prisons have also been told to stay at home.

The latest directives are in addition to the prohibition of prison visits ordered two weeks ago.

A notice from the Prisons headquarters directed medical staff to visit all penal institutions and establish if a total lockdown had been effected.

"All prison medical staff are instructed to visit stations in their regions and conduct a daily monitoring and evaluation exercise," the notice reads.

The notice further orders the officers to contain their children within their houses. However, Prisons director of operations Duncan Ogore downplayed the lockdown adding that the officers were free to leave their camps. Ogore said they were keen to make sure none of their officers was infected by the virus as this would lead to a major crisis within the prison. "The new measures are meant to make sure that we contain the spread of the virus," he said.

Ogore said that the inmates were vulnerable to Covid-19 and they were not taking chances as they fight against the outbreak.

At Naivasha GK prison, all motorcycle operators were banned from accessing the facility until the disease is contained.

A junior officer from the prison confirmed the lockdown saying that this had affected even their family members who worked outside the prison. "We have been forced to stay within the prison grounds following the directive," the officer said.

LACKS MERIT

Defiler uncle's appeal quashed, to serve life sentence

FAITH NYASUGUTA/ A three-judge bench has quashed a second appeal by a man convicted of defiling two of his nieces.

The man (name withheld to protect the girls) will now serve life imprisonment for defiling his eight and six-year-old nieces.

The court heard that the accused infected the minors with sexually transmitted diseases.

The offences happened in February 2012 while the trial was conducted in 2012 and 2013 and judgment delivered on 20th July 2013. He appealed. He said the High Court erred in law by sentencing him to life imprisonment since he was a minor. He argued that detention should have been a last resort and that he ought to have been sentenced under the Children's Act.

LITIGANTS DECRY HURDLES

Judiciary's online model faces technical glitches

ANNETTE WAMBULWA/ The move by the Judiciary to move online the filing and hearing of matters to curb the spread of the coronavirus is frustrating justice delivery.

Some litigants have raised concerns about the new way of filing cases and hearings is riddled with hurdles.

One litigant told the Star that during filing of their case they were unable to pay fees because that the system hung frequently. But lawyers have welcome the measures saying they are necessary due to the current

Covid-19 outbreak. Activist Okiya Omtatah (pictured) said even though he has encountered a few challenges during filing cases, the hearings through the Zoom app have been very efficient.

"The only challenge I had on my part was that most of their messages go to the spam mail, so you have to keep checking your spam mail. I don't know why they go to spam," he said.

Omtatah also said that the court account does not handle bulky documents so when the annexures to your case are big they bounce back. He was able to file his documents after using Gmail to send the documents to the court. Omtatah said he has not encountered any hitches with Zoom because he has very fast internet.

On Thursday, a curfew case filed by the LSK case was heard by Justice Weldon Korir via Zoom.



NEWS GENERAL



ROLE OF ACADEMIA

We are fully in fight against pandemic, UoN answers Mutua

GILBERT KOECH/The University of Nairobi has dismissed claims that the academia is not actively involved in the fight against coronavirus.

UoN vice chancellor Stephen Kiama (pictured) said researchers were burning the midnight oil to find a solution through different approaches.

"University of Nairobi researchers are also writing proposals for research grants required for arresting Covid-19," Kiama said in a memo dated April 1 to staff and students.

He said university lecturers are working with the government, giving advice and educating Kenyans.

The VC's response came after the Machakos Governor Alfred Mutua questioned the role that the academia has played in fighting the pandemic.

THE DATA

40K

Unionised vets practising in the country

They asked the government to include their work in the list of essential services exempted from the night curfew.

CONSEQUENCES

Jobless tenants in Eldoret now face eviction over rent

JESSICAH NYABOKE/The financial impact of Covid-19 has started to hit home as tenants in Eldoret town face eviction over unpaid rent.

Panic has gripped tenants in Shauri Moyo, Kamkunji and Langas after their landlords started demanding rent or they would be evicted by force.

The estates are mostly occupied by low income earners who eke out their living from small businesses such as selling second hand clothes at Eldoret West open air market.

Other tenants staring at forceful eviction are from the jua kali sector, hotels, security and flower firms.

Tenant Amos Mutsami said landlords had warned that failure to clear last month's rent would result in being kicked out.

HELPING CHILDREN AT HOME

Safaricom supports free digital learning

MAUREEN KINYANJUI/Safaricom has partnered with education content creators to provide free access digital learning to students.

The telco is working with Longhorn Publishers, Eneza Education and Viusasa to ensure children access educational content at home.

Learners have been at home since March 16 after the government suspended learning countrywide to prevent the spread of coronavirus in schools.

Safaricom CEO Peter Ndegwa on Thursday said the company had been looking at ways of being present for its customers during the difficult time the country is facing alongside hundreds of others in the world.

"Through this initiative, we want to ensure that all students can access education content, whether through feature phones or smartphones, and keep up with their studies for the time they will be at home," he said.

The partnership with Eneza Education will see students from Grade 4 to Form 4 access learning and revision content on the SMS-based Shupavu291 free of charge.

This is following a 60-day waiver of the daily Sh3 subscription fee. For the next 60 days, learners will also access education content on Shupavu Web, Viusasa E-learning and the Longhorn E-learning portal through the Safaricom network -up to 250mbps per day - at no data cost.

7PM-5AM CURFEW

Vets want inclusion as essential services

GILBERT KOECH/Veterinarians have petitioned Interior CS Fred Matiang'i to include them as providers of essential and critical services.

Union of Veterinary Practitioners Kenya secretary general Dr Miheso Mulembani expressed their concerns in a letter to the CS.

"The veterinary professionals are worried that the failure by government to list veterinary services as essential and critical services will endanger their lives by being arrested," the letter says."

For example, the veterinary officers carry out antemortem inspection of animals to be slaughtered to as late as 9pm while meat inspectors start their duties

by 4am to enable the meat to be dispatched by 6am to various locations. This is a similar case for milk and fish inspectors."

The union has over 40,000 practitioners in the country.

Mulembani said the Labour Relations Act, 2007, defines critical services as services that if interrupted will endanger the life of a person or health of the population.

Following the increase in the number of coronavirus cases, the government has instituted some measures as a way of curbing the spread of the virus.

Among the measures is a 7pm to 5am curfew, which started on March 27.



PHOTO STORY

A vendor sells face masks, locally made from cotton, at Obunga slums in Kisumu yesterday at Sh20 each

/DANIEL OGENDO

LOOMING DEFICIT

Millers ask state to drop duty on maize imports to avoid shortage

They say stock of two million bags inadequate, propose number be raised to 18 million

AGATHA NGOTHO
@TheStarKenya



Millers have asked the government to waive the 14 per cent duty on maize imported from Mexico.

Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Peter Munya said on Tuesday that the government will allow millers to import four million bags of the cereal to stabilise food prices.

"With the current stock estimated to last a month, the government has allowed private millers to import two million bags of white maize and a similar tonnage of yellow maize for making animal feeds to avert shortages," he said.

The CS said white maize from outside the Comesa trading bloc will attract a 14 per cent duty, down from 50 per cent while the yellow maize will attract 10 per cent duty

to cushion consumers from price increments.

But millers want the government to waive the duty because of the Covid-19.

"There should be no duty at this point and our aim at this time should not be to protect farmers but to ensure that every Kenyan can get adequate food at affordable prices," a large-scale miller who sought anonymity told the Star.

But Agriculture PS Hamadi Boga said even with the 14 per cent duty, millers will still be able to buy maize at the global market price and that of Comesa and EAC regions.

He said even if a consignment gets to Mombasa at Sh3,000 per bag, the price of a two-kilo packet of flour should still retail at between Sh120 and Sh130.

But United Grain Millers Association chairman Ken Nyaga said this will increase flour prices.

"If maize gets to Mombasa at Sh3,000, it will increase to Sh3,400 to Sh3,600 by the time it gets to Nairobi or Nakuru and shoot unga prices to almost Sh150," he said.

The millers said the two million bags of white maize is not enough to bridge the deficit.

"We need three million bags per month for the next six months, up to September. This should be about 18 million bags," the miller said.

According to data from the Ministry of Agriculture on 2019-20 maize production, the country has about 10 million bags of maize. With a monthly consumption of 4.25 million bags per month, the shortfall is to be met from imports.

PANIC BUYING

Kenyans have been warned against panic buying during the Covid-19 pandemic.

On Wednesday, Agriculture CS

Munya said this could create an unwarranted shock in the market, pushing the cost of food up.

"Currently, food supply is sufficient and I urge Kenyans to resist panic buying. We will be closely monitoring the cost of food and taking stern measures against traders who create artificial price inflation on food and agriculture inputs," he said.

Munya spoke on Tuesday during a media briefing on the coronavirus pandemic and food security at Kilimo House, Nairobi.

"It is evident that the economic impact of the pandemic is taking a toll on the national economy and this impact is particularly being felt in the agricultural sector," he said.

Particularly the fresh produce industry had been most hit by the pandemic. "This impact has been occasioned by the lockdown in most countries and the collapse of prices at the auction."

NEWS TRIBUTE

Ndingi personified self-sacrifice, honesty and changed many lives

He cared deeply for the less fortunate and those who were unjustly treated. And as a shepherd of souls, he actively encouraged individuals to consider giving their lives in the service of God and his people



FR PATRICK KANJA
WACHIRA

@TheStarKenya

Fr in-charge St
Jude Catholic
Church, Donholm,
Nairobi



President Daniel
Moi receives a
cheque from
Archbishop
Ndingi Mwana
a'Nzeki /FILE

diocese had a huge farming department, which educated farmers and provided them with needed help, to enhance their farming practices. A fully fledged water department, complete with water drilling rigs, crisscrossed the diocese drilling boreholes for many communities. Most of these activities were financed with foreign assistance through the efforts of Archbishop Ndingi.

FORGIVING AND FORTHRIGHT

While he was known as a simple (certainly not simplistic), honest, generous and forgiving individual, he was also known to give a vigorous tongue-lashing to individuals whom he considered to be in the wrong. While in this state, individuals around him would warily go about their business hoping one would not make a wrong step.

There would follow a collective sigh of relief when calm returned to the bishop. People around him knew he cared about them deeply and would go to great lengths to assist those who needed assistance. He believed in capacity-building among the clergy and laity in his area of jurisdiction.

He actively solicited for foreign scholarships from catholic agencies in the West for the clergy, nuns and laity of his diocese and created a pool of informed persons who would knowledgeably serve the people of God. Indeed, the archbishop was a Godly individual.

Being Christ-like was his objective. Much as he did make mistakes as we all do, he certainly stood head and shoulders above most of us in his exemplary character. Farewell, dad. May the angels welcome you into paradise.

The first time I met the late Archbishop Ndingi Mwana'a Nzeki was in 1972 while still in primary school.

He visited our school and I can still remember our excitement as we sang and danced for this high-ranking churchman who easily and joyfully danced with us. It is the same man who years later would accept and welcome me to train and be formed for the Roman Catholic priesthood and ordained me in 1983.

I worked under his leadership,

both in the diocese of Nakuru (which in the '80s covered the then districts of Nakuru, Kericho and Baringo, serving a multiplicity of ethnic groups), and later in the Archdiocese of Nairobi.

Indeed, Archbishop Ndingi Mwana'a Nzeki was a great man of God in every understanding and meaning of the phrase. He valued and lived for honesty. A sure way of getting into trouble with him was a betrayal of his trust by engaging in things dishonest.

I can still hear him vigorously berating individuals who engaged in unacceptable behaviour. While he vigorously could tell off dishonest individuals, he was quick to apologise when he realised he had misjudged someone and consequently accused him of what he had not done. Having the archbishop profusely apologising for a mistake done was for his juniors a humbling experience.

He valued simplicity. While the rank of archbishop is high in the Catholic Church's hierarchy, Archbishop Ndingi exemplified servant leadership. His external demeanour was not ostentatious. His did not suffer from the 'big man syndrome', which, ordinarily, involves pushing one's weight around and calling attention to your supposedly glorious self.

SPOKE TRUTH TO POWER

Many are the times he would join our conversation where we felt free to express our opinions without fear of rebuke from the 'boss'. While he would not let an erroneous opinion go unchallenged, he certainly did not correct one disdainfully. His lifestyle was not showy or high-octane.

He cared deeply for the less fortunate and all those who were unjustly

treated. The painful experience of the ethnic clashes in 1992 and the brutality of the Moi regime during the one-party reign, brought out fearlessness and a daring in Ndingi which went a long way in reversing the said injustices.

Without fear or favour, Ndingi loudly spoke the truth to the extent that we began fearing for his life, given the many mysterious disappearances and confinements suffered by opponents of the reigning regime.

As a shepherd of souls, he actively encouraged individuals, men and women to consider giving their lives in the service of God and his people.

His efforts saw a dramatic increase in the number of young men and women joining the priesthood and the sisterhood at a time when the church was served mainly by foreign missionaries.

There was palpable growth in the number of Christians, which led to the opening of many Catholic churches within his diocese. He actively solicited for external help for the poor within his diocese.

The Diocese of Nakuru was known to run many health centres, the largest of which were Kaplong Hospital in Sotik, in the then-Kericho district and Eldama Ravine Hospital in Eldama Ravine in the then-Baringo district. There was a myriad of dispensaries and health centres scattered in many parts of the diocese.

Farmers were not left behind. The

FARMERS WERE NOT LEFT BEHIND. HIS DIOCESE HAD A HUGE FARMING DEPARTMENT, WHICH EDUCATED FARMERS AND PROVIDED THEM WITH NEEDED HELP, TO ENHANCE THEIR PRACTICES

Archbishop
Ndingi Mwana
a'Nzeki

/FREDRICK OMONDI



Wiper leader Kalonzo Musyoka visits Archbishop Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki at his home in Nairobi on June 6, 2018 /DENNIS KAVISU

NEWS BUSINESS

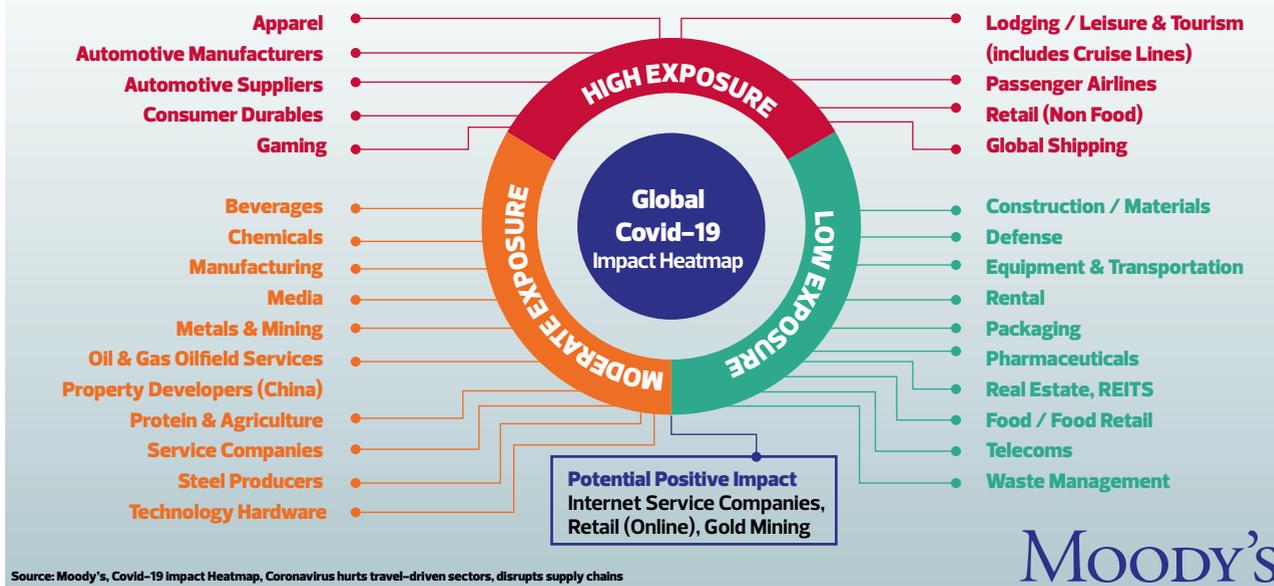
The COVID-19 Heat Map

COVID-19 induced economic disruption will disproportionately impact some industry sectors more than others



MOODY'S
GRAPHIC

COVID-19 induced economic disruption will disproportionately impact some industry sectors more than others



THE DATA
105.1882

The indicative value of the shilling to the dollar

The Kenyan shilling weakened on Thursday due to some merchandise importers and retailers buying dollars to meet their obligations amid lacklustre inflows due to the coronavirus-related disruptions, traders said.

FINANCIAL MARKET

FOREX EXCHANGE RATES

Currency	Buy	Sell	Mean
US DOLLAR	105.0853	105.2912	105.1882
STG POUND	130.3894	130.6735	130.5315
SA RAND	5.8442	5.8606	5.8524
KES / USHS	35.9954	36.1611	36.0783
KES / TSHS	21.9297	22.0678	21.9987
JPY (100)	98.0273	98.2377	98.1325
IND RUPEE	1.3944	1.3981	1.3963
EURO	114.9659	115.2106	115.0882
CHINESE YUAN	14.7872	14.8350	14.8111
AE DIRHAM	28.6063	28.6678	28.6371

NSE BIGGEST WINNERS

	Price	Change (%)
KENYA-RE	2.77	9.49
WILLIAMSON TEA	106.25	6.25
SAFARICOM	28.25	5.02
KENYA AIRWAYS	1.40	4.48
TP SERENA	13.15	4.3

NSE BIGGEST LOSERS

	Price	Change (%)
TRANS-CENTURY	1.80	10.00
I&M HOLDINGS	48.50	3.48
UCHUMI	0.29	3.33
LIBERTY HOLDINGS	8.48	3.20
NATION MEDIA GROUP	24.00	2.24

ECONOMY

Aviation, tourism among most hit as job losses in Kenya surge

More than 50 hotels at the coast and Naivasha have either closed or cut operations

MARTIN MWITA
@MwitaMartin



The automotive industry, tourism, aviation, and non-food retail sectors face the highest exposure to financial distress as the global economy grapples with the effects of the coronavirus.

A survey by business and financial services company Moody's also lists consumer durables, apparel, and gaming as among the most affected.

Manufacturing, chemicals, media, oil and gas, mining and agriculture remain moderately exposed, the survey shows.

Sectors with low exposure are construction, defense, equipment and transport, rental, packaging, pharmaceutical, real estate, food retail, telecoms, and waste management.

"Covid-19 induced economic disruption will disproportionately

impact some industry sectors more than others," Moody's says in the report.

Hundreds of businesses and companies in Kenya are currently struggling to stay afloat in the wake of reduced economic activities.

The most hit sectors include hotel and tourism, fresh produce and flower farming, export processing zones and the Small and Medium Enterprises.

The sectors have reported massive job losses as firms turn to austerity measures to deal with revenue shortfalls. Companies have also resorted to pay cuts to retain employees amid shrinking revenues.

More than 50 major hotels at the coast (Mombasa, Diani, Kilifi) and Naivasha have either closed or reduced operations.

At the coast, about 9,000 hotel employees have been directly affected, the Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers said yesterday, with hundreds of suppliers, contractors

and other service providers being thrown out of business.

"We are looking at empty hotels," KAHK executive officer Sam Ikwaye told the Star.

More than 1,000 employees in the flower sector have been sent home as exports remain suppressed.

In aviation, Kenya Airways has grounded most of its planes after stopping international operations, a move that leaves more than 2,000 jobs at stake. It has forced employees to take pay cuts.

The national carrier is losing an average Sh300 million per day, the amount it generates daily on international flights.

The International Air Transport Association (IATA) has warned that airlines could lose up to Sh1.3 trillion if the coronavirus spread continues unabated.

Media houses are grappling with low revenues on reduced advertising. Some have already issued redundancy notices with others asking their

employees to take pay-cuts if the businesses are to remain afloat.

In the retail sector, some supermarkets cut down on the number of staff citing a tough business environment.

The Kenya Association of Manufacturers has estimated that 16.7 per cent of its over 900 members are considering downsizing to deal with lower revenues as a result of supply chain disruption.

Chairman Sachin Gudka has however asked manufacturers to try and safeguard jobs.

"We must do our utmost to ensure that there are at best, no, and at worst, minimal job losses," he said.

International trade which supports more than 7.4 million SMEs in the country has also been disrupted as a business with China, Kenya's biggest import source, remains low. A survey by the Kenya Private Sector Alliance indicates 21 per cent of businesses reported losses of between Sh1 million and Sh5 million.

COVID-19

SGR to collect less revenues as curfew affects its operations

Mombasa-Nairobi route now runs one train

SUSANNYAWIRA / Passenger revenue for the Standard Gauge Railway (SGR) is set to fall due to a drop in the number of travelers.

This is after the suspension of part Madaraka Express Services due to the nationwide curfew.

Kenya Railways last week gave a

directive that only one train shall operate between Mombasa and Nairobi from March 27. The train service which carries a maximum of 7,000 passengers daily can now handle 4,200 passengers per trip.

In 2018, Kenya Railways data shows that Africa Star Railway

Operation Company (Afristar), the operator, increased sales from the passenger service to Sh1.76 billion, up from Sh1.23 billion a year earlier reflecting a growth of 43 per cent.

The revenues were however not enough to meet the operation costs, which are estimated at Sh1.5 billion a month.

With the suspension of the afternoon train and the rule on social distancing, the SGR is set for a dip in revenues.

Kenya Railways also adjusted the Nairobi Commuter Rail Service schedules to allow passengers get home before the curfew time

However, the Standard Gauge Railway cargo service will continue to operate on a 24-hour basis to ensure seamless movement of goods.

This is to ensure the country maintains a constant supply of imports with exports moving, at a time when the coronavirus has hit the country.

According to Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, freight services which started in January 2018, generated Sh4 billion in the year to December.

In 2019, Kenya Railways earned Sh10.1 billion from the cargo service in the year to June.



TIP OF THE DAY

CONNECT WITH AUDIENCE WHEN PRESENTING

Good presenters know how to connect with their audience — which is really challenging in a virtual setting. To start, you have to adopt an engaged, active persona. Make "eye contact" with your participants by looking directly into the camera as often as possible. This can be hard to remember, especially if you have to look elsewhere on your screen to see the participants. To make it easier, set up your screen so that the window with your audience is close to the camera. This way you can simultaneously make eye contact with them and see their response. Pay attention to the angle of the camera so your face is at a comfortable level for others to see you. (You want to avoid giving your audience a great view of your nostrils!) Remember to show a warm, engaging smile, laugh occasionally, and maintain a friendly, engaging tone.

NEWS BUSINESS

PRODUCTION

Timber merchants incur highest costs despite drop in key sectors

Price increase was in the manufacture of wood and cork, KNBS says



A carpenter carries a frame of an armchair /COURTESY

SUSANNYAWIRA / The timber industry incurred the highest production cost in the first quarter of 2020 as the sector continues to grapple with the low export market.

"The highest producer price increase was in the manufacture of wood and cork except for furniture at 6.47 per cent," says the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics in its latest Producer Price Index.

According to the statistics body, the sector has been struggling as the export of wood products plunged 65 per cent in 2019. This can be attributed to the ban on logging in the country.

The country earned Sh225 million in 2019 from the industry a drop from Sh648 million in 2010.

The highest drop in producer price was in the manufacture of basic metals which was negative 5.36 per cent.

The manufacture of chemicals and chemical products and the manufacture of beverages recorded a price increase of 6.64 and 6.06 percent respectively.

The producer prices of a bale of maize flour, wheat flour and sugar declined by 4.9 per cent during the period under review, leading to a drop in prices for the products.

However, over the past 12 months, the price for producing a bale of maize flour has increased significantly by 43.5 per cent.

The producer price for a crate of fresh milk increased by 1.1 per cent from Sh 784 in December 2019 to Sh 793 in March 2020.

Overall, producer prices decreased by 1.47 per cent from December 2019 to March 2020 while the year on year inflation was 1.07 per cent. The PPI decreased from 102.58 points in December 2019 to 101.07 points in March 2020.

The PPI has been produced since 2012 with the weights derived from the Census of Industrial Production (CIP).



Treasury CS Ukur Yatani. /FILE

CAPITAL

Treasury floats Sh60 billion bond to fund infrastructure

The government has floated a Sh60 billion infrastructure bond, the first such issue this year.

The nine-year bond will have a coupon rate of 10.85 per cent to be paid after every six months starting October 12 this year to the same date in 2027.

The bond interest will not attract tax – amounting to 10 per cent – normally charged on the other issues.

An investor is expected to put in a minimum of Sh100,000, but with subsequent amounts in Sh50,000.

The Central Bank of Kenya (CBK) which conducts the auction on behalf of the National Treasury is expected to ride on recent monetary incentives it gave to lenders to free cash into the market on coronavirus outbreak, to meet the target.

It is however not certain if the amount will be used for the intended purpose, coming at a time when there is a freeze in the development budget with funds being channelled to mitigate the effects of the virus, which had by Wednesday infected 81 people.

Experts are however projecting an under subscription, citing low interest offered.

Clement Manyoni, a capital market trader told the Star that the coupon rate offered is way below compared to the other two such bonds issues last year.

He added that although lending to the government is secure, fund managers and banks are likely to put their cash in high-value projects.

"The repeal of interest cap law in November makes ordinary lending more lucrative. Banks, which are the highest buyers of government securities are likely to take a risk for a higher premium," Manyoni said.

Titus Kimeu, on the other hand, said the government must let the bond coupon be market-determined, insisting that the interest offered is not enticing enough.

The infrastructure bond of the similar amount issued in October last year was market determined while the one issued in February last year came with a 12.2 per cent coupon.

Government plans to construct 10,000km of roads by 2022.

COST OF BUSINESS

Shippers call for longer storage, waiver on cargo charges at port

They also want KRA to streamline operations to ease clearance and tax compliance

MARTIN MWITA

@MwitaMartin



Shippers, transporters, and traders want cargo storage periods and charges at the Mombasa port reviewed to help mitigate operational challenges occasioned by the government curfew.

They also want the Kenya Revenue Authority to streamline its operations and implement a raft of measures to ease cargo clearance and tax compliance.

Through the Shippers Council of Eastern Africa (SCEA), they want the suspension of verification charges of \$80 (Sh8,411) and \$120 (Sh12,617) for 20ft and 40ft respectively, which was to be effected from Wednesday.

In addition, free cargo storage period should be extended from the current four days to 10 days, a move they say will ease the rush to pick containers before the curfew time, which has led to crowding at the Port of Mombasa and the Inland Container Depot-Nairobi.

SCEA which represents the regional logistics and international trader also wants charges on truck alterations, overnight charges and delay penalties for export products waived.

Importers incur charges of between \$30 (Sh 3,154) and \$90 (Sh9,463) per day for cargo that has stayed beyond the free storage period and more than 24 days, depending on the size of the container.



Offloading of containers at the port of Mombasa /JOHN CHESOLI

Containers released by KRA and not collected after 24 hours are charged \$100 (Sh10,514) and \$200 (Sh21,029) per day for 20ft and 40ft respectively.

"We have also asked the Ships Agents Association to impress upon their members to increase the free period for their containers," chief executive Gilbert Langat notes in the communicate seen by the Star.

Export acceptance period should also be extended, SCEA says in the request tabled before Kenya Ports

Authority (KPA) acting managing director Rashid Salim and Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) commissioner of customs and border control Kevin Safari.

To cushion customers from customs-related challenges, the council has requested the taxman to suspend penalties for delayed movement of export cargo in Mombasa.

"To support the reduction and crowding at the ICDN, sending of containers for 100 per cent verification and partial verification be

stopped especially for known customers with history of compliance," Langat said.

KRA has also been asked to extend the export acceptance period from the current four hours, which is said to be restrictive under the current operating circumstances.

There is also a need to streamline delivery of letters for the Exemptions Processing Codes applications for manufacturers whose goods are exempted by the Kenya Bureau of Statistics, SCEA says.

NEWS WORLD

NO TRANSPORT

Indian farmers feed cows strawberries as lockdown bites

REUTERS/ As hundreds of millions of Indians remain locked down to stem the spread of coronavirus, some of its cattle are getting treated to strawberries and broccoli that farmers are struggling to transport and sell in cities amid the three-week lockdown.

Demand for such premium farm produce typically jumps in the summer, but with India's farm supply chain in disarray, farmers are unable to get goods to market. The sudden drop in demand is hurting millions of farmers in the world's second-most populous country.

"Tourists and ice cream producers are the main buyers of strawberries, but there are no tourists now," said Anil Salunkhe, while feeding strawberries grown in his two-acre farm to his cows.

He was hoping to make 800,000 rupees (Sh1.1 million), but now has not even recovered the production cost, as it has become tough to transport produce to large cities.

Munishamappa dumped 15 tonnes of grapes in a nearby forest after failing to sell them — he had spent 500,000 rupees (Sh692,0365) on his crop. He had even asked nearby villagers to come collect his fruit for free, but few turned up, he said.

HOLY LAND

Coronavirus changes burial for Jews, Muslims

REUTERS/ A rising death toll in the coronavirus crisis is forcing a change in Jewish and Muslim burial and mourning traditions in the Holy Land.

In Israel, Jewish dead are normally laid to rest in a cloth smock and shroud, without a coffin. Now, bodies of coronavirus victims are taken for ritual washing — performed in full protective gear — wrapped in impermeable plastic. They are wrapped again in plastic before burial.

New decrees for handling the virus dead have been given for Muslim burials, said Sheikh Muhammad Hussein, Grand Mufti of Jerusalem and the Palestinian Territories.

Israel has reported 29 coronavirus deaths so far. The Palestinians have confirmed one fatality so far.

Funerals and mourning rituals have changed since Israeli and Palestinian authorities imposed stay-at-home directives and restricted the size of public gatherings to try to halt the spread of infection. Funerals in Israel can be attended by no more than 20 people in an open space only. Social distancing rules mean that embracing the bereaved is just not done.

That has affected the Jewish tradition of Shiva — a seven-day period that begins after a funeral, in which people come to the family home to offer condolences, bring food and reminisce about the departed.

In Gaza and the occupied West Bank bereaved families have taken to accepting condolences over social media.

MAYBE WHAT ORBÁN'S DOING NOW IS JUST TIDYING UP THE LAW. HUNGARY WAS ALREADY A DICTATORSHIP IN PRACTICE. NOW IT'S ALSO ONE IN THEORY

COMMENT

GWYNNE DYER

His new book is 'Growing Pains: The Future of Democracy (and Work)'



Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán arrives to attend the plenary session of Parliament ahead of a vote to grant the government special powers to combat the Covid-19 crisis in Budapest, Hungary, on March 30, 2020 /REUTERS

HAS HUNGARY BECOME THE FIRST CASUALTY?

“Hello, dictator!” said Jean-Claude Juncker cheerily to Hungary's leader, Viktor Orbán, at a European Union summit meeting a couple of years ago. The president of the European Commission was only joking, of course, but it was gallows humour. Dictatorship was clearly where Orbán was heading—and now he has arrived.

On Monday the Hungarian parliament passed a new law, allegedly to deal with the coronavirus crisis. It declares a state of emergency and allows Orbán to rule by decree for the duration of the crisis—but it doesn't say when that state of emergency will end. That will be decided by the man who has just been granted supreme power.

Orbán's spokesman, Zoltán Kovács, helpfully explained that “Just as in wartime, a state of emergency could extend until the end of hostilities. Today we confront not a military power, but are in a war-like state to defend our people against a pandemic the likes of which we have not seen in a century.”

‘Never waste the opportunity offered by a good crisis’ as Machiavelli allegedly said 500 years ago. So is what we are seeing in Hungary now the tip of the iceberg? Will governments in other democracies whose leaders have dictatorial ambitions use the coronavirus crisis as an excuse to give themselves absolute powers?

Will Rodrigo Duterte take ‘emergency’ powers to get around the one-term Filipino presidential limit that obliges him to quit in two years’ time? Will Narendra Modi copy Indira Gandhi's 1975 ‘Emergency’ and set up as the ‘temporary’ dictator of India? Will Recep Tayyip Erdoğan destroy what remains of Turkey's democracy to save himself if his popularity declines further?

For that matter, will Donald Trump use the great wave of American coronavirus deaths in the coming months and an alleged threat of mass disorder as an excuse for postponing the November election, especially if his prospects for re-election are not looking bright?

It's a toss-up with Duterte, who is responsible for so many murders that he can never safely retire. But for the rest, the answer is almost certainly no.

Both Modi and Erdoğan have created solid blocs of religious supporters who practically guarantee their political futures (at great cost to the unity and future prospects of their respective countries). They don't need to destroy democracy to survive.

As for Trump, whose ‘base’ is too narrow to assure him a political victory in November if other elements of his victorious 2016 coalition defect, he doesn't really have the option of cancelling the election. Americans' loyalty to their ancient constitution is

still too strong to let that happen. In any case, Trump probably won't need such extreme measures to hold on to office.

He is already re-writing the script so that his heavy responsibility for the silent carnage that awaits the country is erased in the public's mind by his last-minute swerve towards a strong policy of social distancing that averts a much greater loss of life. Hail the saviour!

Which leaves us, then, with the question of why Orbán is going to such political extremes when he already had all the power he could possibly want. He has already fiddled the constitution so that his party can win a two-thirds majority of the seats in parliament on only 44 per cent of the votes.

Hungary is effectively a one-party state, and the media and the judges both serve Orbán's Fidesz Party, not the general public. He even had a ‘state of emergency’ in place already, declared in 2016

WILL GOVERNMENTS IN OTHER DEMOCRACIES WHOSE LEADERS HAVE DICTATORIAL AMBITIONS USE THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS AS AN EXCUSE TO GIVE THEMSELVES ABSOLUTE POWERS?

during the great refugee flood of that year (though none of the refugees came to Hungary), and he has never rescinded it.

True, he can now hand out five-year prison sentences to Hungarians who spread “false” information, but the courts were already giving his critics multiple shorter sentences if they got too noisy. Why go to this extra trouble when it might even tip the EU into expelling Hungary as a non-democratic country (although I wouldn't hold my

breath on that one)?

I once spent a day with Orbán in Budapest, when we were both much younger men. He was a student leader who had just got famous for defying the Communists with a fiery nationalist speech, and I had spent the summer in the Soviet Union interviewing the emerging democratic opposition. (We were introduced by Hungarian-born philanthropist George Soros, then Orbán's mentor and later a prime target of his rabid anti-Semitism.)

We had much to talk about, and I enjoyed his company. What struck me, though, was that he really thought like a lawyer. Maybe a radical one, and certainly later a corrupt one, but a lawyer by character and by training.

So maybe what he's doing now is just tidying up the law. Hungary was already a dictatorship in practice. Now it's also one in theory.



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COUNTIES NAIROBI

CHEAP POWER AND FOOD

KNCCI wants more done to cushion poor, businesses

MAUREEN KINYANJUI/The private sector has called for reduced power costs and tax waiver on food and other essentials to lessen the impact of the coronavirus shock.

Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Richard Ngatia also wants KNCCI county chapters represented in emergency response committees.

He urged the government to reduce the cost of electricity for manufacturers, in particular, to enable them to produce adequate protective gear being used in the fight against Covid-19.

“KNCCI commends the government for stepping [in] to cushion Kenyans from the effects of Covid-19, particularly the directive by President Uhuru Kenyatta to have an Emergency Response Fund established,” Ngatia said.

Nairobi residents, especially those in informal settlements, have been

pushing the government to do more to cushion them.

The KNCCI said more should be done to make food cheaper.

The recommendations were made on Wednesday during a video conference meeting of the chamber’s National Delegates Council. Chairpersons of all the 47 county chapters took part in the meeting chaired by Ngatia.

They discussed resource mobilisation, impact and mitigation measures on Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), business continuity plan and sustainability alongside the establishment of county emergency response committees for Covid-19.

It was resolved that all the 47 county governments waive taxes on food produce.

The counties should increase sensitisation through civic education to create seamless awareness of the health protocols and guidelines be-



Kenya National Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Richard Ngatia (C) during a visit to the Nairobi International Trade Fair last year /COURTESY

ing issued by the Ministry of Health.

“It is apparent that various county chapters are facing various challenges due to this pandemic,” Ngatia added.

“Some of the challenges that stood out from the meeting include the increased price in basic commodities, insecurity, delay in supply of goods and services, reduction in produc-

tion and manufacturing of products, closure of businesses among others. The recommendations above will enable them remain afloat.”

Other participants included State Department of Trade PS Johnstone Weru, East Africa Community PS Kevit Desai and State Department of Crop Development and Agricultural Research PS Hamadi Iddi Boga.

VULNERABLE GROUP

Rep wants waiver for county tenants paying Sh5,000, less

Minority whip Peter Imwatok says they should not pay rent for the next three months

MAUREEN KINYANJUI
@MissKinyanjuiMo



A city MCA has called for a waiver for all county tenants paying less than Sh5,000 rent.

The economy has taken a hit as a result of measures put in place in Kenya and globally to stem the spread of coronavirus.

As of April 1, Kenya had confirmed 81 cases of coronavirus, with one death and three recoveries. Globally the number of confirmed infections is nearly a million.

Besides big businesses and SMEs, the measures have had a direct impact on low-income earners, manual labourers and the self-employed.

Minority whip Peter Imwatok said it is this group of vulnerable people who pay a monthly rent of up to Sh5,000 and they need to be protected.

In a letter to the director-general of the Nairobi Metropolitan Service, Mohammed Badi, Imwatok proposes waiving rent for the next three months for tenants in Makongeni, Kaloleni, Jericho, Bahati, Mbotela,

HOUSING IS ONE OF THE COUNTY FUNCTIONS TRANSFERRED TO NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND IS NOW UNDER NAIROBI METROPOLITAN SERVICE



People walk past Railway housing at Makongeni in Eastlands, Nairobi /FILE

Shauri Moyo, Maringo and Ngara estates.

“As you are aware following the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, a raft of measures have been put in place by the Kenyan government in order to suppress the spread of the virus. This group of residents is currently unable to provide for their daily meals and at the same time pay monthly rent,” Imwatok says.

“To this end, it is my humble request to you, that you waive payment

of rent by all county government tenants whose monthly rent amounts to Sh5,000 and below, majority of whom are low-income earners for the next three months in order to cushion them from the adverse effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.”

Housing is one of the county functions transferred to the national government three weeks ago and falls under the purview of the Nairobi Metropolitan Service.

On Wednesday the Landlords and

Tenants Association of Kenya urged landlords to waive rent for the next three months.

The association also wants the government to help landlords servicing loans to get a six-month moratorium from commercial banks.

“Mr President, on a credible mediation process, start with writing off rent for three months with no threats, notices, locking houses, disconnection of water/electricity and eviction by auctioneers,” said LATAK.



COUNTIES CENTRAL

TO RECALL MCAs OR NOT?

Covid-19: Cabinet-less Kiambu faces crisis in emergency plans

County does not have a public service board to hire more medics in emergency plans

BENJAMIN IMENDE
@TheStarKenya



Kiambu county will be faced with a crisis in handling cases of coronavirus owing to the lack of a cabinet and a public service board to hire medics.

The county does not have an executive committee after the previous team was voted out following the impeachment of former Governor Ferdinand Waititu.

Governor James Nyoro nominated a new team but the nominees are yet to get the approval of the MCAs although they have been vetted.

That means the county does not have a health executive to take charge of coronavirus response and coordination.

County hospitals remain understaffed as patients crowd the health facilities. The hospitals also lack drugs.

"We are in a bad position since the county can't hire and don't have a health executive to lead the county in preparations against Covid-19," Ndenderu MCA Solomon Kinuthia said.

Kinuthia was responding to speaker Stephen Ndichu who told MCAs that the county will adopt the strategy that the National Assembly will pass instead of holding an urgent sitting.

"We, therefore, observed that since Parliament is on the verge of meeting to discuss the VAT legislation, we wait and see how it will handle the matter then we exploit



Kangangi market in Kiambu town that has been closed after traders failed to observe social-distancing measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus /STANLEY NJENGA

that and copy and paste their action," Ndichu said.

Currently, Kiambu doesn't have a public service board to employ new medics to address the Covid-19 pandemic.

"I, therefore, implore your able office to recall the house to debate and ratify cabinet nominees for appointment as substantive officeholders to facilitate a smoother and seamless response to the coronavirus pandemic," Kinuthia wrote to Ndichu on Thursday.

Kinuthia said that the assembly should be recalled so that they pass

laws that will equip all dispensaries and health centres with the requisite Personnel Protective Equipment (PPE).

The MCAs wanted also to put in place measures to train and equip community health volunteers with the necessary gear to limit the spread of the virus.

"We also want to pass a resolution to supplement the emergency and disaster response funds allocation to mitigate the spread of Covid-19," Kinuthia said.

He added, "We want to debate and ratify County Public Service Board

appointees to enable the county to comply with the presidential directive of March 25 on the hiring of more health workers to enhance our compliance with our Covid-19 disaster response capability."

But Ndichu said they were exercising caution so that they do not hold meetings. The government has banned gatherings to promote social distancing as a measure of curbing the spread of the virus.

"We are there. No sooner shall the National Assembly do it than we shall swing into action and do our bit," Ndichu said.

1,000 TO BE READY TODAY

Varsity partners with county to produce protective gears

DKUT to make personal protective equipment and reusable face masks



Jennifer Kariithi, one of the Small and Medium Entrepreneurs under the Laikipia Innovation Programme, sews a protective garment /EUTYCAS MUCHIRI

EUTYCAS MUCHIRI/Dedan Kimathi University of Technology has partnered with Laikipia county government to mass-produce personal protective equipment and face masks to help in the fight against coronavirus.

The PPE is a clothing item worn by medical staff to protect them from infections and injury while at work. The first 1,000 bodysuits for medical staff and 8,000 face masks for distribution to local boda boda riders, community health volunteers and enforcement officers are expected to be ready today.

The face masks are reusable. DKUT vice-chancellor Ndirangu Kioni said on Wednesday that the country was fighting for survival against Covid-19.

"We must, therefore, do whatever we can do first even as we look for help elsewhere," Kioni said.

He said the two institutions partnered to fill gaps in the fight against the virus that was declared a global pandemic in February.

Kioni said their network of entrepreneurs under innovation programme had come in handy. The university has trained eight local manufacturers who are working

with 40 sub-contractors.

County head of innovation development programme Winnie Mwangi hoped that the Kenya Bureau of Standards and the Kenya Pharmacy and Poisons Board will speed up the approval all of the equipment.

Mwangi said the equipment was required urgently, hence the two agencies should consider the prevailing circumstances.

The two institutions were also working on mass production of ventilators and hand sanitisers through other SMEs under the Laikipia Innovation and Enterprise Development Programme.

There are fears that many people might test positive for the virus when mass testing starts country-wide and that the infections will strain medical facilities and equipment like PPEs and ventilators.

The Ministry of Health this week announced that the country is likely to have 10,000 coronavirus cases by the end of this month.

Mass production of the PPEs is part of the preparations that the county government is making as cases spread. Laikipia has not recorded any Covid-19 case.

'NOT A VACATION'

Stay at home directive for all, even children – MP

GEORGE MUGO/A legislator has raised concern over the movement of children in estates and villages despite the order to stay at home to flatten the curve of Covid-19 infections.

Limuru's Peter Mwathi urged citizens to accept and heed the government's instructions to help in reducing the spread of coronavirus that is ruining human health and global economies.

He regretted that primary and secondary school learners keep in groups in the villages to engage in storytelling and play. Mwathi urged parents to engage their children with school work revision and other activities to reduce movement.

He says by doing so, the learners will not lose focus on their studies and also not aid in the spread of the virus that had by Wednesday infected 81 people in the country, killing one. Three have recovered.

"It is sad that our children are being noticed visiting each other. Our parents should ensure they engage them as much as possible with school work and telling them how serious the disease is," Mwathi said.

The MP, who spoke to the Star by phone on Thursday, urged the Ministry of Education to come up with a learning strategy for both primary and secondary schools to complete the syllabus on time.

"The government should urgently put up learning programmes for all public school students through e-learning. This way they will not lose learning time and they will at the same time also be productive."

Mwathi urged the public to heed the government's directives to the control of the spread of coronavirus.

TO BUY BASIC NEEDS

MP Nyoro to donate April salary to poor Kiharu constituents

ALICE WAITHERA/Kiharu MP Ndindi Nyoro will donate his April salary to support constituents who have been hard-hit by the disruption caused by the coronavirus pandemic.

The MP on Wednesday said many of his constituents live from hand to mouth and were finding it hard to cope in the midst of state directives to curb the spread of coronavirus.

He said the 7pm to 5am curfew had made it difficult for many to earn a living.

As such, he will donate his salary to alleviate their suffering by providing basic needs to support families.

He said coronavirus was ravaging other countries and predicted more infections in Kenya in the next two weeks.

He acknowledged Kenyans were suffering economically due to the pandemic but called for more drastic measures to stem the virus.

"I am asking President Uhuru Kenyatta to order lockdown in counties that have already recorded infections to ensure they do not spread to the rest of the country," Nyoro said.

COUNTIES COAST



Lamu county disaster unit members on Wednesday /FILE

ANCIENT BELIEF

Lamu disaster team sprays seawater to 'kill coronavirus'

CHETI PRAXIDES/ Lamu county is using seawater to fumigate public areas, jetties and the seafront in Lamu town to combat the coronavirus disease.

Governor Fahim Twaha allowed the County Disaster Unit to use water from the Indian Ocean as they wait for disinfectants. The exercise started on Wednesday evening and was expected to extend to the rest of the county throughout the week. Residents have for decades believed that the saline water kills viruses and bacteria, and treat many ailments.

The County Disaster Response team, led by Shee Kupi, siphoned water from the ocean using pipes powered by generators and sprayed the town in a three-hour drive that elicited mixed reactions. Speaking shortly thereafter, Kupi said seawater is a natural antibiotic agent and is readily available in the region, hence their decision. He said it neutralises possible pathogens on surfaces. Kupi said the exercise will be conducted after weekly in every part of the county as they wait on the national government to bring them the necessary disinfectants.

"I know many are wondering why we are using seawater while the rest of Kenya is using chemicals. For ages, water from the Indian Ocean has been used by our forefathers to treat various ailments and viruses and it worked. We believe after this spraying, no virus, including the coronavirus, can survive," he said.

He said the county was proactive in the fight against Covid-19, hence will not wait to be infected. "The use of seawater is just the first phase. The department will still employ scientifically proven chemicals in the second phase. Support us to protect you with available means possible," Kupi said.

Resident Ahmed Omar dismissed the move as the biggest joke since the pandemic struck Kenya. He said it was proof enough that Lamu wasn't prepared to tackle Covid-19. "All counties have funds to deal with emergencies and disasters. When people are using chemicals and you are here spraying water, it leaves a lot to be desired. It's a joke. The coronavirus is so serious."

Elder Mohamed Ali, however, defended the team, saying seawater had proved over the years to be more effective than chemicals and other manufactured drugs. "What they have done is exceptional. They have gone back to our ancient ways and it's good. Any virus cannot survive for long in a salty environment. Let them keep on," he said.

EULOGISED AS LOVING FATHER

Kenyan, 38, who died of Covid-19 in US laid to rest

Low-key emotional sendoff for Peter Juma on New York City's Long Island

MAUREEN MUDI
@TheStarKenya



The Kenyan who died of the coronavirus disease in the United States has been laid to rest.

Peter Juma, 38, was a medical assistant at New York's St Catherine of Siena. He died last weekend after spending a week in hospital. He is survived by a widow and five children.

His parents, Bishop Elisha Juma of the Kenya Assemblies of God in

Tudor, Mombasa, and Mary Juma, had made a plea against having him cremated.

The family had asked for government intervention. They plan to go to New York to pay their last respects when the ban on international flights is lifted.

Juma was buried on the city's Long Island in a ceremony attended by a few relatives and the church. This was after they raised the cash needed for the expenses incurred.

"We found a place and had him buried. His sister Joyce and the rest were coordinating the whole

event," the father said.

Back in Kenya, the father led relatives and friends in holding a night vigil at his Nyali home as the sendoff ceremony went on.

They eulogised Peter as a loving father and one who always stood with people in need.

"Our son had always been obedient. After completing his education at Taita High School, he did a course in IT then took a degree in theology. He was one of the assistant pastors in Church of Dominion, New York," Bishop Elisha said.

Mary said her son loved music and would participate in church crusades in Mombasa and beyond.

"When he left Kenya after the December holidays, he said he would be back since he had the vision to develop his ministry at the Nyali Power of the Word church.

"His father even told him he would be his heir and would pass the baton to him to continue preaching the word of God since he had compassion," she said.

Tearful Phoebe Shikuku remembered her husband as a jovial person.

"He has left a big gap and I have no idea where I shall start. We know things are tight, but my plea is that he is preserved in a place I could one day take his children and show them their father's final resting place," she said.



Peter Juma /COURTESY

GIVES HOPE TO FARMERS

Coastal counties safe from locust invasion – ICPAC

Igad Climate Prediction and Application Centre says climatic conditions continue to suit the development of the pests, especially in South Sudan, Ethiopia and Northern Kenya

SOLOMON MUINGI/ The destructive desert locusts will move to the northern parts of Kenya, signalling a relief for farmers in the coastal region.

The IGAD Climate Prediction and Application Centre (ICPAC) says climatic conditions continue to be suitable for desert locust development, especially in South Sudan, Ethiopia and Northern Kenya. Other parts likely to experience more invasion are Somalia, Southern Eritrea and Djibouti.

In forecasts released on Wednesday, places such as Baringo, Mandera and Wajir counties are at the highest risk of continued invasion. Others are Turkana and Marsabit counties. The information is based on climate conditions and existing vegetation

conditions. Wind direction, which greatly determines swarm movements, is forecast to be generally from south to northeast.

Further, the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) reports that threats from the locusts remain extremely alarming in northern Kenya, posing an unprecedented threat to food security. According to the agency's warning issued last month, locusts are fast-breeding, hence more invasion is likely to be experienced in April and May.

The breeding areas have increased because of suitable conditions and sandy soils in northern Kenya. FAO says the hopper bands continue to develop and form an increasing number of first-generation imma-

ture swarms in Kenya's northern and central counties.

"The swarms are maturing and will be ready to lay eggs from the first week of April onwards," the report reads.

Last season, Kenya experienced exceptionally heavy rains and widespread flash floods. The downpours were attributed to the Indian Ocean dipole – a climate phenomenon in which the western part of the Indian Ocean near the East African Coast was warmer than the eastern part. Locusts threaten food security in more than 23 counties and are expected to continue breeding and spreading during the March-to-May rainfall season due to favourable climatic conditions.

COUNTIES RIFT VALLEY



A farmer dries maize after harvest
/COURTESY

food stocks at the NCPB. Let them mop up the maize which farmers still have so that we are food secure as we deal with the coronavirus situation," the MP said.

NCPB requires an additional four million bags as it did not buy maize from farmers after last year's harvest. It had sold more than 2.5 million bags to millers.

The state is assessing food stocks in the country to establish the level of food security. The assessment is being carried out through counties especially in high-yielding areas like the North Rift where farmers have been asked to give details of all types of stocks they have in their stores.

Uasin Gishu Agriculture CEC Samuel Yego said they are collecting the necessary data and filing reports with the ministry.

"We are aware most farmers did not sell their stocks after harvesting last year and this is an opportunity for them to give us details of the stocks they have," Yego said.

"The farmers should within the next two days forward the same details to ward officers so they are transmitted to the counties and then the ministry. The details required include the number of bags the farmers have for maize, beans, wheat, sorghum, millet and sorghum among other crops."

Korgoren said the government should use the collected data to make funds available for the purchase of all stocks in local stores.

Yego says fears over the spread of the virus has affected farming activities and will also impact production.

'CONSULT GROWERS'

Exhaust maize from local stores before importing, farmers urge

They oppose plans to import over 20 million bags to cushion Kenyans during Covid-19

MATHEWS NDANYI
@TheStarKenya



Farmers have petitioned Agriculture CS Peter Munya not to allow the importation of maize until the cereals board buys all stocks held locally.

They are opposed plans to the importation of more than 20 million bags without involving them in measures to cushion Kenyans from

food shortage due to the spread of coronavirus.

Last year, maize production fell by 10 million bags from the previous year's 44 million bags.

The growers, led by representatives Thomas Korogoren, Kipkorir Menjo and Moiben MP Sila Tiren, want the government to mop up all the maize in the country before importing.

Menjo said after mopping up local maize stocks, the government will only import the deficit instead of

flooding local markets with cheap imports that will hurt local farmers.

The farmers do not understand why the government only consults millers during importation, leaving them out.

"Imported maize will come in at higher prices of more than Sh3,000 per 90kg bag and it will be better if the same money is paid to local farmers to boost their capacity to go back to their farms and produce more," he said.

The government is considering reopening the National Cereals and Produce Board to buy maize and other stocks from farmers as an emergency measure to restock the depleted Strategic Food Reserves.

Tiren has urged the government to instruct the SFR board to use Sh10 billion at its disposal to buy local maize.

"We are in an emergency and we urge the government to quickly move and ensure we have adequate

“

KIPKORIR MENJO

Imported maize will come be more expensive

MCAs TO STAY AT HOME

North Rift reps adjourn sittings indefinitely over coronavirus

Assemblies say they have to abide by health regulations

MATHEWS NDANYI/County assemblies in the North Rift have adjourned their sittings indefinitely following the coronavirus outbreak in the country.

Most of the assemblies resumed sittings on Tuesday after a month-long recess but the ward representatives resolved to break off as part of precautions to curb the spread of Covid-19, the disease caused by coronavirus.

The Uasin Gishu assembly had on Tuesday resolved to go on with operations, saying it would only allow a few members in the chambers on a rotational basis to observe social distancing.

That decision was later revoked and sittings adjourned.

While moving the motion for adjournment, Majority leader Josphat Lowoi said the assembly had no option but to adhere to government guidelines on the control of the spread of the virus by avoiding crowding and maintaining social distance.

He said the virus does not recognise the status of people in society, citing world leaders who had already been infected.

"Leaders have the duty to adhere to the government guidelines in this situation and also go home to help create awareness among our people," Lowoi said.

Speaker David Kiplagat said the members would still meet if needed to discuss urgent matters.

MCAs in Nandi, Elgeyo Marakwet, Trans Nzoia, West Pokot and Turkana said they would also adjourn indefinitely and meet only when absolutely necessary.

Earlier, the assemblies had been asked to extend their adjournment by two weeks as Covid-19 infections rise in the country.

Kenya has so far confirmed 81 cases.

County Assemblies Forum secretary-general Kipkurui Chepkwony said the ban on meetings and the requirement on social distancing will affect their operations.

"We all support the ongoing fight against the virus. The forum urges assemblies to postpone their sittings for at least another two weeks as we



Uasin Gishu assembly Majority leader Josphat Lowoi and Speaker David Kiplagat during a session at the assembly last year /MATHEWS NDANYI

assess the situation and work closely with the government," Chepkwony said in Eldoret on Tuesday.

He said assembly staff should be encouraged to work from home but stay in touch if called upon.

Moiben MP Sila Tiren wants Kenyans to stop ignoring government

guidelines on the control of coronavirus. Tiren said Kenyans must learn from countries like Italy, Spain and the US that have been hard-hit by the pandemic.

The government should also step up awareness of the virus among citizens, the lawmaker said.

COUNTIES WESTERN



Vihiga medics dressed in personal protective gear / **PATRICK OMBIMA**

PROTECTIVE GEAR

Ottichilo receives 2,000 masks and gloves for health workers

MARTIN OMBIMA / Vihiga county will distribute personal protective equipment for health workers and law enforcers, Governor Wilbur Ottichilo has said.

The county received 2,000 masks and gloves for the handling of suspected cases of coronavirus.

The county has not recorded any positive cases of the virus that has infected 81 people in the country.

Health workers had threatened to run to safety if they encountered a suspected case citing lack of protective gear. Ottichilo on Wednesday said the county is well prepared to manage the Covid-19 outbreak. He spoke at the county headquarters in Mbale.

SAFETY NET

MP Barasa stockpiles unga for poor in prep for total lockdown

JOHN NALIANYA / Kimilili MP Didmus Barasa has bought 200 bags of maize to be distributed to poor families in case the state announces a total lockdown to combat Covid-19.

Barasa said that the outbreak has made it difficult for many families to afford food because the majority of them depend on small businesses for survival. Each of the four wards in the constituency – Kibingei, Kimillili, Maeni and Kamukuywa – will get 50 bags. "My office will be working closely with the local administration and other leaders to identify deserving cases and modalities of distribution when the time comes," Barasa said.

REDUCE OIL PRICES

We will arrest you for hiking matatu fares, official warns Vihiga operators

County commissioner says the coronavirus has affected everyone countrywide; no need to harass commuters

MARTIN OMBIMA
@StarKenya

Vihiga county commissioner Ochillo Oyugi has warned matatu operators against hiking fares because of the government policies to contain the coronavirus.

Oyugi said the coronavirus has affected all people countrywide and there was no need to harass commuters.

"We are going to arrest all those who are taking advantage of the situation to siphon money from commuters," Oyugi said.

He said it's a government policy for public service vehicles to carry half their capacity to avoid crowding and there is no need to pass on the losses to commuters.

But matatu operators have said that the state has not reduced the price of fuel and scrapped other levies to cushion the transport sector.

"We have no problem carrying fewer passengers but fuel is still costly. Matatu owners need their income and we also have to eat," Western sacco conductor Jossiah Inonda said.

Inonda said the state should understand that the sector is hurting and reduce petroleum prices so that commuters do not have to pay double the price to cater for the empty seats. The county commissioner said the majority of Vihiga residents have

complied with the 7pm to 5am curfew. "Since we started enforcing the curfew, only 29 people have been arrested for not obeying the state orders within the county. Insecurity has reduced," Oyugi said.

Oyugi said most of the people who were responsible for insecurity in the county cannot continue with their activities due to the curfew.

They are not able to meet and strategise within social halls and pubs that are currently on shutdown, he said.

The administrator urged the residents to embrace farming as it might be the last option to produce food in case the Covid-19 epidemic prolongs.

Farmers should prioritise crops that mature faster to curb food shortage, he said.

“

We have no problem carrying fewer passengers but fuel is still costly; owners need income

A matatu conductor helps a passenger sanitise his hands in Luanda town / **MARTIN OMBIMA**



'IT'S GOVERNMENT POLICY FOR PSVS TO AVOID CROWDING'



Deputy Governor Philip Kutima with workers in Kakamega town on Wednesday / **CALISTUS LUCHETU**

TAKING PRECAUTION

Kakamega to fumigate town, markets to control virus spread

CALISTUS LUCHETU / The Kakamega government has begun a fumigation drive of the town and markets across the county to control the spread of coronavirus.

Deputy Governor Philip Kutima on Wednesday joined public health officers in fumigating the county headquarters. Kutima said that the workers will also fumigate Mumias town, market centres and bus parks.

The initiatives have been supported by Masinde Muliro University, Unicef, Midland Imporiu, Farm Access, Ampath and other partners. They have supported training, donated IEC materials and other equipment.

ESSENTIAL SERVICE

Busia fish vendors laud CS Munya's order allowing food transportation during curfew

EMOJONG OSERE / Fish dealers in Busia have hailed the decision by Agriculture Cabinet Secretary Peter Munya to allow food transporters to operate during the curfew. The decision, they said, will enable timely delivery of food to urban centres as most people are at their homes.

The government has advised Kenyans to limit movement as part of measures to contain the spread of coronavirus in the country. Magdalene Sakaya who sells fresh tilapia near the Malaba bus park said, "We hope the police will understand the directive and allow us to work at night."

Since last Friday, they have been ordering us to close the business when the curfew starts." Sakaya said her fish supplies have slumped following the decision to close the Kenya - Uganda border operations.

COUNTIES NYANZA



RALLYING CALL

Stay home, Nyong'o urges residents in video address

Governor's recorded message in Dholuo urges residents to heed health directives or they will be charged under Public Health Act

MAURICE ALAL
@TheStarKenya



Kisumu Governor Anyang Nyong'o has appealed to residents to strictly adhere to drastic measures put in place to prevent Covid-19 from spreading.

He said coronavirus was no joke and that it was the responsibility of every citizen to help combat the disease.

"It has killed thousands of people in the world," he said.

In a video recorded in Luo language, he warned residents against violating the directives.

The governor warned residents to avoid places of worship and social gatherings as directed by the national government.

Funeral homes and mortuaries, both public and private, remained closed, he said.

"Hospital mortuaries will only be used to keep bodies of in-patient

cases, but strictly for less than 48 hours in order to allow for families to make burial arrangements," he said.

The county chief directed that all burials will strictly be for family members who must not exceed 15. "Let us avoid travelling to attend burials. That is not allowed now."

He advised matatu operators to adhere to the new number of passengers to carry or face stern action.

Nyong'o said anybody who disobeyed the orders will be arrested and charged under the Public Health Act.

He also urged residents to embrace high levels of hygiene by washing their hands with soap and running water and sanitise their hands.

Nyong'o further asked residents to be patriotic and avoid spreading false information about the virus.

He appealed for a change in attitude towards the fight against the virus.

Already, the Kisumu bus park and

Kibuye open-air market have been decongested and closed respectively.

"We want those buying food to keep their distance. Let us stay at home if you have no business in town unless you're seeking medication," the governor said.

“

Hospital mortuaries will only be used to keep bodies of inpatient cases, but strictly for less than 48 hours to allow families to make burial arrangements

Kisumu Governor Anyang' Nyong'o and Devolution CS Eugene Wamalwa at the governor's office yesterday
/DANIEL OGENDO

BOOSTING PRODUCTION

Kisii receives two vehicles for farming projects

20 wards to get motorcycles to help in monitoring projects

NAGWENYI GICHANA/THE Kisii county government has received two four-wheel-drive vehicles from the state to aid in the implementation and monitoring of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Project.

Speaking when he flagged off the vehicles, Governor James Ongwae noted that the vehicles will enable programme coordinating unit do timely follow up on numerous development projects.

"The vehicles will offer timely backstopping to the subcounty technical teams by the larger county directorates of Crops, Livestock, Veterinary and Cooperative Development as well as Public Works, Environment and Trade," Ongwae said.

The governor further revealed that 20 wards implementing micro-projects will soon receive motorcycles to boost the movement.

"The objective is to increase agricultural productivity and profitability of targeted rural communities in selected counties and in the event of an eligible crisis, to provide an immediate and effective response," he said.

In Kisii, NARIGP has vetted and approved 521 community micro-projects amounting to Sh170.5 million, 40 per cent (Sh68 million) of which has already been disbursed to various groups.

The county has received Sh80 million which will soon be disbursed to Organisations to meet the remaining 60 per cent adding that nine producer organisations - one for each subcounty- have been awarded inclusion grants totalling Sh9 million, Ongwae said.

"This is to build their capacity and increase their membership for commercial viability."

He said under the programme, all the necessary approvals have been given by the National Programme Steering Committee (NPSC) for the construction of Nyamache banana market at Sh117 million.

The World Bank is funding Sh100 million while the county government has set aside the remaining Sh17 million.

In February, farmer groups and producer organisations in Kisii received Sh55 million to improve their agricultural production for more income.

The money that was distributed to the groups by Governor James Ongwae was given under the National Agricultural Inclusive Growth Project.

The farmers were drawn from across 20 wards in the county. Farmers will also benefit from a model resource and training centre jointly funded by the World Bank and the county government.

The model centre will enhance farmers' knowledge of agricultural production and value addition in line with President Uhuru Kenyatta's Big Four Agenda.

'WE WANT THOSE BUYING FOOD TO KEEP THEIR DISTANCE'

UNITED WE STAND

Fighting Covid-19 needs national unity, says Maangi

MAGATI ABEBO/Kisii Deputy governor Joash Maangi has asked the country's political leaders to bury their differences to effectively fight the Covid-19 pandemic.

Maangi said disunity while tackling the outbreak would create a health crisis in the country through more infections.

He said the national leadership and those at the counties should work together during national crises.

"Crisis moments isn't time to bicker. It is not the time for us to show our political differences to the public as leaders. It is time leaders come together and rally the people. We want people to support measures that have been put in place to stem further corona virus infections," Maangi said.

He asked traders affected by the closure of the country's main open markets to understand that the country was battling to roll back the pandemic.

Speaking separately, Kitutu Chache North politician Paul Asumi urged more voluntary salary cuts across the political divide to raise money to combat the outbreak.

Asumi asked MCAs to take the cue from national leaders who have accepted salary cuts, including the President, his deputy and Members of Parliament.

Speaking in Marani where he donated sanitisers, Asumi who has unsuccessfully vied twice for the constituency's parliamentary seat urged the government to provide a stipend to Kenyans who have lost jobs. He said thousands of youth had been rendered jobless.



Kisii County's Emergency Response Committee on Covid-19 during a meeting at the Kisii Agricultural Training Institute /ANGWENYI GICHANA

COUNTIES EASTERN

WANT BAN LIFTED

List churches as essential service providers, pastors tell President

Makueni clerics say church is the last place of hope and a safe haven for the downtrodden

MUTUA KAMETI
@TheStarKenya

Makueni pastors have asked President Uhuru Kenyatta to rescind the ban on public gatherings including church services in a bid to contain the spread of Covid-19.

The pastors want the church listed among essential service providers.

Speaking at a meeting in Wote town on Thursday, the men and women of cloth said the church was the last place of hope, resilience and a safe haven to the downtrodden and those stricken by any form of calamity.

"Biblically speaking and throughout church history, any plague that befell the people, the church offered the much the needed solution. It is sad that in the current situation, the church has been left out closed and thus we feel as a country we may be involved in a futile exercise," said Titus Uswii, secretary of Makueni County Pastors forum.

The pastors said given the opportunity to operate, the church had the ability to self-regulate to ensure social distancing for the safety of congregants.

The government has banned public gatherings including churches, markets, funerals and weddings in bid to contain the spread of coronavirus that has ravaged the whole world.

Pastor Uswii asked the government to examine public transport, boda bodas, taxis, hotels, shops, boutiques and salons operating within given guidelines, saying the church was able to manage their followers better than those businesses.

"This includes adjusting the sitting arrangements to observe the one-metre-apart rule, increasing



Kiongwani Catholic Church in Makueni county. The government banned public gatherings, including church services /KAMETI MUTUA

the number of services to avoid congestion or even conducting our services out in the church compound with a limited number of members," Uswii said.

The pastors invited the government to an open discussion over the issues. They condemned the excessive use of force by police officers while enforcing the curfew.

The objective of the curfew was to fight the spread of Covid-19 and not civil unrest, they said.

"President Kenyatta did not introduce a curfew because there was civil unrest or there were people

fighting to overthrow the government. The police should enforce the curfew in a humane way," Uswii said.

They asked the government to restrain security officers from harassing or arresting their colleagues while in church offices where the pastors work from. They said pastors had a duty to report to work at their stations in the church like Kenyans working in other areas.

"According to the Bible, pastors are watchmen who need to be allowed to continue keeping watch over the church and eventually the entire na-

tion. They should have been listed at the top of essential service providers at this critical moment, pastor Jeddiah said.

Pastor Mutisya said they should be allowed to visit the sick at their isolation centres to pray and give them hope.

"When solutions cannot be found by human effort or knowledge, when things are not moving, when foundations are shattered, when the government has no solution, people are referred to the men of God for counselling, guidance and healing," Mutisya said.

BROKE COVID-19 RULES

140 Athi River youths sent into forced quarantine

PHILOMENA KILONZO/ A hotel in Athi River, Machakos, has been closed by the government after hosting more than 140 youths in defiance of a ban on gatherings to stop the spread of the coronavirus.

They have been sent into quarantine inside Lukenya Getaway Resort for 14 days at their one expense. Machakos county commissioner Esther Maina (pictured) declared the indefinite closure of the resort. The youths aged between 22 and 28 were found at the premises despite a directive banning public gatherings.

"This is a continuation of what happened yesterday at Maanzoni Lodge. The youth are a part of the 720 that were quarantined yesterday. We have also quarantined them to determine their health condition for the next 14 days and from there we will know what to do with them," Maina said, ordering that they undergo tests for Covid-19 before they are evacuated from the private facility.



GIRL SUFFERS INJURIES

Cops probe death of granny 'set on fire by two men'

MUTUA KAMETI/ A 75-year-old granny was burnt to death on Wednesday in her two-bedroom house at Kithangathini village in Mbooni East, Makueni county.

Her family blamed two unknown men for the tragedy. The mother of seven was burnt beyond recognition. Her 13-year-old granddaughter escaped with slight burns on her hand. The house also caught fire and the roof caved in.

Mbooni East subcounty police commander Agnes Omajong said they had launched investigations.

"We are yet to establish whether the fire was accidental or it was caused by somebody with intent to kill," she said.

The family said the granddaughter, a Standard 7 pupil at Kithangathini Primary School, witnessed her grandmother being tied with a rope. She then fell unconscious, was doused with petrol and set on fire in her bed.

Her lastborn Munyao Kinyumu said the girl narrated to them how the two men threw her out of the house as the fire intensified. They called for a thorough investigation.

EVERYONE IS SUFFERING

Waiving rent for residents impossible, say Kitui MCAs

LINAH MUSANGI/ The call by tenants to landlords to waive rent due to the economic impacts of Covid-19 is unrealistic, Kitui MCAs have said.

The concerns were raised after a landlord in Nyandarua county warmed hearts of Kenyans by waiving house rent for his tenants in the wake of Covid-19.

The Landlords and Tenants Association of Kenya on Wednesday asked landlords across the country to offer tenants rent relief for the next three months. However, the proposal has not been received very well by MCAs say the current economic constraints are hard on everyone.

Majority leader Mwikya Kilonzo said most landlords acquired their

properties on loans they are still on service. He said the matter should be a personal decision.

"Kenya Revenue Authority is still collecting 10 per cent domestic taxes on the properties. KPLC and water suppliers are also charging their services," the Athi MCA said.

Kilonzo proposed that if Covid-19 cases continue to increase, people should consider vacating rental houses and retire to their villages till normalcy resumes. Migwani's Philip Nguli said landlords too have been affected by the pandemic as most of them are still settling loans.

The ward rep said waivers should be well thought and coordinated to benefit Kenyans in all sectors.



Kyome-Thaana MCA Alex Wambua / LINAH MUSANGI

"If one sector is affected, it has repercussions on the other sectors and it's got to be an inter-sectoral program for all," Nguli said.

Kyome-Thaana MCA Alex Wambua said that although the idea was aimed at cushioning Kenyans during this time of the Covid-19 outbreak, residents ought to understand that

private businesses have limitations. "As much as the idea is worth smiling at, there are extremes landlords cannot go to," Wambua said.

However, Kitui's Majority whip Stephen Makau said the government should work closely with landlords and cushion them so as to pass the benefits to tenants.

COUNTIES NORTHEASTERN/EASTERN

THE CZECH REPUBLIC STYLE

Kitui mulls compulsory masks for all residents to curb virus

Health chief officer says the Czech Republic has used the gears effectively

MUSEMBI NZENGU/ The Kitui county administration is considering an order for the compulsory wearing of face masks by all residents to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Health chief officer Richard Muthoka said they were aware of positive reports from the Czech Republic about the effectiveness of masks.

“The Czech Republic ordering compulsory wearing of masks by its residents has reduced the rate of infection of Covid-19 whereas their neighbours in Europe are faced with very high numbers,” Muthoka said.

He spoke to the media on Wednesday after a meeting on the impact of measures taken by the county to combat the coronavirus outbreak. The meeting was chaired by Governor Charity Ngilu.

“The use of masks has helped flatten the infection curve in the European country,” Muthoka said.

Kitui County Textile Centre has received numerous orders to make

face masks but priority will be given to distributing the protective gear to locals, he said.

Muthoka said the Kitui assembly had allocated Sh10 million to fight the virus.

Some of it will be used to buy thermometers to help screen anyone coming into the county.

“Checkpoints will be mounted for all persons entering Kitui to be screened for coronavirus,” the chief officer said.

He announced that fumigation of all major market centres across Kitui will be done three days a week. The exercise commenced on Wednesday night.

Kitui has confirmed one patient — Catholic priest Nicholas Maanzo who returned to the country from Ireland. He has been isolated at the Mbagathi Hospital in Nairobi and is responding to treatment.

Muthoka said that nine contacts of the priest had been identified and would be tested for the virus.



Kitui Governor Charity Ngilu during a meeting on coronavirus preparedness in the county on Wednesday /MUSEMBI NZENGU

FEAR OF LOCKDOWN

Food a priority as Garissa residents rush to stock up

STEPHEN ASTARIKO/ Garissa residents are stocking food to prepare for a possible total lockdown as cases of Covid-19 surge.

Residents who spoke to the press on Wednesday said foodstuffs have topped their lists for the past month.

A high school teacher in Balam-bala who lives in Garissa said he has been forced to adjust his budget to accommodate essential items to sustain his five children and a wife.

“I have been following closely how the virus has been spreading worldwide. From my own assessment, Kenya could be headed for a possible lockdown if we don't stop downplaying the virus,” Mohamed Salan said.

“When I walk through the streets of Garissa town and watch how the residents are taking government directives casually, I get scared.”

He said under normal circumstances, he stocks food rations that would last his family for two weeks.

“But as things stand, I am thinking of stocking food that would last for one and a half months. This means I have to put more money on foodstuffs. Other items, for now, are not very necessary like clothing and household items.”

DISCHARGED

5 Meru virus suspects test negative after quarantine

GERALD MUTETHIA/Five samples that were taken for testing for Covid-19 in Meru have returned negative results, Governor Kiraitu Murungi has said.

Speaking when he held a response committee meeting to review the status and preparedness of the county on coronavirus, Kiraitu said the results don't mean the county is immune to the disease.

Health executive Misheck Mutuma said the five were discharged to join their families.

Kiraitu said his administration has set aside Sh36 million for additional public awareness, protective gear for health workers, purchasing ventilators and oxygen cylinders.

“My administration increased budget allocation as a precautionary measure. The money will be used to buy fumigation equipment and chemicals, enlist fumigation

volunteers and intensifying public awareness campaigns through various media outlets.”

The governor ordered stern action be taken against traders still selling second-hand clothes (mitumba) which were banned to stop the spread of the virus.

“We have suspended the sale of mitumba clothes until further notice. There should be no idlers in our markets. It is our duty to protect the lives of our people,” Kiraitu said.

Mutuma raised concerns about people travelling from Nairobi to the county, urging the national government to ban the movement. Nairobi has been listed as a high-risk county after recording the most cases of the virus.

“People should be limited because we have many elderly citizens in the villages and people share a lot including utensils,” the executive said.



Meru Governor Kiraitu Murungi and county commissioner Allan Macharia at the county headquarters /GERALD MUTETHIA



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SASA

COVER

Why Kenyans are upcountry despite

Many are wondering where the food will come from for themselves

BY NJERI MBUGUA

/@NjeriEMbugua



Kenya, as of April 2, had 110 confirmed cases of the coronavirus, three fatalities, three recoveries and six hotspot counties.

To curb the number of people infected with Covid-19, the government has issued stern directives restricting the movement of Kenyans.

The government has also urged Kenyans not to travel upcountry because older persons are more vulnerable to the coronavirus.

However, for Ruiru businessman Samuel, 30, staying in urban areas only means struggling to pay rent and put food on the table.

Sam, as he is often referred to, sells smokies, boiled eggs and sausages around the town.

With the sun's unapologetic heat filling the air, his legs are placed on his travel bag and he intently stares out the open window, waiting for the 14-seater matatu to get full.

"I'm going back to my parents' home, where I can help on the farm and not have to worry about rent or food," he said. "Hustlers have been

left without business. The number of people buying smokies is very low because most people are not walking out and about anymore."

To maintain hygiene, he would have to purchase soap, water or sanitiser to clean his client's hands each time someone bought a food item.

"It's too expensive and the business does not make money to support both myself and cleaning other people's hands," he said.

However, even as he relocates upcountry, his wife and children who live in his parents' compound still need to be taken care of.

"I have been sending some money to them for upkeep, but now that there is no business, I'll have to go stay with them and hope for the best," he said.

NO TIME FOR KIDS

The 30-year-old adds the government should help with food support and direct landlords not to ask for rent for the remaining months.

"Despite my leaving, my items

Passengers wait at Nyamakima business centre on March 19
/WILFRED NYANGARESII

are still in my house here and if they want rent, I don't know how I will pay for it. I have no money because business is down," he said.

A few cars behind Sam, two little girls are trying to capture the attention of their mother as they bicker over who gets to eat the last sweet.

Their mother, who is next to them, seems annoyed as she ignores them and continues to scroll down on her phone.

She also seems impatient with the duration of time the matatus are taking to fill. There are currently about five more seats that need to be occupied.

"They are taking more time than usual because there are no people right now," she said.

This seems odd because the bus stop is filled with people moving up and down as they fight for space, with the vehicles moving in and out of the bus stop.

The mother of two, who identifies herself as Sarah, is moving her children to her mother's home until



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Are we still travelling despite state orders

and their families as business in Nairobi grinds to a halt



the disease is gone. "They are better off with her because I do not have any time to stay home all day with them," she said.

"I've made arrangements with my younger brother to help my mother take care of them."

Sara, who stays with her husband in Ruiru, says they cannot afford to have them home.

"He works at a construction site and I sell groceries at the market. We cannot stay home and take care of them and we cannot afford to hire help to look after them," she said.

The two girls, who resolved to cut the sweet in two pieces, seem excited to travel.

Sarah has talked to them about washing their hands often and keeping away from people who are sick.

"There have not been any cases reported upcountry, so I know they are safer there. The only problem may be constant water access since my mother still goes to the river," she said.

She adds they might join them

if things get worse. Njenga gets out of the car, holding a big package wrapped in gazettes, and pays the conductor in cash before finding shade and making a phone call.

DAILY COMMUTE

The 56-year-old has just arrived from his home in Githunguri to Ruiru town, where he does business.

He is carrying some meat he bought at a pit stop the matatu made to pick up more people.

"I have no option but to travel back and forth daily because of work," he said.

Njenga, who operates a shop within the market, adds he cannot afford to close the business and stay home.

"We do not have the luxury to just close up and go home because then where does the food come from?" he said.

Njenga makes the daily commute, paying Sh240 daily to travel between the two places.

However, the matatu in which he arrived appeared overloaded and the conductor took cash and went to look for loose money from a group of other conductors.

"We are observing hygiene but you cannot control everyone. People will still shake hands, exchange money and not observe social distancing," he said.

"I think if the government gave options for food and rent, we would maybe stay at home until it was over."

On March 30, Health CS Mutahi Kagwe asked people living in Nairobi to stop travelling upcountry.

"We would like to urge those in Nairobi to stay in Nairobi... those living in upcountry to avoid travelling to Nairobi," he said.

Addressing the media, Kagwe

said people living upcountry are the elderly and might contract the disease.

"Statistics show most elderly people in Kenya live in rural areas. This kind of movement messed up Italy. The elderly are more vulnerable," he said.

By the time the CS was making the announcement, Kenya had 50 confirmed cases of Covid-19.

Kagwe said the current trend of spread of the Covid-19 has been established to be through community transmission and not imported.

COUNTIES UNDEREQUIPPED

The Council of Governors has said the total number of ICU beds available in all counties is 162, while 22 counties do not have ICU facilities.

Council chair Wycliffe Oparanya on Wednesday said the government has agreed to support counties in recruiting 6,656 health workers in different cadres for emergency response.

By March 20, Kemska had distributed 694 surgical masks to counties, 32,000 face masks, 910 pieces of medical disposal overalls, 735 face shields, 610 goggles and 769 boxes of examination gloves.

Also, counties received 140 pairs of gumboots and 2,000 pieces of N95 masks. Oparanya said only 167 sets of complete personal protective equipment were fully distributed to counties.

The county governments have also raised concern over a testing centre for the virus, which is currently being done by Kemri and the National Influenza laboratory.

"This in itself is a great risk for the country should the disease spread rapidly in many counties at the same time as it is projected in the coming weeks," Oparanya said.



Public health officers from Naivasha check passengers' temperature on the Nairobi-Nakuru highway /GEORGE MURAGE

SOCIETY TALK

BY NABILA HATIMY

@realobserver



Isolation is a chance to reconcile with true self



A sick man recuperates at home /DOUGLAS OKIDDY

Unlike some African countries that are experiencing the Covid-19 global pandemic, Kenya has not gone into total lockdown. However, self-isolation and social distancing are required of all citizens. Moreover, with the 7pm-5am curfew implemented since last Friday, most Kenyans are finding themselves more and more withdrawn from social circles.

Unfortunately for us, humans are a social people. Kenyans are especially community oriented people, who thrive in social gatherings. We are used to coming together as family or friends; eating, drinking, having chama meetings or even gossiping.

Other than the 07-08 post-election violence period, Kenyans have not experienced an uncertain time like this before. Being forced to stay away from loved ones and the outside world feels like a punishment. With social distancing, we have come to appreciate the little things we could do freely pre-corona outbreak. Even being squeezed in a matatu does not sound too bad now..

Alas! We are stuck indoors, either with squabbling families or completely alone. But whichever way you look at it, this time is crucial to reconnect with the self. Cambridge English dictionary defines self as a 'set of characteristics, such as personality and ability, that are not physical and make a person different from other people'.

However, in today's interconnected world, how many of us choose to be different? We find some sort of camaraderie in social groups that we alter our traits to help us fit into. The idea of self is not absolute; as humans are social beings, we see ourselves as others see us. We see ourselves as reflected in the backdrop of society. We lose touch with our true selves in the blur of everyday practices.

In a way, we should be grateful for this time we are spending in isolation. Solitude is not the synonym for loneliness. There is an unacknowledged significance

to solitude. Solitude allows us to reconnect with our true selves. To see ourselves as we are without external influences. Only without the noisy distraction of everyday life can we hear the deepest thoughts from our inner voice. We can reconcile the mind, body and spirit and restore ourselves to a balanced place.

This time spent in isolation is forcing us to confront our true feelings about our lives and ourselves. We can no longer hide behind the façade of social media filters and hashtags that make our lives look 'bomb AF'. We cannot use geolocation tags to prove how worldly we are. And the fact is we do not need to snap a picture of every meal we eat.

Social media users seem to be having a blast calling out those who use the platforms to flaunt their make-believe extraordinary lives. How will the 'influencers' survive without posting pictures of places they go to? How will sugar babies live without financial support from the sponsors, who are busy providing for their families in these uncertain times? In essence, we all live an alternate lifestyle online than we do in real life. We act differently on social settings than we do by ourselves.

Our days are often dictated by external social factors, such as dressing to impress or spending a lot of money hanging out at high-end places with friends. The truth is, given a choice, we would rather be stuck doing things we do not love in a social setting than be stuck home alone.

If we use this time wisely, it will allow us a chance to introspect and help us rediscover ourselves. Ask yourself questions that will help you reconnect with your true self. Who am I? How does being alone make me feel? What lessons have my past taught me? How happy am I right now? What food do I like? What is the first thing I would do post-corona outbreak? Am I living my life's purpose? How often do I compromise to please others? Do I enjoy my own company? Can I be better?

In memory of writers in Ethiopian flight 302

BY JKS MAKOKHA

/ @TheStarKenya



In Kenya, there is a saying that English is not a language from here; it came by ship. Perhaps the same can be said of the Covid-19 virus. It is not a flu virus from here; it came by plane.

With airlines grappling with the changing economic environment occasioned by the pandemic, aeroplanes have been grounded, flights cancelled and airports shut. This is true from Nairobi to other places, including the neighbouring Ethiopia. Only cargo planes are being offered a leeway to keep air traffic intact and economies safer from total collapse.

Interestingly, it is one year since the Ethiopian Flight 302 from Addis Ababa to Nairobi crashed near Bishoftu, killing all 157 people on board. The flight came down minutes after taking off. Since no bodies were ever found due to the impact of the crash, many families are still seeking closure, for the memories of losing their loved ones are still near and clear.

DNA science and intricate investigations managed later to assign identities to the indescribable remains collected as samples from the crash site. Many of the passengers who perished in the ill-fated flight were Kenyans returning home from abroad.



Prof Agnes Gathumbi / COURTESY

Prof Agnes Gathumbi and Dr Isaac Mwangi were among the 36 Kenyans who died. The two were returning from Italy, where they were on official university duties.

I remember Prof Gathumbi as a sterling English language pedagogue. She taught me as an undergraduate student in the late 1990s. Many Kenyans did not notice her demise and many more had never heard of her. Yet, many still would recall having used one or two of her textbooks in the course of their high school studies. Teachers in staffrooms across the country still use the books in their English lessons.

Together with other writers, she authored *The New Integrated English Book* series. These were canonical texts both for teachers and students that were used in secondary schools across Kenya for years. Her books are published by major Kenyan publishing houses, including Jomo Kenyatta Foundation, Oxford University Press and the Kenya Literature Bureau.

Prof Gathumbi also tried her hand in writing for children. Children's literature today is one of the vibrant sectors of the book industry. For instance, in 2007 and 2008, she published with Phoenix Publishers two interesting books: *Two Foolish Bulls* and *The Step Sisters*. Another one, titled *Lion, Dog and Cat*, was published in 2007 also.

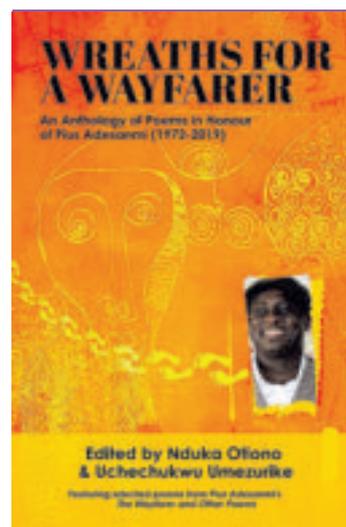
Apart from writing prose, she contributed a number of poems to many anthologies of this genre. One remembers fondly here her two poignant vignettes, "The Parking Boy" and "Farewell", published in an anthology titled, *Tender Memories*, which was published in 1989 by Oxford University Press.

Moreover, Agnes Gathumbi was an anthologist of literary short stories of great worth. Her

compilations were always selected for inclusion in the teaching of literature in Kenya and beyond. Between 1998 and 2000, *The Winner and Other Stories* was the recommended KCSE short stories set book in the country. She co-edited the anthology under the aegis of the Kenya Institute of Education, currently known as Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development. The lead story, whose title names this book, is by the late Barbara Kimenyi, a famous Ugandan writer of children's literature.

At the time of her death, Prof Gathumbi had left her fecund mark on the literary and educational landscapes of our motherland in an indelible manner. Gathumbi was the Director of the Institute of Teacher Professional Development for many years.

Here is a teacher of teachers whose track record will forever be visible as wisdom footprints on the way of Time. Her death occurred



The book cover of / COURTESY

as she returned to Kenya from her assignment in Italy, now under the dark cloud of the ongoing global corona pandemic.

As the world continues to reel from the miasma of the pandemic, with each day bearing dour news for world populations, including Kenyans, let us remain steadfast in recognising the heroes of the moment. For every cloud has its silver lining.

The Nigerian literary critic, poet and world-renowned scholar, Prof Pius Adesanmi, perished in the same doomed flight, too. He is well known for his satirical critiques of African post-independence decolonisation, published widely on numerous media and academic platforms.

A new prize celebrating his intellectual legacy was awarded last year in Kenya at the African Studies Association of African (ASAA) International Conference held at USIU-Africa. It is called The Pius Adesanmi Memorial Award for Excellence in African Writing. It was awarded to Kagiso Molope for her captivating debut novel, *Such a Lonely, Lovely Road* (2018).

Pius' own first book, *The Wayfarer and Other Poems*, won the Association of Nigerian Authors' Poetry Prize in 2001. A new book, in which I have penned him several verse tributes, has just been published in his memory. It is titled *Wreaths for a Wayfarer: An Anthology in Honour of Pius Adesanmi (2020)*, edited by Ndaka Otono and Uchechukwu Umezurike. Both books are available on www.amazon.com.

Dr JKS Makokha teaches Literature and Theatre at Kenyatta University

GUEST COLUMN

How coronavirus is changing online dating

BY LISA PORTOLAN

/ @TheStarKenya

When Tinder issued an in-app public service announcement regarding COVID-19 on March 3 we all had a little laugh as a panoply of memes and gags hit the internet.

Two weeks later the laughter has subsided, but the curiosity continues. How will singles mingle in the time of Corona?

We are entering unprecedented dating territory.

Luckily, dating apps have already taken the "face-to-face" out of many first meetings. A study conducted by YouGov and Galaxy in 2019 indicated 52 per cent of Australian singles had used a dating app to make a romantic connection.

Usage was particularly high for single Aussies between 25 and 34, with 60 per cent having used a dating app to make a romantic connection.

But while these people first made the connection online, for many (if not most), the connection eventually moved to real-life. So what now with social distancing?

WE STILL WANT TO CONNECT...

People are still opening their

dating apps. Between March 5 and 10, OkCupid reported a seven per cent increase in new conversations, and at the time of writing, 10 out of the top 100 apps on the iTunes store were dating apps.

During the second week of March, active users on Bumble rose by eight per cent. As American cities go into lockdown, apps are reporting increased numbers of messaging: on Bumble from March 12-22, Seattle saw a 23 per cent increase in sent messages, New York City 23 per cent and San Francisco 26 per cent.

In a time of spatial distancing, dating apps present a solution – to boredom, for connection – and also a risk. What responsibilities do dating apps have in relation to hook-ups and meet-ups and social distancing, if any?

Dating apps continue to serve public service announcements

WE ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF A HISTORICAL RE-JIGGING OF OUR UNDERSTANDING OF ROMANCE, INTIMACY AND SEX

in-app, as well as encouraging people to use their chat and video functionalities to continue exploring potential relationships.

Social media points to another interesting trend: people are changing their interaction patterns in dating apps, or dating app discussions are becoming corona-centric.

There has been a 188 per cent increase mentions of coronavirus on OkCupid profiles in March. Indian Tinder users described a rise in longer Tinder conversations. Which made many question if Covid-19 marked the return of Jane-Austen-like-courtships?

In the Jane Austen romance world, a protracted courtship might involve a spate of love letters. Today, it's video chats and direct messages.

To match this new phenomenon, dating apps are pushing to keep the majority of the relationship in-app.

While many dating apps already had video-chat functionalities, some have tweaked the interface to make it more relevant to the current climate, re-branding video-chats as "virtual dates".

... BUT WITH NO TOUCHING



Online dating / SHUTTERSTOCK

In this new world, we're all navigating how romantic intimacy can exist without physical contact.

With the prospect of months of self-isolation how will we navigate sex? After all, not everyone has a sexual partner readily available.

A notice about sex and coronavirus from the New York City Department of Health went viral last weekend. It included the statement "You are your safest sex partner".

The tables are suddenly turned: online hook-ups were previously framed as less wholesome than face-to-face ones. Yet in 2020 they are perceived as safer.

Simultaneously, we are seeing a steady rise in sex toy sales: sales are up 13 per cent in the UK, 71 per cent

in Italy, and a whopping 135 per cent in Canada. Australian sex toy brand Vush is reporting their sales are up 350 per cent.

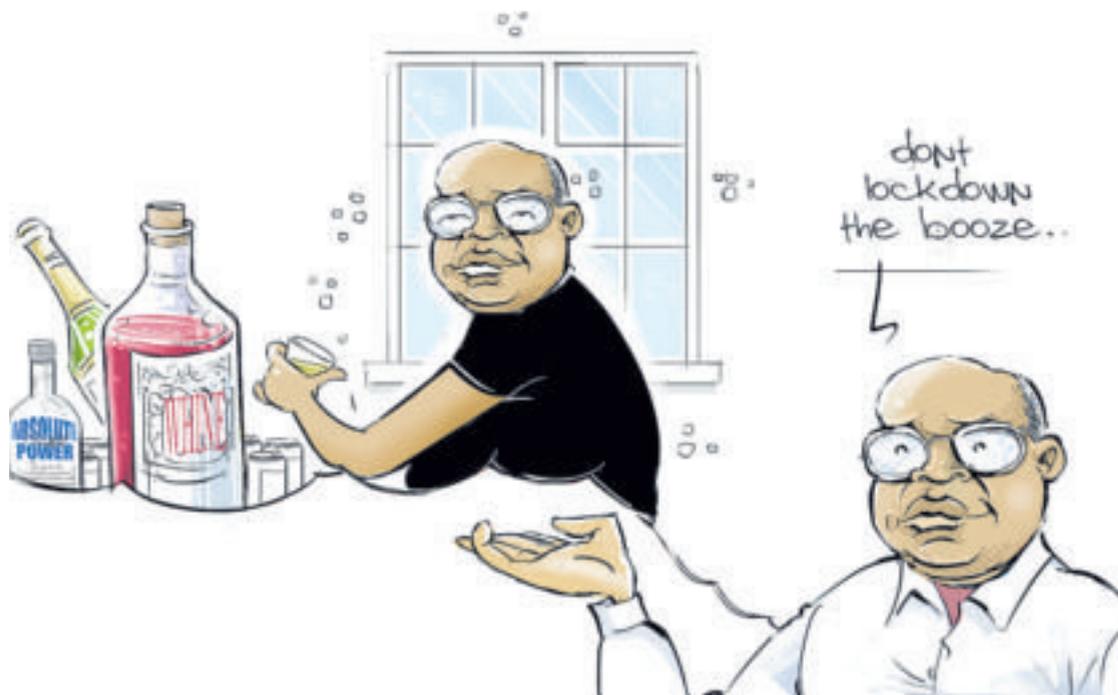
Connection is sought after in times of uncertainty, risk and crisis. But Covid-19 makes the navigation of these intimacies certainly difficult. We are in the middle of a historical re-jigging of our understanding of romance, intimacy and sex.

It's safe to say the negotiation of intimacy has been irrevocably changed – even if it is only for the short while.

Lisa Portolan is a PhD student, Institute for Culture and Society, Western Sydney University. This article was originally published on *The Conversation*.



Even in a lockdown, keep the booze and cigarettes flowing



As if confinement isn't bad enough for addicts, there's risk of psychosis, seizures and ultimately death

I'm not ordinarily into making bets as I really don't like losing, but I'm ready to bet Kenya's current dusk-to-dawn curfew is leading up to a lockdown like we have in South Africa.

Of course, just to ensure I lose the bet, now the powers that be (you know they all read my column religiously) will find an alternative. Thank me later, if you must.

Anyway, well into my first week of the lockdown and I'm still alright. It helps that while not an essential service, like the nurses and doctors or even the police and the technicians at Eskom (the electric company), journalists are classified as an "enabling" service. So we have a licence to "manga manga ovyo ovyo bila idhini", or at least get out of the gate for more than just a grocery run or a trip to the local hospital or the ATM.

It's a literal licence, by the way, typewritten on an official letterhead and duly stamped and signed. I feel like I'm in some World War 2 movie and some soldier is about to ask me for my papers.

Meanwhile, I don't know why they bothered with allowing people trips to the ATM when it is cheaper and as easy in SA to withdraw cash from the supermarket till when you buy something. Although not with a foreign cash card, I tried.

IF YOU DO HAVE A LOCKDOWN, ALL I CAN SAY IS DON'T LOCK AWAY THE BOOZE, NO MATTER HOW APPROPRIATE YOU THINK IT IS

Anyway, I really do digress. I was going to tell you how I'm surviving the lockdown. Because of my licence, I get to go into the CBD while the rest of my household has to stay housebound.

So while the poor devils have to find creative ways of keeping sane, I get to live a somewhat normal existence. Except it's not normal to have next to no cars on the road, once busy streets free of people.

When I get home, I have a drink or three to take the edge off and feel bad for those who didn't or couldn't stock up on booze the day before lockdown.

If you do have a lockdown, all I can say is don't lock away the booze, no matter how appropriate you think it is.

In SA, the lockdown is going ok for now, but if you hear about riots and chaos, it will be because some zealots decided to ban alcohol and tobacco sales as part of the lockdown measures.

I spoke to a medical doctor who said, "Although the decision to ban the sale of these two

drugs was made with the best intentions, it was not a good idea: this ad hoc law fails to adequately consider the harms that its enforcement will do to the many vulnerable individuals who suffer from substance use disorders."

He added, "Especially in the case of alcohol, many of those with substance use disorders cannot simply stop using drugs. If they do, they risk developing a range of symptoms, including psychosis, seizures and ultimately death."

Substance use disorder is a medical condition that often affects people with mental illness or underlying psychosocial problems. It can be managed and treated by healthcare specialists with drugs, psychiatric care and other supportive measures. Switching off the booze tap is the wrong answer.

MANY OF THOSE WITH SUBSTANCE USE DISORDERS CANNOT SIMPLY STOP USING DRUGS... SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER IS A MEDICAL CONDITION THAT OFTEN AFFECTS PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OR UNDERLYING PSYCHOSOCIAL PROBLEMS

STOCKHOLM SYNDROME?

BY SAMANTHA

/ @TheStarKenya

The rich also cry, but keep it secret

After surviving the seas, the reception centre, winter and job hunting with no papers... After surviving all that he now lay in hospital infected with Covid-19 that he had picked up in Italy.

All those other things could not take him out but a simple virus was going to. And he had to cross an ocean, cheat death many times only to now stroll into its arms. Yes, if you are having a bad day, have some perspective.

Perhaps I should say that to Chris? He called. Should I call back? I called him an ambulance and passed out the last time we saw each other. I didn't brag about what I did to his face. I didn't mock him. I didn't laugh at him. I called for help. Now IF he has been told that I have oromandibular dystonia, he has no reason to believe that I bit off his trumpet on purpose. Perhaps that's the reason he is calling. If he hasn't been told, this could be my chance to tell him. I'll call him back. I take a deep breath and dial his number. It rings just once.

"Samantha..." he says. "Are you ok?"

"Yes, yes I'm fine," I respond. "How are you? Oh God, Chris I'm so sorry..."

"It's ok, you couldn't help what happened," he responds.

There's silence as we both take in my fictitious condition.

"It must be hard to live with that... that thing you have," he says.

"It is..." I say. "I can normally control it. I do. I take drugs for it. I don't know what happened that night. I guess I was too excited."

Might as well make him think he is the most attractive man on earth.

"Yes, the doctor mentioned that you may have been overcome with

passion," he says. Did he now? That doctor gets more and more mysterious with each passing day.

"Your effect on me that night was bittersweet," I say softly.

"Yes, so sweet..." he says.

Wait. What? Does Chris have Stockholm Syndrome? Is he bonding emotionally with an abuser? How fascinating. Falling in love with your oppressor is something scientists have tried to understand for years. I cut this man's penis off, for heaven's sake. And he's busy flirting with me.

"Are you out of hospital?" I ask.

"No, not yet," he answers. "I need to give you a head's up about my wife."

In the midst of all this commotion, I had forgotten about his wife and what she thought about all this.

"She doesn't know it was you. Let's keep it that way," he says.

"Ok... What does she think happened?" I ask.

"Well, I was obviously with someone. I just didn't mention who it was," he says.

That's a relief. On top of everything else, I'm not interested in facing a very angry wife. And she introduced me to her husband. I will die if she tries to discuss this with me. As if reading my mind, he adds:

"She was brought up in the type of home where dirty linen is not aired in public."

Yes, I suppose she was. She seemed quite prim and proper when we met. Such a nice lady! How did she end up with this guy? Pleasing her parents? The rich marrying the rich? God forbid they let the rest of us get a shot at a grand life.

So it will be a stiff upper lip for the public and no one will ever know why her husband is in hospital. Perfect. The rich also cry, they just don't ever let you see it.



A man overcome with emotion hits his head on a wall /SHUTTERSTOCK

★ SASA LIFE LESSONS

CULTURE DESTROYED

Welcome, but do take a shower first: Life after Covid-19 in Coast

Gone are the days when guests would be treated to a handshake, hug and kiss to show affection

PILI CHIMERAH

@TheStarKenya



It is so surprising how the coronavirus pandemic has changed the lifestyles of people globally.

It has brought changes in business, socialising, interactions and hygiene. Even after we get through the pandemic, things will never be the same again.

Coast Association of People with Disabilities coordinator Hamisa Zaja explains some of the lifestyles that have changed the most in the Coast region, where she is a resident.

POSITIVES

The coronavirus has brought families together globally. This is through lockdown in different countries and stay-at-home directives to curb its spread from one place to another.

Zaja said it was initially quite hard to see a family with a husband, wife and their children together except on December holidays, but the situation has made it possible.

"This is a time which all those people who could not have the time to be in their homes, are in their homes," she said, adding there is now room to build that family love and bonding.

Hygiene has been improved as people have become cautious about the hands' cleanliness as it is now very important to wash hands every single time.

"What has changed our life for the better is washing our hands. We have to wash them thoroughly and in a specific way," Zaja said.

Hygiene has also been put into consideration when entering one's house. You are required to take a shower before you get into contact with your family to ensure you protect them to your level best.



Health CS Mutahi Kagwe greets ministry officials using the Indian namaste gesture during a conference on coronavirus at the Ministry of Health headquarters, Afya House in Nairobi, on March 17 /DOUGLAS OKIDDY

NEGATIVES

The negatives, however, seem to outweigh the positives. Zaja said, the virus has completely destroyed the coastal culture.

This is a culture of showing generosity through a shake of hands, hugging and kissing to show love.

For example, the coastal way of welcoming guests is with a lot of warmth. But with the current situation, that hospitality has been broken.

People have become more cautious about the guests they receive. It has reached a point where, when a guest



HAMISA ZAJA

You are required to tell a guest to remove his belongings, take a shower, wash their hands... According to the culture we grew up with, that is completely an insult, but in such a situation, it is necessary

comes to your house, you tell them to clean up before sitting and relaxing.

"You are required to tell a guest to remove his belongings, take a shower, wash their hands... A lot of instructions. According to the culture we grew up with, that is completely an insult, but in such a situation, it is necessary," Zaja said.

For those who do not understand, they will take the behaviour negatively and in a very bad way and will start to say it is unacceptable.

Mosques used to be full to the brim on Fridays and churches used to be packed on Sundays. They are now empty.

Those found by the authorities in the religious houses face a thorough beating, so people just opt to stay away.

While some understand the meaning of staying away from religious houses, others think it is inconsiderate, bearing in mind it is a challenging time that requires solidarity and praying for the world.

"Many a time, you would tell kids to go to church on a Sunday, or if it is time for prayers for the Muslim community, they should go to the mosques. But people are unable to go to these religious places," Zaja said, adding that many are left to pray individually at home.

Business has gone down. Everybody is complaining that sales have dropped, from that Mama Mboga we used to see with her kibanda full, to that Mama Viazi who used to have clients full to the brim in the evenings, to retail shops and wholesale ones.

Many have decided to give their small businesses a break until the nightmare is over, simply because they are required to stay at home and their businesses require them to be outside, getting into contact with different people.

"We women mostly depend on small businesses, for example. Many a time, we travel to different places to maybe get clothes, jewellery, food. Most of this is from China, so small boutiques have closed because the

situation has destroyed the means to travel so one can get the stock she used to get abroad," Zaja said.

SOCIAL DISTANCING

Zainab Chitsangi is the CEO of an eponymous foundation, whose work requires her to meet with people and share ideas on the development of different communities and youths.

Her foundation's purpose is to educate and sensitise the community and the youth and to help grow youths' talent in communities, while they join forces with stakeholder organisations to help build up the community.

"We have been forced to stay at home in such a way that even if you have an idea, you cannot pass it on because of this pandemic," Chitsangi said.

She says she had arranged many projects which she knew she would complete at a specific time, but that will not be possible since she had to postpone the projects to be implemented and finished at a later unknown date.

She has no option but to do some of her projects online, which she describes as a big challenge since it sometimes does not reach all her targeted audiences.

"In many of my plans and sensitisations, I have been forced to do them online, and not many will be reached by this. So to me, it has really affected a lot of my activities," she said.

Chitsangi hopes all this will end so that many activities can go back to normal.



A man washes his hands with soap and water as part of measures to combat the spread of coronavirus in Westlands, Nairobi, on March 18 /ANDREW KASUKU

★ WORD IS...

WORDIS@THE-STAR.CO.KE

SOCIALBYTE
WITH ELIZABETH NGIGI
@nyambs_liz

Serro featured in Waithaka's video 'Akia'

US-based Kenyan producer Waithaka presents 'Akia', featuring Kenyan songstress Serro.

Off the soon to be released all-female album 'Odes By Queens', 'Akia', Dholuo for 'uncertainty', is a melodious track laid on heavy percussive rhythms accompanied by flamenco-style guitar lines.

Alternating between Dholuo, English and Swahili, Serro sings of walls that she's built high out of wounds from past relationships. She expresses her desire to release all inhibitions and share love intimately with her suitor.

In the video directed by Callivan Creative's Ivan Odie, a waitress' beauty has her workmate enchanted. She is, however, too guarded to accept his romantic gestures as endearing and genuine as they are.

Her fears are seen to stem from a past experience, whose glimpses we see through intense flashback scenes.

I have found real love, says Vanessa Mdee



Vanessa and Rotimi /COURTESY

ELIZABETH NGIGI / Juma Jux's ex, Vanessa Mdee, says she has finally found real love by dating Hollywood actor Rotimi.

The two are living together in the States. While Vee was recording a video for her fans on social media, Rotimi made an appearance and said, "Hatuachani."

Mdee's fans have taken this as a response to the haters who have been saying, "Wataachana tu". Mdee opened her heart to the fans, expressing how in love she is. "I've been in the industry for 13 years and I have never taken a break. I have finally found some time to do what Vee likes. To chill. I found love, beautiful love. I am so happy," she said.

She went on to urge fans to use this time well to grow themselves spiritually. "Find time for yourself, especially in this time of stillness. Realign yourself, pray, reconnect with God. Take care of your family and loved ones and be still and know that He is God," she said.



For more Word Is stories scan the QR code above.

I LEFT DIAMOND FOR THE SAKE OF MY SANITY, SAYS TANASHA



ELIZABETH NGIGI @nyambs_liz/ Tanasha Donna has opened up about her failed relationship with WCB boss Diamond Platnumz. In an Instagram Live interview, Tanasha said she was not ready to be a mother.

The mother of one says she was not in love at first but things happened very fast after meeting Diamond.

"I liked his energy and his vibe but I was not in love. Then all of a sudden he wanted to marry me. This was

Tanasha Donna
/COURTESY

after three months of dating. Then a date was set for February," Tanasha said, adding she wanted to take the time to know each other.

Tanasha hooked up with Diamond three months after she broke up with her ex-lover.

Sooner than later, she was convinced he was her dream man. "It did feel like genuine love. I hope my feelings were not wrong," she said.

Tanasha would then spend most of her weekends with Diamond's family and before she knew it, she was pregnant with his child.

"I was in shock. I was not ready to be a mum. I know I wasn't being responsible because I wasn't on any birth control," she said.

"It did cross my mind that I could if I wanted to, get rid of the pregnancy, but I could not go through with it."

The public only came to learn about the pregnancy two months before she delivered.

"I would edit the photos to hide my pregnancy. I was going through so much with the media. And was realising that this comes with it. I had to come to terms with life in the limelight," she said.

Tanasha accused her baby daddy of infidelity, adding that she had to leave for the sake of her son and her mental health. She explained the relationship started having issues six months before they parted ways.

For the last six months, the two were trying to see how they could work it out, but Diamond had lost interest.

"Not because of anything emotional. I would say it is not living up to certain expectations he had in the relationship," she said.

Tanasha says she is now focused on her son and music career.

Maliza Umaskini boss Sadat to help Majirani



Maliza Umaskini founder Sadat Muhindi /COURTESY

ELIZABETH NGIGI / Former Papa Dennis boss and Maliza Umaskini CEO Sadat Muhindi has offered to support singer Majirani after he came out to the public, claiming he was depressed and needed someone to help him continue running his normal life.

In a viral video seen by Word Is, Sadat has encouraged Majirani to remain strong. "Life is hard but you have to struggle. Nothing comes easy. Sometimes you fail, other times you wake up," he said.

"I have been auctioned like three times and my house has been locked for more than five times when I was renting a house. I did not lose hope so even you in Bungoma, stay there and when things will be back to normal, together with Maliza Umaskini, I will help you come back to music. "I know people love your work

and they miss your music. I will make sure you go back to your normal lifestyle and continue doing your music. God bless you."

Majirani came out to the public a week ago, saying he was broke and has been sleeping on the streets after he was unable to pay rent.

The singer is currently living in a grass-thatched house with a friend, and he said he was open to any job. "I've lost weight and I don't regret starting a football team that has helped many. Only God can repay me," he said.

On seeing Sadat's video, Majirani thanked him. "A big message from a big heart... Just what I needed during this low moment of my life... A message of hope at least I can hang on a little bit... Thank u soo much Maliza Umaskini president Sadat Muhindi," he said.

★ STAR CLASSIFIED

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P.O. Box 39544, Nairobi. Tel: 0722-780128

PUBLIC AUCTION

Dully instructed by our principal, the financiers (RADHA MOTORS LTD), we shall sell the following motor vehicles/salvage by public auction on **FRIDAY 10TH APRIL 2020 AS FROM 10.00AM AT THEIR MOMBASA YARD**

REG NO	MAKE
Kcq340b	premacy
Kct810s	crown
Kct882k	demio
Kcs338t	fielder
Kcd161S	townace
Kcu794d	passo
Kcv328e	voxy
Kbu376m	succeed
Kck 824e	fielder
Kcr 439u	fit
Kbz076p	sienta
Kct055f	fit
Kcp105t	vitz
Kcq148f	cube
Kcu720l	probox
Kct362l	wish
kcw842g	axio

Condition of sale
Cash at the fall of the hammer
Dully instructed by our principal, the financiers (MUSSAB MOTORS LTD), we shall sell the following motor vehicles/salvage by public auction on **FRIDAY 10TH APRIL 2020 AS FROM 10.00AM AT THEIR MOMBASA YARD**

REG NO	MAKE
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Condition of sale
Cash at the fall of the hammer

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PUBLIC NOTICE

THE PHYSICAL AND LAND USE PLANNING ACT NO 13 OF 2019 CHANGE OF USER

The owners of plots **KABETE/LOWER KABETE/2822** is proposing to change the user of this property from **Agricultural to Light industry(concrete mix plant and stone cutting)** subject to approval by Kiambu County government. Individuals, institutions, and organisations with objection (s) or comments are requested to forward them in writing within 14 days from the date of this notice to:-

**The Director Physical Planning
County Government of Kiambu, box
2344-00100, KIAMBU**

PUBLIC NOTICE

THE PHYSICAL AND LAND USE PLANNING ACT NO 13 OF 2019 CHANGE OF USER

The Registered Owner of this property **L.R No. Nairobi Block 115/386** Located Off Eastern Bypass within Utawala Area proposes to Change its Use from **Single-dwelling Residential unit to Commercial (Shops) cum Multi-Dwelling (Flats)** subject to approval by the Nairobi City County Government. Individuals, organizations, Institutions etc with comments, recommendations or objections to the development proposal are advised to forward them, stating grounds for the same in writing, within 14 days of this notice to the;

**THE COUNTY SECRETARY
NAIROBI CITY COUNTY GOVERNMENT
P.O. BOX 30075-00100
NAIROBI**

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This Rich Lady Wants A Good Man To Romance Her Life. 0723232330

Indian girl need life partner sms 0722115384

Indian m/f looking life partner Sms 0722115384

Wazungu, Big Booty Chics, Sponsors, Marriage Partners, Classic Sugar Ladies And Sugar Daddies. 0723232330

OMAR 39 years looking for a muslin girl 18-30 tall, brown, slim, devout n kind-hearted even with a girl ready to b second office call 0732939565

Omondi a Widower leaving and



NATIONAL YOUTH SERVICE TUMAINI FARM UNIT

TENDER NOTICE

The National Youth Service – Tumaini Farm Unit in Nyandarua County wishes to invite sealed tenders from eligible contractors for the following tender

S/NO	TENDER NO	TENDER NAME	ELIGIBILITY	CLOSING DATE
1	NYA/CT/05/2019-2020	Proposed construction and completion of 1 no. Barracks block and associated foul drainage system for the National Youth Service – Tumaini Farm Unit	open	16/04/2020

Interested and eligible contractors may obtain tender documents with detailed specification from the Supply Chain Management Office, Nyandarua central upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Kshs. 1,000** (One Thousand only) payable in cash at the sub county treasury.
Only bidders who meet the following requirements will be considered for further evaluation;

- Certificate of incorporation, Valid Tax compliance certificate, Pin and Vat certificate, CR 12 Certificate
- NCA 7 and above (building works)
- Valid business permit
- Minimum construction experience of 4 years for a value of equivalent amount
- Proof of equipment and personnel to be used
- Audited account for the last three financial years. Financial bank statements for the last six months
- 2% Bid bond of the quoted amount.
- Litigation history signed by commissioner of oaths
- Certified documents by commissioner of oaths

Completed tender documents in plain sealed envelope Clearly marked "Tender No." should be addressed to:
**THE COUNTY COMMISSIONER
P.O.BOX 3-20303
OL KALOU.**

And be deposited in the tender box situated at the entrance of the County Commissioner's Office, on or **16th April 2020 at 10.00 a.m.**
Tenders will be opened immediately thereafter in presence of bidders or their representatives who may wish to attend at the County Commissioner's Boardroom, 1st floor.

**SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OFFICER
NYANDARUA COUNTY.**

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Wireless: 020-8016539
Email:nguruent@gmail.com

PUBLIC AUCTION

Dully instructed by our principals we shall sell by Public Auction the undermentioned household goods on **THURSDAY 9TH APRIL 2020 at SICURO STORAGE YARD nex to MARDE TERESA CATHOLIC CHURCH, ZIMMERMAN along KAMITI ROAD from 10.00 A.M**

In the matter of Distress for Rent Act Cap 293 Laws of Kenya

- LANDLORD Vs. ERICK ADHURA**
Television (Samsung), Radio System (Sony), Fridge, Sofaset & Gas Cylinder.
- LANDLORD Vs. JANE S. NDUATI**
Sofaset, Coffee Table, Wall Unit, Television, Gas Cooker, Bed & Mattress.
- LANDLORD VS. DANCAN MWANGANGI**
Sofaset, Wall Unit, Dining Table with Chairs, Beds, Huriccane Lamps, stoves, Curtains, Hair Drier, Baby Chairs, Water Drums, Mattresses.
- LANDLORD VS. SUSAN NDERITU**
Sofaset, Television Set, Stand, Shoe Rack and Kitchen Table.
- LANDLORD VS. GEOFFREY MANYARA OUMA**
Sofaset 5 seater, Coffee Table, Gas Cylinder 6Kg, Television Set

CONDITIONS OF SALE
Cash at the fall of the hammer
ALL ARE WELCOME



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working Nairobi, Age 44 with 2 Kids looking for a Serious Love That Can lead to Marriage if you are interested send your Profile and contact to blancohygiene@gmail.com

Free Hook Up For Ladies. Text Your Name, Age, Tribe And Town And Get Connected Immediately. 0723232330

@550/= get White,Asian or Kenyan top & bottom gays,Sugar Mummies/Daddies,Lesbians & partners SMS/Whatsapp Harmony Services-0715584490 or www.eharmony.com

IM KENYAN MAN, very understanding ,smart,a christian n im looking 4 a serious lady4 marriage below 30yrs n without kids n serious,cal or send ur profile 0724249628

Ray from Kitale needs mom aged 45-50. Sms 0707415978.

Sponsors, Ladies Trapped In Unhappy, Loveless Marriage, Classic Sugar Ladies And Sugar Daddies. 0723232330

JAMES, a teacher would like to meet a God-fearing lady for marriage. Sms 0708 496 915

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For White, Asian and Kenyan top & bottom gays,Sugar Mummies/Daddies, Lesbians and Partners Call/Whatsapp Harmony Services on 0715584490 or www.eharmony.com

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RICH wazungu 'sponsors' available immediately. call 0732555194

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TRACK, MONITOR ua cheating partner.ua workers,we con-

duct surveillance and gather info,provide concrete evidence.cal 0732555194

LADIES are u looking for a rich mzungu (sponsor) frm any country u want u get immediately? contact 0732555194

WE SOLVE these problems immediately:taza,libido,pre mature erection,penis enlargement,stop mpango wa kando,theft,protection,business.cal 0732555194

IF U CANT GET WATOTO try our herbal u get .we solve all prblms mpango wa kando,enlargement, cal 0732555194

WE CAN BRING BACK ua husband/wife or fiance who left u ki madharau in 24 hrs,lost libido,enlargement,kushika mimba etc.cal 0732555194

Rich Sugarladies Want Discreet Relationship With Young Strong Men 0723232330

LADIES Trapped In Unhappy Loveless, Romanceless And Boring Marriage, Who Need Discreet Affair To Cheer Them Up, 0723232330

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WEALTHY SUGAR MOMS And Sugar Dads, Ladies Trapped In Loveless Marriage, Big Booty Chics Etc 0723232330

Are you single and looking for a serious and mature life partner?Sms your name,gender,age,-tribe,HIV status,academic level,-career,county etc to Rohosmart Connections-0722219480 for genuine hookup.

Married but unhappy Ladies Want Someone To Romance Their Lives. 0723232330

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ABDUL FROM SOUTH C is looking for lady friend from nairobi. 0717054246

RAJESH, Single, smart, handsome, f stable, want a gud, faithful n romantk lady. sms 0712852468

SINGLE? lonely? divorced, widow, lonely rich hs/wfe, casual date, leisure luv, escort lovers, intrstd?sms0711689517

JOY, SINGLE, 31yrs, 3kids, need christian man, Godfearing,35-40 yrs,SMS0711689517

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Am kevin age 33 in nairobi. am looking 4a rich fncly-stbl sugar-mummy hiv-, who is tal, goodlo-

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ALEX C. from Nairobi AYANI is looking for friends both \$My number is 0735112936 (30-40yrs)

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Am ken age 33 in nairobi. looking for wealthy fncly-stbl sugar-mummy. who is tal and plus size age 35/59 for fun, romantic luv etc cal /text 0773653604

Romantic hookups. get ur dream lady today.SMS mi ur desires and I WhatsApp you pic of ur lover to be first asap and hookup at last.

Married But Unhappy Ladies Want Someone To Romance Their Lives. 0722114000

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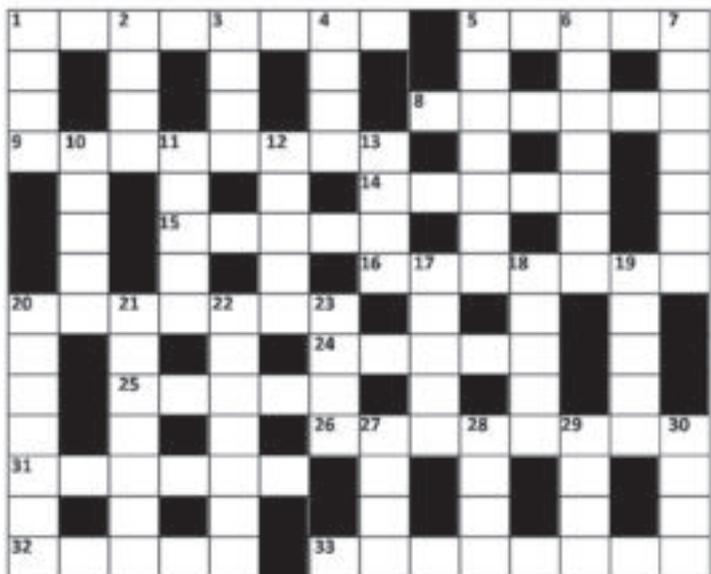
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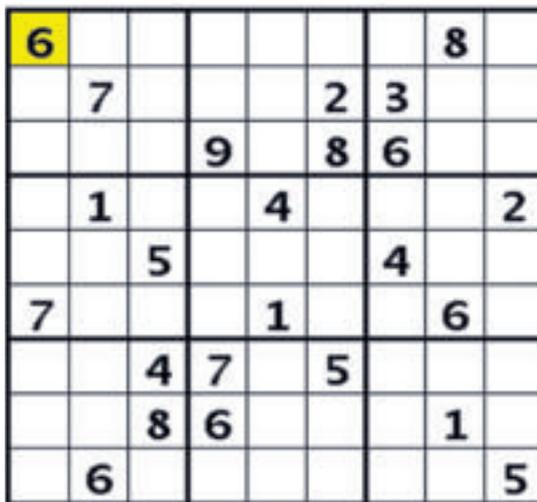
- 1 Member of Parliament for Kuria West constituency (4)
- 2 A Japanese form of wrestling (4)
- 3 Of like kind (7)
- 4 President of Djibouti (4)
- 5 Member of Parliament for women in Kajiado County (7)
- 6 Prime Minister of Morocco (7)
- 7 thin and tight, it converts sound waves into vibration (7)
- 10 A politically organized body of people under a single government (5)
- 11 President of Benin (5)
- 12 Member of Parliament for Turkana West constituency (5)
- 13 Member of Parliament for Kibwezi West constituency (4)
- 17 Insurgent (5)
- 18 Thermoplastic yarn (5)
- 19 President of Kenya (5)
- 20 Lubricated (7)
- 21 Resistance to a change in motion (7)
- 22 President of Djibouti (7)
- 23 Radar screen element (4)
- 27 Dose too heavily (4)
- 28 On one occasion (4)
- 29 Former Member of Parliament for

- Kilifi South constituency (4)
- 30 Have as a logical consequence (4)

ACROSS

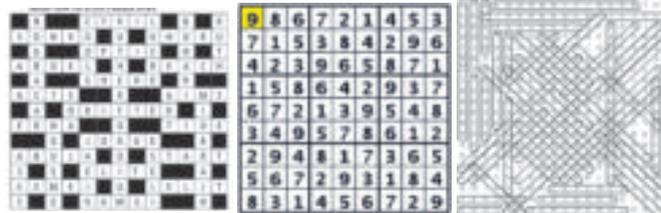
- 1 Electrical component having a particular value of resistance (8)
- 5 Member of Parliament for Igembu North constituency (5)
- 8 A legendary king of the Britons (6)
- 9 A line joining points of equal temperature (8)
- 14 Member of Parliament for women in Homa Bay County (5)
- 15 Magnifying glass used by jewelers (4)
- 16 Chemical element with symbol U (7)
- 20 President of Namibia (7)
- 24 A false and malicious publication printed for the purpose of defaming (5)
- 25 Member of Parliament for Tongaren constituency (5)
- 26 Chemical element with symbol Po (8)
- 31 Member of Parliament for Kilgoris East constituency (6)
- 32 End of life (5)
- 33 What is the physical process by which the particles of different substances stick together (8)

SUDOKU / SIMPLE



Fill the grid with digits so that each column, each row, and each of the sub-grids that compose the grid all contain all of the numbers from 1 to 9 one time.

Yesterday's Solutions



WORD SEARCH

Find and mark all the words hidden inside the box. The words may be placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.

L L A B W O A N N S T T Y Y E R S I C I N	S E K A L F W O N S E L C I C I N	B L A C K I C E B L I Z Z A R D B O O T S C A R F C A R N I V A L C H R I S T M A S C O L D E G G N O G F I R E P L A C E F I R E P L A C E F I R E W O O D F O G F R E E Z E F R O S T G L O V E S H A I H E A D B A N D H I B E R N A T I O N H O C K E Y H O L I D A Y S I C E F I S H I N G I C I C L E S K N I T C A P L O N G U N D E R W E A R M I T T E N S O L Y M P I C S P A R K S C A R F	S E A S O N S K A T E S S K I D O O S K I P A N T S S K I N G S L E D S L E E T S L I P P E R Y S N O W C A S T L E S N O W P L O W S N O W S H O V E L S N O W T I R E S N O W B A L L S N O W B O A R D S N O W F L A K E S N O W M A N S N O W S H O E S S O L S T I C E S O U P S T E W S T O R M S W E A T S H I R T T O B O G G A N V A C A T I O N W I N D C H I L L W O O L S O C K S
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ALL IN THE STARS



ARIES

March 21 - April 20

You'll be an emotional basket case today. Don't take any comments too seriously.

TAURUS

April 21 - May 21

Your best gains will come through helping others emotionally. Loss is evident if you don't consider all the angles.

GEMINI

May 22 - June 21

Stabilize your own position by locking up your savings. Generosity will put you in the poorhouse.

CANCER

June 22 - July 22

You will be subject to pushy individuals if you get involved in uncertain organizations.

LEO

July 23 - August 22

You will meet exciting new people through interest groups or functions that you attend with your children.

VIRGO

August 23 - September 23

Put all your energy into moneymaking ventures. Need some adventure in your life? Exotic destinations beckon you.

LIBRA

September 24 - October 23

Opportunities for new partnerships will develop through the organizations you encounter.

SCORPIO

October 24 - November 22

You need to reevaluate your situation. Do your chores and get on with the things you enjoy doing.

SAGITTARIUS

November 23 - December 21

You may want to take another look at the investment you are about to make. Try to avoid serious discussions with loved ones.

CAPRICORN

December 22 - January 20

You may have a tendency to put on weight. Arguments will flare up if you get backed into an emotional corner.

AQUARIUS

January 21 - February 19

You may find that your family responsibilities are piling up. You will have a problem dealing with groups.

PISCES

February 19 - March 20

However, you may not attract the kind of interest you had in mind. Don't let children hold you back from doing things you enjoy.

Kingo

By James Gayo



ODDLY ENOUGH

Spider-Man to the rescue! Superhero jogger cheers children in England

REUTERS/ The northern English town of Stockport has a new hero in the battle to keep children entertained during the coronavirus lockdown: Spider-Man!

Jason Baird, a local 34-year-old martial arts teacher, has taken to dressing up as the Marvel superhero for his daily jog, replete with acrobatic jumps and somersaults.

Swapping the towering skyline of New York for suburban Stockport, a town known for its hat-making heritage, Baird stopped by a primary school on Wednesday and adopted Spider-Man's iconic crouching pose for waving children.

"It's just Co-op, and then I'll be back," Baird said of his route, referring to the local grocery store.

Following his visit to the school, Baird posed for a selfie with a policeman - contrasting with his opposite number in New York who sometimes had a strained relationship with the authorities.



Jason Baird dressed as Spiderman during his daily exercise to cheer up local kids in Stockport on April 1/REUTERS



SPORTS LOCAL

HOCKEY

Makori ready to fight for his position at Butali

BY EVANS OUSURU / Butali Warrior's right-back Dave Makori is ready to fight for his position as he plans to make his debut for his star-studded side when the Kenya Hockey Union (KHU) league resumes.

Makori was signed from Kenyatta University vultures at the beginning of the 2019 season but did not play as Butali had signed six players contrary to the union's rule of having five maximum new signings by a single club.

Arif Shah, Francis Kariuki, Moses Ademba, Calvins Kanu and Amos Barkibir were all signed alongside Makori. The utility defender, however, has been training with teammates and he is keen to dislodge Maxwell Fuchaka, who they share the position with.

Makori wants to settle quickly once the league resumes and targets at least five goals this season. Even though Fuchaka is currently indispensable, building on match fitness will be the player's first priority.

"The registration and signing of players rule locked me out last season. I am really excited about the opportunity

to play for Butali. It was really hard last season because of what happened but I remained patient and now I feel much stronger mentally and physically and I hope to grab the opportunity when it comes," said the 22-year-old.

"I want to fit in perfectly and become a key member of the team. Obviously, Fuchaka is a top player because he has played for a long time and made the position his own but nothing is impossible. I have scored goals previously and possibly, I will do it again this season," observed the former Kakamega High School player.

To earn his place, Makori said hard work, discipline and determination will be required in order to achieve the objective.

"I train during all sessions. Personal discipline game-wise and following instructions and other team duties remain paramount. I have room for improvement and learning from senior defensive figures Kennedy Nyongesa and Constant Wakhura gives me more hope that I am destined for greatness."



Butali Warriors' right-back Dave Makori / COURTESY

FOOTBALL



KCB's Enoch Agwanda is a product of Migori Youth / FILE

Watch this space

Migori Youth ready to fill gap left by Sony Sugar in South Nyanza

BY FRANCIS WADEGU / There was a hue and cry in South Nyanza after the region's sole top-flight club Sony Sugar was relegated from the Kenyan Premier League after failing to honour three league fixtures due to financial constraints.

Thankfully, a powerhouse is emerging in the area in the shape of National Super League side, Migori Youth, whose founder Aziz Abdi hopes will join the KPL in the not too distant future.

"The future can only shine brightest for Migori Youth as we project playing in the top flight within two years. Migori Youth are a community football club who have so far proved that you only need passion to light up the whole community in developing talent," said an optimistic Aziz.

The club started in 2007 as Migori Youth Talent Academy with the sole purpose of developing young talent

and prospects were identified from the community and signed up.

"The training in partnership with high schools that develop talents within the region, revolved around social development focusing on education, talks of peer pressure, drugs and substance abuse," explained Aziz.

Among the schools MYTA partnered with were St. Peter's Mumias, St. Antony High School, Kitale Chebuyusi High, Masara High School and Chesamis Boys.

According to the club chairman, the greatest challenge MYTA faced was lack of trust in the budding footballers from both NSL and Premier League teams.

"Their career would have ended up prematurely if something was not done. That's when the leadership registered the club in FKF Division 2 in 2015 and provided a great platform for our boys to

gain the much-needed experience through playing time," recounted Aziz. "The decision to enrol Migori Youth in the lower leagues proved to be a prudent one. The team became a formidable force going 11 games unbeaten and eventually getting a chance to play in the National Super League courtesy of the misfortune to neighbouring Isebania FC."

"Isebania were not able to honour their matches and after lengthy consultations between us, them and the federation, we absorbed them and became one family of Migori Youth and took up their chance in the NSL," he said while accounting for Migori's rise to the second tier in Kenyan football pyramid.

Migori have continued to rise above expectations and challenges due to the commitment from the management and the partners.

ATHLETICS

With races suspended, Kiprop takes time to bond with family

BY EMMANUEL SABUNI / Away from bustle and hustle of what she does best — running, three-time Vienna Marathon champion Nancy Kiprop is taking time to bond with her two children.

Kiprop said she is restricted to just a little workout and thus spends most of her time bonding with her son and daughter as she hopes for a quick end to the coronavirus pandemic that continues to ravage the globe.

"I am doing little exercises here and there even as we remain optimistic that the world will soon be free from COVID-19. I had good plans this year after making my debut in the world marathon majors in New York," said Kiprop, a former teacher.

The Iten-based runner was to compete at the New York 10km race in June, which has been cancelled. She was to use the race as part of her preparation to return to the New York City Marathon in November.

"We are just indoors having time with kids and getting closer to each other. I could get close to my school to play with the kids but unfortunately, it is also closed. Now I have very little to do," she said.

As a teacher by profession, Kiprop decided to put the chalk and blackboard aside to concentrate on running as well as small scale farming back in the village.

"As part of making sure that we are bonding, we watch movies and compete on the play station with my children. That is a serious bonding way since there is nothing more to do now that our movement is restricted due to this pandemic," she added.

FOOTBALL

Odhiambo takes fight against coronavirus to another level

BY MESHACK KISENGE / Wazito attacking midfielder Eric Odhiambo is not shying away from making good use of his experience in the field of Journalism to create coronavirus awareness during this time the local action is suspended.

Odhiambo, a Bachelors degree holder in the field of Communication and Psychology from the University of Nairobi, spends the better part of the day reaching out to Kenyans on how to stay away from the disease which has halted all sporting activities globally.

The midfielder, who has a bias in communicating through Social Media, has been on the front line in appealing to Kenyans to observe the guidelines given by the government through the Ministry of Health.

Odhiambo, who currently works with Sahibu, a monthly magazine located at Upper Hill after leaving Nation Media Group where he worked for two and half years, says journalism has helped him spread the gospel and according to him, the impact is there for all to see.

"We are currently off the pitch but I am on duty as usual. I am using my skills to sensitize the public on the coronavirus pandemic and its bearing fruits. I am constantly reminding the public on the guidelines given by the government," he said.



SPORTS PROFILE

Why the 'Flying Sikh'

Interesting family ties helped Baldev become Kenya's indefatigable speedster

'YOU MUST HAVE SOME SORT OF COMMUNICATION WITH THE CAR AS IT HAS ITS WAYS OF COMMUNICATING WITH YOU'
— BALDEV

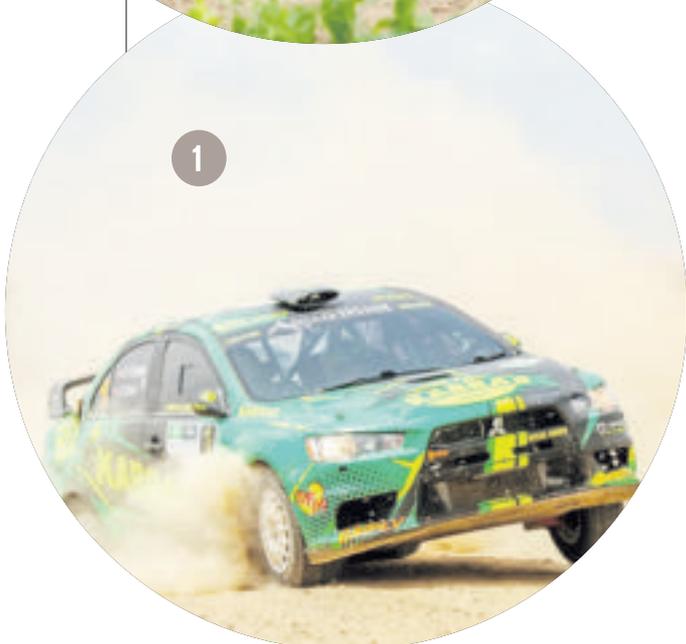


3

2



1



@samson ateka

SAMSON ATEKA



Fondly referred to as Boldy or Flying Sikh in racing circles, Baldev Singh Chager is not a morning person.

He wakes up like a diesel engine that has a hard start but once he gets going, he's fine for the day. Hardly does he do breakfast; just some juice, preferably carrot or something from berries.

"I'm always late getting out of the house so it is all a rush to get to work. I don't drink tea or coffee and I have not since I was a child; never really liked any of those drinks. Once I'm at work, it gets busy and hectic with our line of business which is service-based," says Baldev.

"Sorting out e-mails and then follow up on what is happening in the garage. I'm a person who likes to get my hands dirty and do whatever is necessary. I hate my mobile phone as it will always have to ring as soon as my hands get dirty or when I'm concentrating on something technical."

"Once the day is over I'm back home and working on my rally car which I prepare at home as it's too hectic at work to concentrate on rally car details."

Boldy's social life is jammed with friends as he has very few immediate families in Kenya.

"Most of my family members from my side have migrated. The most so-

1 and 4. Baldev Chager in action during a past Safari Rally / FILE

2. Baldev Chager during a Classic Rally / FILE

3. Baldev Chager readies himself at the start of a recent race / FILE

cial thing I do every now and then is get together with my friends and have a meal or koroga (Asian Chicken Curry) or just a few drinks to catch up. I like to cook for my friends sometimes, mannerism I picked from my elder brother Raji (Chager)."

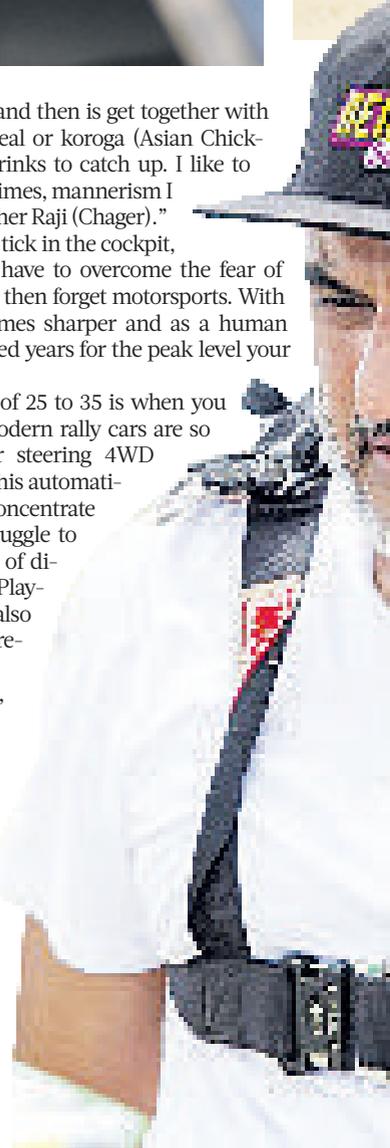
Asked what makes him tick in the cockpit, he explained: "First, you have to overcome the fear of speed. If you can't do this, then forget motorsports. With time, concentration becomes sharper and as a human being, you have very limited years for the peak level your body and mind can take.

"I believe from the age of 25 to 35 is when you can hit this target. The modern rally cars are so smooth and have power steering 4WD good suspension etc and this automatically helps your brain to concentrate on the road with little struggle to keep the car in some sort of direction as it used to be. Playing games like squash also helps you improve your reflexes," he said.

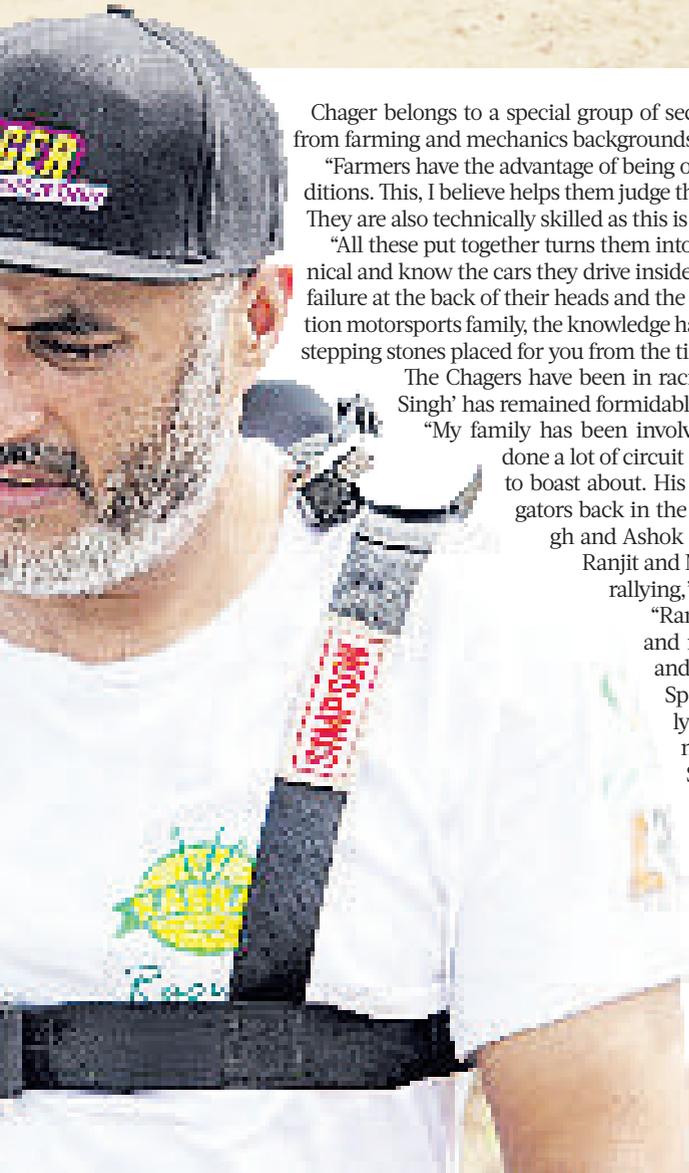
"At the steering wheel, it's you and the car and you have to have some sort of communication with the car as it has its ways of communicating with you. You got to be an alert driver to really feel this. Even a normal car driving down the road is always telling you something. For example, cars pulling off to the left could mean tyre pressure is low or alignment is off or wishbone is bent. Cars talk to whoever drives them."



4



keeps soaring



Chager belongs to a special group of second-generation drivers in Kenya most of whom come from farming and mechanics backgrounds.

“Farmers have the advantage of being off-road and driving a lot in the farms in all sorts of conditions. This, I believe helps them judge the roads better and generally are at home being off-road. They are also technically skilled as this is very important in the running of farming machinery.

“All these put together turns them into seasoned drivers. Mechanics like us also are very technical and know the cars they drive inside out and always have a fear of some form of mechanical failure at the back of their heads and the dire consequences. But generally, being second-generation motorsports family, the knowledge handed over to me is so vital and priceless. It is like having stepping stones placed for you from the time you are born.”

The Chagers have been in racing for donkey years and it’s little wonder that ‘Flying Singh’ has remained formidable since making his KNRC debut in 1998.

“My family has been involved in all aspects of motorsports. My dad (Daljit) has done a lot of circuit and motorcycle racing in the past and had various titles to boast about. His eldest brother Manjit Chager was one of the top navigators back in the day and he has co-driven for old names like Assa Singh and Ashok Pattni and also for my dad. My dad’s younger brothers Ranjit and Manori were also active participants in track racing and rallying,” he noted.

“Ranjit has won a few titles over the years in track racing and rallying while Manori was very good on the track too and briefly started his rallying career before migrating to Spain. “My brother Raji is no new face and has been actively racing in the Formula 2 category. He too grew up with motocross riding. My sister Avinder has co-driven in the Safari Rally with my very good friend Kuku Sagoo.”

“She also tried her hand in Go-karting at the Solai while my mum and other sister Harinder have also been involved in motorsports but more at the organisational level. My first cousin Param, son of Manjit also had a go briefly at co-driving before also migrating to the UK. The rest of my cousins have also been involved in motorsports in all other aspects like preparation of cars or being service crews.”

Chager reckons that rallying is a bad disease. “If you’re not doing it you’re thinking of it or if not thinking of it, then you’re watching it,” he noted.

“Once it’s in the blood, it never leaves and there is, honestly, no cure or medicine for it. It has brought down names and also brought up names in this country. It is definitely like a drug,” he noted.

BALDEV SINGH CHAGER

DOB:
LOCATION

1975
March
8

Nicknames:
Boldy / Flying Singh

Team:
Kabras Sugar Racing

Sponsors:
West Kenya Sugar Co. (Kabras Sugar)

Role:
Lead driver for Kabras team

Car:
Mitsubishi EVOX

Family:
Married with kids

Resides:
Nairobi area

Place of work:
BHP Performance Ltd/ BC Racing

Occupation:
Businessman

Person he would like to have dinner with:

The President

Favorite Holiday Destination:
anywhere with a beach

First Road Car:
Mini

First Rally Car:
Opel Ascona 400

Favorite All-time Rally Driver (s):
Markku Alen, Kankkunen and Tommi.

Current Navigator:
Ravi Soni

Hobbies:
Engineering, reading

Most Admired Sports personality:
Mike Tyson & Usain Bolt.

Achievements

- 0 Three times Safari Rally winner in 2013, 2014 & 2019
- 0 Multiple Kenya Champion - 2008, 2013, 2014 and 2019
- 0 Two times Motorsport personality of the year -2007 and 2013
- 0 1998 KNRC Championship- 3rd overall
- 0 2004 KNRC championship- 4th overall
- 0 2005 KCB KNRC championship- 3rd overall
- 0 Current KNRC leader

SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

FOOTBALL GOSSIP

BY DAVID BILLINGTON ✉ david@billingtondesign.com



Liverpool have no intention of bidding for the £100million Dortmund winger

UNITED GOING FOR SANCHO BUT NOT REDS



Borussia Dortmund's Jadon Sancho
/REUTERS

Media reports have linked Chelsea, Manchester United and Liverpool in the fight to sign Jadon Sancho from German side Dortmund when the next transfer window opens at the end of the season. However, I can reveal that Liverpool do not intend to bid for the £100million winger.

Manager Jurgen Klopp feels he does not need to improve his squad in that position. United's Ed Woodward is known to support the transfer and manager Ole Gunnar Solskjaer is also very keen. Striker Marcus Rashford said: "I think it would be good for us because he is exciting to watch and myself, Anthony Martial and Jadon would play well together. He is creative and imaginative and is just what we need."

It is likely that United will offer Sancho the famous No7 shirt once worn by Cristiano Ronaldo and David Beckham. Sancho is also said to be keen on a move to the Premier League where he began his career at Manchester City. Chelsea are the only other club in the race at the moment and owner Roman Abramovich has deep pockets but United are the favourites to make the signing.

MARCUS IS SETTING A BRILLIANT EXAMPLE

I am full of admiration for Manchester United striker Marcus Rashford. He is a delightful young man, friendly, unassuming and modest for someone with such enormous talent. And he genuinely cares about people. During home isolation, Rashford has been working to raise money to provide poor children with meals to replace the free lunchtime meals they would have received if schools had not been closed because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Rashford himself used to receive free school meals and he knows how important they are. Both Manchester United and Manchester City have come together to provide help for families during the lockdown period. Together they have raised over £100k and Marcus has also

been working with them to raise more and has handsomely donated himself. He already helps deaf children at school and has been judging the Marcus Rashford Poetry competition which has attracted hundreds of entries. It is not possible to visit schools now because of the lockdown. However, both he and his family have been sifting through the entries to find a winner. Rashford has also been taking lessons in learning sign language so he can communicate better with deaf and dumb children when he visits schools, which he does often.

Rashford is exercising at home to help with his back injury and is working every day to a programme provided by the United medical team. When asked for a message to send out to children about the virus situation he said: "Children, keep safe, keep active by exercising and most of all keep smiling and we will all get through this together." What a credit he is to young people and especially successful, rich young footballers.

ALONE AT THE EMIRATES

It is 3 o'clock UK time on a Saturday afternoon. I am standing outside Arsenal's Emirates Stadium on a day that should have seen the whole area buzzing with Gunners' fans. The atmosphere would have been electric and the noise building into a crescendo even before the game begins with fans having taken their seats inside this magnificent arena. Instead, I am standing alone, not because I am obeying the government's advice to self-isolate, but because there simply is no one else around.

Actually, I am breaking the rules because strictly speaking, I shouldn't be here at all considering we are all supposed to be at home on a lockdown.

Outside the Emirates Stadium it is eerily quiet, as though the world has come to the end and I am the only one left on earth. The gates are locked, there are no security men and even the meat pie vans have packed up and departed. The silence is deafening and the loneliness very unnerving.

Coronavirus has shut our football world down, cleared out almost every stadium in Europe and banned the supremely talented football players to their homes. We fans stare at our blank TV screens, empty of wonderful goals, celebrations and shouting commentators.

When will it all end? Will we all be able to survive without our beloved game? I looked at my watch as the big hand reached 3 o'clock... there was no whistle, no roar of the crowd and no rivalry on the pitch. I will be working extra hard, talking

to players on the phone and following up on any leads to write for you and keeping you in touch with all that is Premier League football. I have never known such strange times – but the only person I am able to tell this to, as I stand outside the empty Emirates Stadium – is myself. Thank you for reading this column... Perhaps I am not so alone after all and together we will get through these challenging times.

REAL LOOKING TO SAVE MONEY BY SELLING BALE

When Gareth Bale was prevented by Real Madrid from joining Chinese club Jiansu Suning for £1million a week, little did they realise that it might cost them a fortune. I have been told by my Spanish contacts that the club have finally decided to release him this summer to save money as their highest paid player. However, the Chinese FA want to promote home grown players and have put restrictions on bringing in foreign players. The problem is that no clubs have come in from Europe to sign the Welshman unless Real pay a large percentage of his huge salary.

The coronavirus has meant a serious loss of income for most clubs and financial restraints are in place as clubs seek to balance their books and save money wherever possible with many clubs imposing a salary cut for players. The only other way Real can cut short Bale's contract, which has two years to run, is to give him a massive pay off. Bale himself is happy to stay and see out his contract and is therefore content to sit and watch events. America's MLS is a possible move. However, that once again would mean Real taking a big financial hit as they would pay part of his salary and take a lower price for the 30 year-old.

HANDS OFF JIMENEZ, SAY WOLVES

Wolves have very rich owners and Real Madrid, Manchester United and Arsenal circling around their striker Raul Jimenez does not impress them. In fact the club have issued a 'hands off, he is not for sale at any price' warning. The 28 year-old Mexican has scored 22 goals in 45 appearances this season and his 15 goals in 37 matches helped Wolves finish seventh in their first season back in the Premier League.

GUARDIOLA WANTS JUVE'S BONUCCI

From information I have received from Manchester, it looks like City's John Stones is losing his fight to stay at the club as Pep Guardiola

becomes increasingly more worried about his reliability. On top form, Stones is world class, but on too many occasions he has been found to be a weak link in the club's defence. Injuries and a consistent lack of form have dented his credentials at City. My info centres around reliable information that Guardiola has told his scouts and club to target Juventus centre back Bonucci. Juve boss Maurizio Sarri regards 32 year-old Bonucci as his rock in defence but Guardiola has asked City chairman Khaldoon Al Mubarak to pay whatever it takes to land the Italian and with his financial muscle, this could happen during the summer.

CHELSEA EYE ON MOROCCAN STAR

Chelsea executives have contacted Real Madrid about Morocco international Achraf Hakimi. The 21-year-old has been at Borussia Dortmund on loan and has impressed with seven goals and 10 assists. Because the loan deal does not include an option which would allow Dortmund to purchase Hakimi, several clubs have registered an interest. Bayern Munich have joined Chelsea as an interested party but Real said they would wait until the season ends before making any definite decisions.

Real manager Zinedine Zidane said he plans to use Hakimi in his first team squad next season and he can play as either a full back or winger. Chelsea, however, have decided that if Willian does not accept their two-year contract extension offer, they will go for Hakimi as his replacement. Willian is out of contract in the summer and if he moves clubs, he wants to stay in the Premier League and Tottenham would be in the hunt to sign him. Jose Mourinho is a known admirer and the two worked well together when he was the manager at Chelsea.

BAYERN SAY NO SWAP DEAL FOR SANE

In order to stop rumours unsettling their defensive star David Alaba, Bayern Munich have sent journalists a statement saying that swapping their star for Manchester City's Leroy Sane is "rubbish". Sane has been watched by Bayern scouts for 12 months but the 24 year-old has been out of action for the past few months because of injury. Sane played for German team Schalke before his move to City for £46.5million. Bayern's team boss told us this week, "I would like to say very clearly that swapping the two players is not an option for Bayern at all, we are not in the bazaar."



IT IS LIKELY THAT UNITED WILL OFFER SANCHO THE FAMOUS NO7 SHIRT WORN BY RENALDO AND BECKHAM

SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

MOTORSPORT

Silverstone, F1 to decide whether race can go ahead by the end of April

BY ANDREW BENSON/ Silverstone and Formula 1 say they have until the end of April to decide whether the British Grand Prix can be held as planned on July 17-19.

The global coronavirus crisis has already forced the first eight F1 races of the season to be called off.

Silverstone is among the next group under threat. A joint statement said Silverstone and F1 were 'in close dialogue' on the feasibility of going ahead on the original date.

It comes as Wimbledon is widely expected to call off its tennis grand slam in July. The British Grand Prix statement said: "We fully appreciate that other UK sporting events in July have taken decisions regarding their events, but it is important to highlight that their logistics and sporting arrangements differ from Silverstone's.

"Therefore, our timeline gives us until the end of

April to make a final decision. The safety of our fans, colleagues and the F1 community will be our priority and we will continue to engage with the appropriate authorities."

The season-opening Australian Grand Prix was called off on the Friday of the race weekend last month with all the teams in situ in Melbourne after a McLaren employee tested positive for coronavirus.

The postponement of the following Bahrain and Vietnamese Grands Prix came later that day, to bring on to the first four long-haul races after the Chinese race was the first to be postponed in February.

Since then, the Dutch, Spanish, Monaco and Azerbaijan Grands Prix have also been called off. Only Monaco has been cancelled; all the others hope to reclaim dates in a revamped schedule later in the year once racing can start again following the lifting of travel restrictions.

Red Bull advisor Helmut Marko speaks to the media
/ REUTERS



Makoto Noji, head of bureau of culture and sports for Fukushima government with Tokyo 2020 COO Yukihiko Nunomura during an official Olympic flame 'handover ceremony' in Fukushima, Japan / REUTERS

OLYMPICS

Mixed reactions

Hope and confusion for athletes over qualifying for Games

BY STEVE KEATING/The decision to delay the Tokyo Olympics by a year is sparking both anxiety and hope among the world's athletes as the coronavirus pandemic adds to confusion over who might qualify for the Games, now in 2021.

Legal experts warned of a Pandora's Box of messy legal challenges from athletes in the lead-up to the Games, as sporting bodies consider tweaks to qualifying criteria that could impact who gets in and who misses out.

"I'm sure there will be additions/subtractions," said USA Basketball chief communications officer Craig Miller about the names on America's 'Dream Team' list.

"For example, I could see Zion Williamson being considered if he stays healthy and continues his strong play," he said of the first overall pick in the 2019 National Basketball Association draft who plays for the New Orleans Pelicans.

The International Golf Fed-

eration will use world rankings to determine the Olympic field. Those could look very different in a year from now, potentially opening the door for Tiger Woods, who missed much of the season with back issues.

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has said that 57% of athletes who had already qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Games would keep their spots in 2021.

But after first enduring the emotional grinder of not knowing if the 2020 Games would go ahead as planned or how to prepare, for the nearly 5,000 athletes who have not earned their place the cancellation of the global sports calendar threatens to disrupt the qualifying process late into the year and beyond.

With pools, tracks and training facilities shut, along with widespread self-isolation orders around the globe, many sports federations were unable to provide a clear pic-

ture of what qualifying will look like. Some issues are logistical, like those facing USA swimming and gymnastics, which may have to secure new Olympic trial venues.

Others are less straightforward. To book a ticket to Tokyo, many athletes must still meet Olympic standards and/or accumulate enough ranking points in qualifying competitions to be eligible for selection. But the opportunities to do so could be severely limited by the pandemic.

That, warns attorney Howard Jacobs, who has represented cyclist Floyd Landis and sprinters Marion Jones and Tim Montgomery, could lead to a slew of litigation. "There are a number of ways that challenges can be brought," Jacobs told Reuters.

"Let's say a U.S. athlete who qualified in the marathon at the Olympic trials in February... say they don't run the standard under the new window," he said.

GOLF

Woods and Mickelson agree to play in coronavirus relief match

BY FRANK PINGUE / Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson will play a coronavirus relief golf match next month with Super Bowl-winning quarterbacks Tom Brady and Peyton Manning, according to CNBC.

The report, which sourced an unnamed person familiar with the negotiations, said the charity match would be held at an undisclosed location without fans and is being organised by the PGA Tour and AT&T's WarnerMedia.

The negotiations are still being finalised but the match pitting 15-times major champion Woods and Manning against five-times major winner Mickelson and Brady could be aired on

live TV and is unlikely to be featured on pay-per-view, the report said.

"Discussions along these lines have been ongoing for quite some time, but nothing has been approved by the tour," the PGA Tour said in a statement.

A matchup featuring two of the most famous golfers of their era and two of the all-time greatest NFL quarterbacks would be a rare sporting event during the coronavirus pandemic which has brought the sporting world to a halt.

The event will feature a small production crew to film it and each individual will obey the social-distancing recommendations to stay six-feet apart, the report said.

RUGBY

England boss Jones signs deal through to the 2023 World Cup

BY CHRIS JONES / Eddie Jones has agreed a contract extension to coach England through to the Rugby World Cup in France in 2023.

The 60-year-old's current contract was due to expire in August 2021, but he had been set for a new deal since leading England to the World Cup final last year. Jones has a 78% win ratio since taking the role at the end of 2015.

"We have a great team and I am excited about raising the standards again," Jones said.

The timing of the announcement comes in the midst of the coronavirus crisis, with many at the RFU and in the wider rugby community fearing for their futures.

"My thoughts and those of all of us at the RFU are with everyone impacted by Covid-19, both across the country at large but also within our own rugby union community. In exceptionally difficult times, we are pleased to be sharing some good news," said RFU chief executive Bill Sweeney.

Jones added: "The extension is a great honour for me, but in the current environment, it is only right to acknowledge what a difficult time the world is facing."

"We are all looking forward to a time when we can get back to playing rugby and use the sport as a force for good in bringing people back together."

England head coach Eddie Jones during a training session
/ REUTERS



SPORTS INTERNATIONAL



FOOTBALL

No agreement yet

English football bodies fail to reach agreement on players' pay cut

Tottenham Hotspur's Serge Aurier and Gedson Fernandes during a training session
/REUTERS

LONDON/ Talks between the Premier League and the PFA players union over potential wage cuts or deferrals, due to the coronavirus stoppage, failed to reach an agreement on Wednesday, the organisations said in a joint statement.

Senior representatives from the Professional Footballers' Association (PFA), the Premier League, the EFL (Football League) and the League Managers Association (LMA) discussed several issues arising from the pandemic and said they would continue talks.

Tottenham Hotspur's decision to impose a 20% wage reduction on 550 non-playing staff and moves by Newcastle United and Norwich City to use the UK government's furlough scheme—meaning public money would be used to pay their

employees—has prompted some sharp criticism.

"No decisions were taken today, with discussions set to continue in the next 48 hours with a focus on several high-profile matters, including player wages and the resumption of the 2019/20 season," the organisations said in their statement.

Reports on Wednesday indicated that the PFA had sent an email to all its members asking them not to sign an agreement with their clubs about wage cuts or deferrals without consulting with the union.

The PFA did not provide a comment when contacted about the issue by Reuters. While the union looks for a collective agreement, Premier League side Bournemouth said on Wednesday that the club's chief executive Neill Blake, first-

team technical director Richard Hughes, manager Eddie Howe and assistant manager Jason Tindall had all taken "significant, voluntary pay cuts for the entirety of this uncertain time".

The decision of clubs to seek help from government funds to pay staff, while their top stars continue to earn lucrative salaries, has led some to question the moral status of the game. Julian Knight, a lawmaker from the governing Conservative Party, who is chair of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport Committee in the British parliament, has condemned such moves. "It sticks in the throat," said Knight.

"This exposes the crazy economics in English football and the moral vacuum at its centre."

FOOTBALL

Champions League, Europa delayed until further notice

LONDON/ Uefa bowed to the inevitable on Wednesday and suspended all Champions League and Europa League soccer matches 'until further notice' due to the coronavirus pandemic.

European soccer's governing body also said all national team games scheduled for June have been postponed, including playoff matches for Euro 2020, which has been moved to 2021.

The finals of Europe's elite Champions League competition, second-tier Europa League and Women's Champions League, all of which were scheduled for May, had already been postponed.

While most leagues in Europe hope to finish their domestic seasons once restrictions on movement and social contact are lifted, UEFA president Aleksander Ceferin said last week the season could be lost if the play does not start by the end of June.

Wednesday's video conference call of Uefa's 55 member associations included a broad-ranging discussion on the crisis and what options might face the game in the coming weeks.

A source, who was part of the call, said while no decisions were taken, given the lack of certainty over the timeframe for the pandemic the understanding was that the longer the delay, the more the priority would fall on completing domestic seasons.

One possibility on the table at Uefa, in case of a long delay into the summer, is to complete the European club competitions with a mini-tournament, such as a 'final four'.

Uefa's executive committee also decided to give clubs more time to complete the club licensing paperwork for next season and suspended the provisions that demand clubs provide future financial information.

UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin during a press conference
/REUTERS



Bournemouth's Callum Wilson in action with Liverpool's Virgil van Dijk
/REUTERS

SERIE A

Bournemouth officials take pay cuts, staff furloughed

BY ROHITH NAIR/ Bournemouth have furloughed staff while top executives and coaches have taken voluntary pay cuts to help ease the financial impact of the coronavirus crisis on the south-coast side, the Premier League club said on Wednesday.

The Premier League season has been suspended until at least April 30 due to the pandemic and clubs across the country have been hit by significant losses in match-day revenue.

Newcastle United put non-playing staff on leave and instructed employees to apply for the government's newly-created coronavirus job retention scheme and Bournemouth

said they had to take similar drastic measures to protect the club's future.

"The club's chief executive Neill Blake, first team technical director Richard Hughes, manager Eddie Howe and assistant manager Jason Tindall have all taken significant, voluntary pay cuts for the entirety of this uncertain time," Bournemouth said in a statement.

"We have also advised a number of staff across all areas of the club that they will be temporarily furloughed, as a result of the ongoing pandemic."

Bournemouth said the furloughed employees, many of whom have been affected by the stadium's closure,

would be on leave for at least three weeks under the government's coronavirus job retention scheme.

British finance minister Rishi Sunak announced earlier this month that furloughed workers can claim 80% of their wages up to 2,500 pounds (\$3,099) per month as part of the scheme.

"Furloughed staff will continue to have their benefits – including pension contributions – paid by the club," Bournemouth added.

The club said it was committed to "topping up each furloughed employee's wages to 100%" while reclaiming 80% from the government's scheme.

SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Fernandes transforms United

How 'Portuguese magnifico' has helped turn the tide at Old Trafford two months after switch

BY SHAMOON HAFEZ / BBC

When Bruno Fernandes lifted his finger to his lips to 'shush' Pep Guardiola at Old Trafford, he became an instant hero for Manchester United supporters.

The Portuguese midfielder has made an immediate impact both on and off the pitch for Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's side, who are unbeaten since his arrival from Sporting Lisbon for £47m (Sh6.1bn) in the January transfer window.

Despite playing just nine games and seeing big-name players such as Radamel Falcao, Angel di Maria and Alexis Sanchez fail to make an impression before him, Fernandes has already been touted as the club's best signing since the retirement of Sir Alex Ferguson in 2013.

The unexpected break in the season due to the coronavirus crisis has halted what was impressive form for Fernandes, alongside an upturn in results for United heading into the business end of the campaign.

Indeed Fernandes has already endeared himself enough to the Old Trafford faithful that he already had a terrace song in his name.

"Bruno, Bruno, Bruno, he's from Sporting like Cristiano. He goes left, he goes right, makes defences look *rubbish*, he's our Portuguese magnifico."

And while Fernandes has made an impact with supporters, it's on the pitch where he's making the biggest waves.

In January, United had suffered demoralising back-to-back defeats against Liverpool and Burnley to once again raise questions about Solskjaer's suitability in one of the biggest jobs in world football.

Manchester United's Bruno Fernandes in action against Manchester City's Ilkay Gundogan and Rodri

/REUTERS



But the Norwegian and his Red Devils were a team transformed since a deal for Fernandes was completed on January 27 to bring an end to a prolonged transfer saga that had started last summer.

In Portugal, Fernandes was the stand-out player for the last two seasons, winning the player of the year on each occasion, as well as the Portuguese Cup and the Portuguese League Cup twice with Sporting.

He scored 39 goals and provided 28 assists — no player had more goal involvements — and his 239 chances created was 25 clear of the next best, Alex Telles of Porto.

Since the start of February until the season was stopped, United had won six games and drawn three, scored 22 goals

and conceded just twice while keeping seven clean sheets.

In that time, they cut the deficit to fourth-placed Chelsea to three points, progressed to the quarter-finals of the FA Cup and the last-16 of the Europa League.

Fernandes himself was directly involved in five leagues goal — scoring twice and providing three assists — with no player in the English top-flight contributing more during that period and capping off his first month by winning the Premier League's player of the month award.

"He has settled in great. History tells you that bringing in new signings from different leagues in January it is hard to know how they are going to settle," said United coach Michael Carrick.

"Is it going to be straight away or are they going to need some time? Certainly Bruno has fitted in great on the pitch and is as important around the pitch in the dressing room. He has got a real presence about him and the lads have taken to him well.

"More importantly he has lifted the standard and the spirit within the squad as well."

Standout moments include his perfectly-weighted chipped pass to allow Anthony Martial to volley home the opening goal in the 2-0 win over Manchester City in the last league game, while he converted nerveless penalties against Watford and Club Brugge.

And his silencing of City boss Guardiola during the derby was one United fans particularly

enjoyed, being made into a meme on social media with Fernandes explaining that 'at the moment, he did not deserve my respect'.

The 25-year-old's all-round ability has the Old Trafford faithful reminiscing of the demand and desire of Roy Keane, the vision and passing ability of Paul Scholes, and the touch and class of Eric Cantona — his team-mates have been suitably impressed, being on the receiving end of the standards he expects.

After the 1-1 draw against Everton, in which he scored a long-range drive, a report said that while most of his team-mates felt a point at Goodison Park was not a bad result, Fernandes told them they should be 'mad' at failing to win.

Skipper Harry Maguire described Fernandes as someone 'with a big personality and aura around him', former striker Dimitar Berbatov said: "United look a different team with him", while compatriot Diogo Dalot, who drives Fernandes into training every day, boldly claimed he will go on to be a club 'legend'.

Alongside academy graduates including striker Mason Greenwood and full-back Brandon Williams, who have both broken through this season, Fernandes may well form a central part of the team for years to come.

"To play for United, you have to deal with it, you have got to be mentally able to cope," said Carrick. "There is certainly that expectation — that is standard and comes with it. That is just how it is."

The early signs are that Fernandes is carrying the weight of expectation without too much strain.

EREDIVISIE

Irritated Ajax want Dutch league called off

BY AMSTERDAM / Ajax Amsterdam technical director Marc Overmars on Wednesday expressed astonishment at plans to try to complete the Dutch league season and compared the country's football association and Uefa to Donald Trump.

His irritated reaction came after the Dutch football association (KNVB) issued a statement saying it would follow Uefa's direction to attempt to finish the season suspended due to the coronavirus outbreak by Aug. 3.

"Why would it be about money and not people's well-being at this time? I had hoped that the KNVB would take an independent decision, but they are now hiding behind Uefa," Overmars told Dutch daily De Telegraaf.

The KNVB was among 55 members of European football's governing body who on Wednesday discussed possible next steps for football on the continent following the devastating impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

The KNVB issued a statement saying it would follow Uefa's desire to try and complete the season, even if it meant re-starting the suspended campaign in mid-June and playing through into August. "I have a lot of difficulties understanding that," Overmars said.

"We in the Netherlands are not as dependent on television rights incomes as the leagues in Spain, England, Italy and Germany are.

"I think that they had been put under big pressure by Uefa to

continue playing at whatever cost," added the former Barcelona and Arsenal winger.

"I'm comparing the KNVB and Uefa with the sentiments of American president Donald Trump a week ago when he thought the economy was more important than the coronavirus. 'Hallo! There are more than 100 people dying daily in the Netherlands because of coronavirus.'"

Overmars said this season's Dutch league should be declared finished. "The league is dead, life is more important."

The league was suspended last month with Ajax top of the standings on goal difference from AZ Alkmaar with nine matches each left to play. Ajax were champions last season.



Ajax' Amsterdam players celebrate during a recent match/REUTERS



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FAMILY TIES
MADE 'BOLDY'
THE SPEEDSTER
HE IS TODAY**

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SPORTS

ATHLETICS MWANGANGI ON A MISSION TO WIN THE ELUSIVE OLYMPIC GAMES' MEDAL

'Buffalo' still thirsty

Ndiku says postponement of Olympics is a blessing as he has just resumed training

BY STEFFANY NDEI/ Caleb Ndiku Mwangangi seems to be sitting pretty after the 2020 Tokyo Olympics were postponed as he seeks to return to the track at the biggest stage.

Having won numerous accolades in the 1,500m and 5,000m at both continental and global levels, Ndiku is still thirsty for the elusive Olympic medal.

"I want that Olympic gold medal. That is what I am missing in my career," he said.

The postponement, according to him, was complete blind luck as he had just resumed training with the competition being his sole focus.

The 28-year-old reckons he got his athletic prowess from his late father, who was a javelin thrower. However, it was his mother who saw the star in him long before others would and encouraged him to venture into the sport.

And even amidst discouragement and doubts during his formative years and being taunted that people from Ukambani do not flourish in athletics, Ndiku pushed on to become a household name.

Starting as a basketball player at Kyanguli High School, Ndiku was encouraged by one of his school coaches to take up athletics and went on to represent the region at the national championships in 2007.

In 2008, he joined an athletics academy in Machakos, under the tutelage of his then coach Paul Mutwii, the Athletics Kenya vice president in charge of competitions. Due to his fervour for greatness, Ndiku ended up getting injured because of pushing himself too hard.

"I was pushing myself too hard yet my body could not handle the pressure since I was still young," he said.

His first disappointment as a professional athlete, however, did not happen on the track. He was left out of a squad that was to travel to Ethiopia for the 2008 African Championships, a move he says was purely political.

"I went back home and decided not to venture in athletics anymore. I even stopped training," he said.

The disappointment, however, became his fuel ahead of the of the 2009 World Youth Championships in Brixen, Italy. With a point to prove, he outdid everyone in the qualifiers.

"I ran while angry and I knew I had to win to ensure that if they decide to cut me off again, they will be dropping the winner at the trials," he said.

In Brixen, he ran 3:38.42 in the 1,500m race to win a silver medal, behind Gideon Mageka.

However, Ndiku could not hide his frustrations after missing out on the title and just broke down in tears after the medal ceremony.

"I went behind the podium and cried. Silver was not what I wanted," he said.

In 2010, he ventured into a speciality that no one predicted he would dominate, cross country. However, he went on to win a gold medal in the junior race at the 2010 World Cross Country Championship in Poland, becoming the only such winner from his Ukambani region. He went on to win the 1500m title at the World Junoir Championships in Moncton, Canada in 2010, which earned him a contract with Nike.

'The Buffalo' as he is fondly referred to, due to his 'hands over the head' celebrations, went on to win conquer All-Africa Games in 2011 and African Championships in 2012 in the 1,500m speciality.

In his concession, 2013 was the worst year of his career despite running 3:29.50, a personal best, in Monaco.

His goal was to qualify for the World Championships in Russia, which he did, but claims, he was unfairly left out.

But the best was yet to come as he won every possible race in 2014, clinching the 3,000m gold medal at the World Indoor Championships, 5,000m at the Commonwealth Games, 5,000m at African Championship and same race in Diamond League.

He also won the Continental Cup in 3,000m. His heroics saw him win the Safaricom Sports Person of the Year award.

Now he is keen to clinch the elusive Olympic title. He ran at the 2016 Olympics but finished a disappointing 18th because of a nagging back injury and left leg that has troubled him to date.

Ndiku is working on building a basketball court for the youth in Machakos, a sport he terms as his first love.

He plans to venture into coaching athletes when he retires but concedes his fate is not sealed until he douses his thirst for an Olympic medal.

Having come up against one of the best athletes in the world, Ndiku reveals the toughest runner he ever ran against was Bernard Lagat of the United States, terming him very technical.

And if the dreams of representing Kenya in the Olympics come to pass, the Buffalo reveals he will don his signature look of dying his hair. "Of course I will dye it. That is my brand," he says.

And citing mental strength as his forte, he might as well pull one of the biggest comebacks in Kenya's athletics.



Essence



HOW COVID-19 DEFLATED BBI

WITH POLITICIANS NOW THINKING MORE ABOUT PERSONAL SAFETY AND SURVIVAL RATHER THAN 2022 POLITICS, EVERY KEY PLAYER HAS BEEN STOPPED IN THEIR TRACKS



COVER STORY **SSCIVILITY FOR A CHANGE**

How Covid-19 fever has o

With politicians now thinking more about personal safety and survival rather than 2022 politics, every key player has been stopped in their tracks by the coronavirus pandemic



JAMES MBAKA

@OnchiriMbaka
Senior political reporter

When we used to talk about fever and high temperature, it used to mean the political fever that had infected the country over 2022 succession politics.

Today, fever means only one thing: coronavirus.

The coronavirus pandemic has completely deflated 2022 succession politics that had reached a crescendo with the highly charged Building Bridges Initiative campaigns, now gone silent.

With every politician thinking more about his or her personal safety and survival rather than 2022, every key player has been stopped dead in their tracks by the virus. A good political leader today one who supplies relief food and water and cooperates with rivals to help people instead of ranting against adversaries to elevate themselves.

Politicians and analysts admit succession games plans have been thrown into limbo with their implementation remaining just on paper amid uncertainty on execution.

The uncertainty about the pandemic has also favoured and disadvantaged some political players. President Uhuru Kenyatta is seen to be in a strong position to exploit the lull and possibly craft a succession masterstroke.

“The coronavirus pandemic has not only shifted the goalposts but also favoured and disfavoured key layers in the succession matrix,” political analyst Javas Bigambo told the Star.

Bigambo said everyone who had their eyes trained on 2022 succession have been disoriented as no one knows when it will pass.

“Looking at how quiet the political scene is, now everybody is thinking about safety and survival and not about 2022. Nobody can sprint now,” Bigambo noted.

While the BBI train appeared to have offered leading political lights a way to ramp up their 2022 momentum the virus has halted that train.

“The country is united to fighting a common enemy-coronavirus. The impact of this global pandemic on our local ecosystem cannot be over-emphasised. It is expected to cause



“

DIDMAS BARASA

When nobody knows when the disease would be defeated, we can't even talk about holding a referendum this year. The pandemic would crash our economy completely. Where will the funds come from when the economy would be bleeding

serious disruptions in the political terrain,” former Kitutu Masaba MP Timothy Bosire told the Star.

Bosire, who is ODM national treasurer, warned that the politics would remain in a hiatus as long as the coronavirus pandemic rags and Kenya awaits its full impact.

“The political consequences of Covid-19 are massive. The disease has put every political player on their back foot,” he said.

With the government unveiling tough social distancing measures to contain the virus, political antagonists have withdrawn their bare-knuckle assaults.

Political bigwigs have exited the national scene and retreated to self-quarantine over the Covid-19 scare.

This quiet in the eye of the storm follows months of no-holds-barred tackles that had threatened President Kenyatta and opposition chief Raila Odinga's unity agenda.

The forced ‘political quarantine’

Deputy President William Ruto and ODM leader Raila Odinga during the National Prayers against the coronavirus pandemic at State House, Nairobi, on March 21 / **PSCU**

has lowered temperatures among rivals even as President Kenyatta's administration directs energies to fight the Covid-19 pandemic virus.

BBI TRAIN

Initially, the BBI train that was hurtling across the country under Raila's captainship had triggered an aggressive 2022 succession battle that has also widened cracks within the National Executive.

Deputy President William Ruto was isolated in his own government with Raila taking up an informal yet strategic position within the executive.

Raila's larger-than-life stature in the Jubilee government thrust him right into the heart of the presidential succession politics, to the chagrin of Deputy President William Ruto's camp.

As the ODM leader launched an aggressive attack targeting Ruto and his allies, the DP rolled up his sleeves and went on an aggressive charm

deflated feverish politics



offensive with grassroots tours to counter the BBI juggernaut.

On Wednesday, Bigambo amplified his view that the DP's scheme to get public sympathy and turn the tables against Raila on the BBI process had been badly upended.

With the Covid-19 fear everywhere, the DP can no longer proceed with his packed countrywide rallies to preach his gospel against Raila. Social distancing for personal survival versus political survival.

"The momentum Ruto had sustained has hit a wall. He cannot move to marshal his grassroots support," he said adding that the BBI project had reached its peak before the reggae was stopped in Nakuru.

He added, "The Nakuru meeting could have been very critical. The President could have faced some kind of humiliation in Nakuru, given how the Kalenjin nation was gearing up for the meeting."

The Nakuru rally had been seen as the ultimate test for the unity agenda

spearheaded by the President and Raila, given that the meeting was to be held right in Ruto's backyard.

Political analyst and United States University professor Macharia Munene told the Star that the Covid-19 pandemic has "significantly disrupted the country's succession politics."

"The pandemic will derail and disrupt a lot of political expectations, reggae has been stopped by the coronavirus," he said.

The political and diplomacy professor said the coronavirus crisis could have also created its own heroes that might spring up and squeeze themselves right into the succession politics.

"Crises and opportunities create their own heroes, Mutahi Kagwe is the current hero. He is now the most prominent position other than the President," the professor said.

Reports that the government has already diverted up to Sh 8 billion—the balance in the Sh11 billion BBI fund kitty—to the fight against Coronavirus, signals an end to the BBI campaigns across the country.

The reallocation of the money would be a major blow to the BBI proponents, with the constitutional change campaign having been seen as the main argument of the 2022 succession battle.

"The crisis has made money less available than it was before. There is no money to do BBI things. How long this crisis stretches will determine the level of disruption," Munene said.

Central Organisation of Trade Unions secretary general Francis Atwoli admitted that the coronavirus has far-reaching political and economic implications.

Atwoli, who had become a key figure in the BBI process, said the country's focus has now shifted to tackling coronavirus because it threatens the survival of Kenyans.

"The current situation paints a grim picture. There is no reason to talk about politics and then end up being wiped out by the disease. It is important we first join hands to address this common enemy so that if we live tomorrow we would have an opportunity to talk politics," he said.

He said the pandemic has equalised all Kenyans and the fiery, vocal politicians have gone into hibernation.

"Even those who have stashed a lot of money can not spend that money now because even hotels where they used to go to have fun have been closed down, he added.

Political analyst Felix Odhiambo told the Star that the coronavirus is a double-edged sword that has taken the country by storm.

"No political player would be spared by the virus. It is back to square one for all the key political players," he said.

Odhiambo said while the Covid-19 pandemic would herald a paradigm shift in the political scene,

it would also affect both short-term and long-term "political schemes."

"Social distancing has really affected any possibility of conducting meetings to execute strategies. The disruption in terms of political strategies is far-reaching," he noted.

The uncertainty surrounding the disease could further throw the political arena into the doldrums.

The deadline given by the President for the BBI team to submit its final report appears to be evaporating in the pandemic, as well as a referendum.

This means that the clamour for a constitutional change this year may be derailed further given that most

national resources have been redirected to fighting Covid-19.

"When nobody knows when the disease would be defeated, we can't even talk about holding a referendum this year. The pandemic would crash our economy completely. Where will the funds come from when the economy would be bleeding?" asked Kimilili MP Didmas Barasa.

The BBI proponents had been pushing for a referendum this year to overhaul the country's governance structure. Raila is pushing for a parliamentary system with a strong Executive prime minister — which Ruto opposes.

NEW MEASURES IMPOSED BY GOVERNMENT TO TAME SPREAD OF COVID-19



Open air markets to be disinfected regularly



Entertainment joints to close by 7:30pm starting Monday 23



Supermarkets to limit number of shoppers



County governments to prioritize garbage collection, cleanliness of markets



Corporations, private enterprises encouraged to allow employees work from home



Factories asked to operate on 24-hour system with staff rotation



People asked to stay at home unless on essential business



14 seater matatu to carry maximum 8 passengers



25 seater matatu to carry maximum 15 passengers



30 seater and above to maintain 60 percent maximum



SGR commuter train services to maintain 60 percent maximum

POLITICS FRUITLESS PROCESS?

Brutality still plagues the police 'service' despite years of reform

Women, some carrying babies, young men returning home from work, stranded commuters and journalists alike were roughed up and beaten, calling into question the fruits of the reforms

JULIUS OTIENO AND
GORDON OSEN

@TheStarKenya

The fatal shooting of a 13-year-old Yassin Hussein Moyo and the cruel enforcement of curfew have exposed the brutality that still ill dog the police, despite years of attempted reforms.

Yassin was on the family balcony in Huruma, Nairobi, when he was shot apparently by the officers who were enforcing the 7pm-5am curfew imposed to curb the spread of the coronavirus. They had spotted some suspicious youths past curfew and fired indiscriminately, a source told the Star. Yassin was struck.

Meantime, images and clips of police beating and whipping harmless and helpless Kenyans flooded the social media and TV channels on Friday.

On Wednesday President Uhuru Kenyatta apologised for police excesses. "I want to apologise to all Kenyans, maybe for some excesses which were conducted or happened," Uhuru said during a video call with Covid-19 survivors.

There have been three curfew deaths since President Kenyatta declared the dusk-to-dawn curfew after it became apparent that most Kenyans were not observing social distancing as directed.

But in what triggered a traumatising reminder of brute police force quelling anti-state riots during the 2007-08 elections, the officers beat up anyone and everyone who came their way past 7pm -and some before 7pm.

Women, some carrying babies, young men returning home from work, stranded commuters and journalists alike were roughed up, calling into question the success of the vaunted reforms underway in the National Police Service — a service on paper but a force in action.

However, National Police Service spokesman Charles Owino said the cases of police brutality witnessed on Friday were isolated and should not be used to condemn the entire service. "You don't miss a few erratic people. Remember our population is over 100,000. But in the police service, we don't take collective responsibility. Every officer takes individual responsibility for their actions," he told the Star. He earlier had said the use of batons was justified in Mombasa and blamed unruly Kenyans in large part.

Police boss Hillary Mutyambai is yet to speak about the brutality, only saying he has directed the Directorate of Criminal Investigation to inquire into the killing of Yassin.

The government and international donors have pumped billions of shillings into NPS reforms since the 2007-08 post-election violence.

US Ambassador Kyle McCarter re-



cently told the Star that his country has donated more than over Sh600 million in the years to the police reform project.

The country enacted reform frameworks to change the internal operations and the external image of the police force, who were accused of brutality over many years.

The 2010 Constitution created an independent office of the Inspector General of Police and two deputies to replace the commissioner of police. It also created the Independent Policing Oversight Authority (IPOA).

The IG and the DIGs were expected to have a free hand disciplining errant officers, and reshuffling, among other steps to run the envisaged burnished service.

The office of the Directorate of Police Reforms was created and domiciled in the Office of Inspector General to spearhead transformative changes. The office is charged with mobilising resources from state and non-state actors.

The Constitution also created the National Police Service Commission, an independent institution to deal with the welfare of police officers and oversee the reforms.

The first commission under the chairmanship of Johnston Kavuludi vetted top officers for suitability and integrity. A number were sent home in the cleanup.

Further, the Constitution created the Independent Policing Oversight Authority, a civilian institution to check the excess of police officers.

The government further embarked on improving the welfare of the officers. Medical cover, house allowances and professionalism training, among others have been introduced.

The officers were ordered out of the police line to live among civilians and protect them. The Kenya Police

and the Administration Police have also been merged and placed under the single command of the IG.

Their uniforms have also been changed to a bright non-militaristic and non-threatening blue.

With all these reforms, it was expected that the officers would be more humane, respect human rights, and be considerate when applying force on the unarmed, already economically and socially traumatised populace.

COLLAPSE OF REFORMS

International Center for Peace and Conflict executive director Ndung'u Wainaina said the reforms were developed with the conviction that the continued mistrust that communities harbour against the Police Service portends a breakdown of law and order in the long run.

"Police reforms in Kenya collapsed. Police throughout the country have remained highly politicised. Police are not really protecting the people, they are still obsessed with protecting the rulers and safeguarding their interests," Wainaina said.

Security expert George Musamali also observed that the much-touted reforms have failed due to political interference.

Musamali said the introduction of the "draconian" security laws that took away the independence of the IG and the powers of the National Police Service marked the end of the envisioned reforms.

"There are no police reforms to talk about. I think we started very well, then everything collapsed. We went 10 steps ahead and now we are five steps back," he said.

"There is a lot of political interference in the manner in which the police are operating. We had given the IG independence, tenure of office,

A police officer whips a pedestrian on March 27 in Nairobi / **FREDRICK OMONDI**

including the deputy IGs. And then we went to Parliament with security laws in 2016 and diluted all of them," Musamali said.

However, police spokesman Owino said the service has seen "tremendous transformation" since the reforms were introduced soon after the 2007 elections.

"The police reform agenda has achieved a lot. Policemen are now going about their business in a better way. After 2007-08 elections, there was a need to change a lot in government, including the police," the spokesperson said.

He said the incidents of police excess were isolated cases, noting that the few errant officers who were captured on camera battering Kenyans should not be a basis for blanket condemnation. He said they will take individual responsibility."

He likened the NPS to a family whose father, a bishop, raises children who sometimes end up being serial smokers, thieves or pastors.

"There is no difference between the police, as an institution, and a family where you find your father is a bishop, you are five children, one drinks, another one smokes, but they are both brought up by the same parent. It does not mean that you will go back to the bishop and ask him how he has brought up the children," he said.

IPOA commissioner Doreen Muthaura concurs with Owino's sentiments, saying that 95 per cent of officers deployed to enforce curfew carried out themselves with decorum. She said cases of brutality were isolated and IPOA has already taken up some of them.

"The officers conducted themselves 95 per cent the way it was supposed to be. Mombasa was a case that was special where a Nation photojournalist was brutalised," she said.

She disclosed that the authority was already investigating the killing of the 13-year-old boy and the beating of civilians at the Likoni channel in Mombasa.

"Reforms of police are making good progress. IPOA is following other cases. Where are the cases that we have forwarded to the DPP? Let's not be pessimistic, let's be an optimist about the reforms in the NPS," she said.

Demas Kiprono, a human rights lawyer and campaign manager at Amnesty International, said despite the considerable effort in reforming the police, it has remained "a force beholden to the regime [rather than] a professional force, accountable and human rights-compliant service guided by the law and the Constitution."



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COLUMN **TRUTH-TELLING**

Covid-19 quarantine: Did KJ lie?

Dagoretti South MP made an allegation surrounding the management of the coronavirus in Kenya and was accused of not telling the truth, spreading fear, using the wrong platforms



SUSAN MUGWE
@mugwe_s

Mugwe is a political economist and writes here on her own behalf

“What is truth?” This question was posed by Pontius Pilate who was a Roman governor appointed in 26 AD under the emperor of Tiberius. As the governor, Pilate had the power of a supreme judge. This meant that he had the sole authority to order a criminal's execution.

The Sanhedrin, which was an elite club of priestly and lay Jewish elders, had arrested Jesus during the Jewish festival of Passover, and brought him to Pilate. They accused him of blasphemy for declaring himself to be the King of the Jews. And this allegation angered them deeply for it was considered treasonous. When Pilate enquired of the charges brought against Jesus, the Sanhedrin replied that had He not been a criminal, they would not have charged him in Pilate's court. Pilate, not being a Jew, told the Sanhedrin to take Jesus away and charge Him under the Jewish laws. The Sanhedrin objected to this and reminded Pilate that they had no power to execute anyone.

So Pilate summoned Jesus and asked Him if indeed He was the King of the Jews to which Jesus responded, “You say that I am a King. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.

“What is truth?” retorted Pilate. Pilate was in a crisis. He wanted to establish the truth because he found no basis for a charge against Jesus.

The country is in a crisis. We are combating the global Covid-19 pandemic, which has had unprecedented health, social and economic ramifications. Salient measures have been taken to curb the spread of this

disease, and the relevant authorities have frequently updated the nation on the status.

However, this week, an allegation surrounding the management of the coronavirus in Kenya was made and publicised on social media platforms by Dagoretti South MP John Kiarie, popularly known as KJ. This allegation did not sit well with the team spearheading the fight against this pandemic, and also with many social media users. KJ was accused of not telling the truth, spreading fear, using the wrong platforms as a political leader to articulate issues, and of seeking cheap publicity and populism.

When covertly berating KJ, Health CS Mutahi Kagwe, told him that as a leader, he was expected to speak the truth.

TRUTH-TELLING

But as Pilate asked, we also ask “What is truth?” Is it the opposite of a lie? Is it telling half a truth? Are some lies selfish while others are strategic?

In politology-speak, truth-telling is when one does their very best to state facts as honestly as possible and as they remember them. It recognises that each of us invariably has limited knowledge about all the granular details of any issue. It also presupposes that our narration of what we consider as truth, is not influenced by unconscious bias. Unconscious bias are learned stereotypes that are automatic, deeply engrained within our belief system and affect our behaviour and responses.

In contrast, deception is where one intentionally takes steps that are

carefully designed to prevent others from knowing the full truth about an issue. And there are three types of deception; lying, concealment and spinning.

Lying is when one makes a statement that he knows to be completely false. It involves inventing statements that are trumped up to deceive the audience hoping they will think it is true. Lying can also involve disingenuous arrangements of facts to tell a lie. The intention is to deliberately lead the audience to a false conclusion without explicitly stating what the conclusion is. For example, the BBI proponents have told us that expanding the Executive to include representation from different tribes is the panacea to our cyclical post-election violence. This is a lie.

Concealment is when one omits or withholds certain factual information that he knows will weaken his narrative, but that is crucial in assisting the audience to make informed decisions. It consists of willfully neglecting to provide crucial information which if presented, would change the outcome of the

LYING IS WHEN ONE MAKES A STATEMENT THAT HE KNOWS TO BE COMPLETELY FALSE. IT INVOLVES INVENTING STATEMENTS THAT ARE TRUMPED UP TO DECEIVE THE AUDIENCE HOPING THEY WILL THINK IT IS TRUE

discourse, from his original intent.

For example, we were told that transferring of some functions from the Nairobi county to the national government was meant to ensure that city residents continued to receive services, whose efficiency had been compromised by the leadership vacuum in the county's executive. Constitutional experts rebuffed this explanation and called it a flawed and legally defective hostile takeover, while the MCAs retreated in their bid to impeach the Governor. This was concealment.

Spinning is exaggeration or distortion, not prevarication. It is a form of propaganda achieved through sophisticated selling of a specific message that is heavily biased in favour of one's own position, in order to influence public opinions. The spinner emphasises certain facts and links them together in ways that portray him in a positive light, or to the intended conclusion he wants from his listener.

The techniques involve careful timing in delivering information, selective presentation of facts, and careful selection of words and phrases meant to invoke certain anticipated responses from listeners, and exert control over a situation.

In times of crisis, press conference rooms are cynically referred to as the “spin room”, the schedule of briefings as the “spin cycle” and the practitioners of the spin as “spin doctors”. For example, in 2017, before the self-immolation of the NASA coalition, the principals convened a press conference where Raila posited that the cost of the SGR project was supposed to be Sh227 billion, but was inflated by Sh100 billion by the Jubilee government. However, this was soon debunked when it was revealed that the project was estimated to cost Sh340 billion, and that the estimates were provided before the Jubilee government assumed power in 2013. This was spinning.

KJ told us that there are 7,000 Kenyans in quarantine who arrived back between Wednesday and Sunday; and that in Dagoretti South constituency, they were hosting them in Lenana School and Kinyanjui Technical. He also went on to give a situational analysis on other issues such as the adequate number of test kits and projected positive estimates going by global trends. In the same breath, he also offered suggestions in improving the management of the Covid-19 spread such as identifying additional isolation centres, provisions of masks and clean water, deployment of community health workers and legislative responses.

Begs the question, did KJ tell the truth? And if he didn't, did he lie, conceal or spin the narrative? You be the judge. How we live and die, what and who we value, and what we believe, is dependent on this one question, “what is truth?”

Finally, my unsolicited advice is to all leaders; you win by going on the offensive. Defense only delays your enemy. Likewise, it is a natural human reflex to hide unpleasant information. However, great leaders appreciate that timely truthful admissions, accelerate course corrections in a spiralling crisis.

You can tell a politician is lying, if his lips are moving – Anonymous

KATIBA CORNER

Cops give us far more cause to resent than to respect them

'Police should not be members of a disciplined hierarchy operating just at the government's command'. In Kenya, that's just what they are, and just the way the government wants it



**JILL COTTRELL
GHAI**

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Kenya has hit international headlines for the wrong reasons – again!

Police beating crowds at the Likoni ferry. Police beating a boda-boda rider to death. Police shooting dead a 13-year old boy. Within Kenya, we all know of more examples. The Police Reform Working Group says, "We continue to receive testimonies from victims, eye-witnesses and video footage showing police gleefully assaulting members of the public".

It's not much consolation that similar scenes have taken place in other countries: According to the Guardian, "In the Philippines, police and local officials trapped curfew violators in dog cages, while others were forced to sit in the midday sun as punishment".

And a few weeks ago, during demonstrations against immigration laws discriminating against Muslims, police in Delhi were filmed viciously beating people using lathis (long sticks very much like the ones the Kenyan police are filmed with). But, by killing curfew violators, or totally innocent individuals, our police seem to have sunk to the greatest depths.

Nor is it a great deal of use pointing out that the Constitution envisages a police service (no longer called a "force") that is professional, competent, disciplined, accountable, has integrity, respects human rights and has a positive relationship with the community as a whole. Indeed, to stress this puts us in the same class as the BBI Taskforce, constantly harping on what we should be doing and saying "Let's do it".

It is hard to imagine what is going on in the mind of a police officer who sees fit to beat a curfew violating driver. The officer could warn the driver, perhaps arrest or summon him or her. But what does the officer think is being achieved by beating him? A citizen who realises that there was good sense in the law and he ought to obey it? Or a citizen with a deep resentment against the police and authorities?

And how does the police officer feel about himself that night? That he behaved like a rational being and defended the rule of law and Kenya against a virus? Looking at video footage one is reminded of people who encounter a creature that terrifies them – a spider or a snake,



A police officer chases a matatu crew that flouted the 7pm-5am curfew along Eastern by-pass last Sunday
/FREDRICK OMONDI

perhaps – and frenziedly strikeout to destroy it, with a long stick that enables one to keep some distance. Maybe the police officer feels "I dealt with a cockroach today".

But maybe the police themselves are also terrified of the people they feel they are expected to control. And of the virus they are expected to protect us from – and which they probably understand very little about. This, of course, offers no excuse – least of all for shooting a boy on his family balcony.

"Policing by consent" was the objective of the first police force in the UK in the 19th century. Interestingly the slogan has been revived in the last few days by a senior police officer urging mutual understanding between police and public.

Last week, various Kenyan civil society organisations issued a statement pleading particularly for more information. People need to understand more about the disease, but also more about what is being forbidden.

The police, too need to understand what is expected of them. There were reports of the police teargassing traders who went to a market that was supposed to be closed. But was there really at that time a valid order to close the market? That, of course, is apart from the question of the necessity of using teargas. One fears that teargas will not be something that is in short supply.

The Kenyan newspapers constantly report people complaining that they do not know anything about the virus. Hopefully, the campaign being conducted, at least in some

places, involving community health workers informing the people will help.

ACCOUNTABILITY

It is good to read on Twitter that the Directorate of Criminal Investigations is encouraging people to report harassment by the police at this time (hopefully at all times). And that the Independent Police Oversight Authority is pursuing various cases including those mentioned at the beginning here, and others as well.

Good also to hear that the President has apologised to Kenyan for the treatment they have been receiving at police hands.

Interesting also to read of police officers against whom damages were awarded, for earlier abuses of power, appealing to the Court of Appeal. It is important that the police realise they have individual responsibility for their actions. As the Chair of IPOA has said, "Following orders is no excuse for unlawful use of force".

HEART SEARCHING NEEDED

But the lack of respect that so often lies at the heart of the nation's problems must be addressed. And it is not just the police's lack of respect for the public.

The current situation places the police, along with the health service, at the frontline. And for the police, it is a frontline that they probably have very little understanding of. Though the government may perceive this is as the law-and-order frontline (and the Public Order Act is just about that) from the perspective of the police they are also the disease frontline. If they have to break up a gathering because it threatens the spread of the virus, it threatens them too. Have they been provided with adequate training and equipment?

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner (head of the London police) was able to say, "We will also contin-

ue to do everything we can to keep our staff fit and well, following the public health guidance and equipping them with protective equipment where we should and can?" A cautious statement admittedly, but can we say the same?

In the longer term, do we give the police the respect they need? Efforts are being made to improve their housing conditions. And at least they have a job (one they are unlikely to lose unlike so many of their fellow citizens at this difficult time). But those who do not feel respected themselves will not respect others.

Unfortunately, the police give us far more cause to resent and fear them than to respect them. It may be something of a hangover from the colonial era. The police were to keep the natives under control. The notion that government means controlling the people has never left the psyche of the governing class. A former President of the UK Supreme Court, who publicly criticised the police over its coronavirus over-enthusiasm (to use a mild term) said, "The tradition of policing in this country is that policemen are citizens in uniform; they are not members of a disciplined hierarchy operating just at the government's command". In Kenya, the latter is just what they are, and just the way the government wants it.

Many Kenyans face a bleak prospect over the next months. And this is partly because of the national failure to respect everyone. How is it possible to allow a nation to get into the situation where most people have no cushion? No savings, no reserves. And where living conditions for most are so dreadful that any idea of social distancing is a terrible joke. And in the rainy season (after a lot of rain last year) the Nairobi Water Company has to promise special provision to ensure that people in Mathare can still get water.

It's not the vision of Kenya that the Constitution portrays. If there is one principle you could extract from that much-maligned document it is that of respect, of a sense that everyone is to be valued, that every life, if you like, is sacred. Instead of that, people are so often treated by leaders of electoral cannon fodder. And the police are the tool to keep the lid on any dissent.

Many people have been speculating as to how the coronavirus will change society. Will it produce a greater sense of community, that we are all in this together? We might ask, will our leaders partake in any such sense of community? And will the police, too, recognise that they are part of us?



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BUT THE LACK OF RESPECT THAT SO OFTEN LIES AT THE HEART OF THE NATION'S PROBLEMS MUST BE ADDRESSED. AND IT IS NOT JUST THE POLICE LACK OF RESPECT FOR THE PUBLIC.

the week

SHOT OF THE WEEK



SERVICE WE WANT TO SEE: A police woman escorts a woman and her son who got stranded at Utawala bypass after disembarking from a bus on March 27 /FREDRICK OMONDI

SNAPSHOTS / FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Iran's coronavirus death toll from rises to 3,160

DUBAI (Reuters) - Iran's death toll from the coronavirus has reached 3,136, with 124 deaths in the past 24 hours, Health Ministry spokesman Kianush Jahanpur told state TV on Thursday, adding that the country had 50,468 cases of infection. "We have 3,956 infected people in critical condition ... There was 2,875 new cases of infected people in the past 24 hours... 16,711 people have recovered from the disease," Jahanpur said. Iran's leaders have resisted imposing lockdowns despite it being one of the world's worst-hit countries. They have insisted all necessary measures are being taken.



Netanyahu back in isolation after minister gets Covid-19

TEL AVIV (Reuters) - Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is returning to self-isolation for another six days after his health minister was diagnosed with coronavirus, the premier's office said on Thursday. Netanyahu, 70, the nation's longest-serving leader, had just ended a two-day period of isolation on Wednesday night after a parliamentary aide was diagnosed with the disease. He immediately went on national TV to announce new measures to curb the epidemic. Litzman, 71, has appeared regularly alongside the premier to give coronavirus updates. Netanyahu tested negative on Monday.



'Hundreds of thousands' of virus tests need in S. Africa

JOHANNESBURG (Reuters) - South Africa needs to conduct "hundreds of thousands" of coronavirus tests to understand the true number of infections and halt their spread, Health Minister Zweli Mkhize said on Wednesday. South Africa has the highest number of coronavirus cases in sub-Saharan Africa, and the government is worried that infection rates could get out of hand if the virus starts spreading rapidly in the country's poor and overcrowded townships. Officials have imposed some of the toughest anti-coronavirus measures on the continent, including a 21-day "stay at home" lockdown.



FROM THE COURTS



Milimani law courts/FILE

★ **WHAT** are you doing while staying or working from home? Well, a magistrate has become a preacher and is preaching the gospel through Facebook. Besides working from home – Chief Justice says the Judiciary is still keeping the wheels of justice running during this pandemic – the magistrate is encouraging citizens through social media. Court Corridors will soon tell you more about her new-found passion after speaking to her about the same.

★ **SOME** rogue clerks, lawyers and prosecutors are getting it rough as the Star mole has established. They are not “harvesting” as they were doing before the coronavirus pandemic hit the country. Initially, some broker lawyers would attend hearings and once they observe the suspect, reach out to their family and friends to get the job. Things are now different. A lawyer known as ‘the court owner’ is finding it rough as she can barely secure a client, despite showing up in court on a daily basis. There literally no suspects. The Star mole has also learned that a certain prosecutor and a court clerk who were plea bargaining brokers are also not doing well as court sessions have been suspended.

★ **YOU** don't have the authority to deny me entry into the court premises. Whom do you think you are?” a middle-aged man shouted when he confronted some security guards at a Nairobi court. This was after he was denied entry. The man had visited the court on Monday morning. “There are no court sessions, just go back home and wait for further directions,” the guard ordered him. The offended man later left and disappeared.

FROM SIASA CORRIDORS

★ **A** Nairobi Jubilee politician who had started taking on Deputy President William Ruto during the BBI rallies before Covid-19 struck Kenya is rethinking his political direction ahead of 2022. The spread of the coronavirus halted the BBI activities that were billed to be the game-changer ahead of the general election. The legislator who had started warming up to ODM is said to have made several attempts in the last one week to meet the Deputy President. A source whispers to Corridors that his team of think tanks told him that it was now “safe for him to play neutral” on both the DP and ODM leader **Raila Odinga** as their support is crucial in 2022 as he seeks a higher position.

★ **STILL** on Just who cursed President **Uhuru Kenyatta's** Kiambu county? Two senators were on Tuesday overheard along the corridors of Parliament saying that barely months after changing of the guard at the county leadership, trouble is brewing again. From their discussion, it emerged that a powerful individual has been exerting undue pressure on the ongoing World Bank Kenya Urban Support Programme tender process. This has even led to the cancellation of some earlier advertised tenders to sneak in a preferred list of tenderpreneurs. Through proxies, the official has been working round the clock to get the preferred companies all the required statutory tender documents to apply for KUSP. Those who have been pushing for an open process and fairness in the tendering process have been left with mouths agape, wondering who will save the county from itself.

★ **AN** MP from Ukambani has caught the attention of many with his generosity towards requests pushed his way by voters in WhatsApp groups where he is a member. The first-term lawmaker has been kind enough to share airtime, M-Pesa and data bundles with his constituents whenever he is requested. Savvy residents are now joining the politician's groups via weblink, with the hope of getting handouts ostensibly to save them in the face of the coronavirus. A mole intimates to Corridors that the lawmaker is contemplating leaving the groups, but fears a backlash from his voters.

FACT CHECKER

PATRICK VIDJA

Is Wuhan exporting clothes to Africa?

The mention of the word Wuhan easily brings the current coronavirus pandemic in mind.

Wuhan, the capital of Central China's Hubei province, is a commercial centre divided by the Yangtze and Han rivers.

It is here that the outbreak was first identified in December 2019 before it was recognised as a pandemic by the World Health Organization on March 11, 2020. A twitter user recently made a claim that China authorities had allowed Wuhan to import used clothes and beddings to Africa,

Is this true?

The Star's fact-check desk moved in to establish the truth,

The claim

Clothes, beddings etc from Wuhan China are set to flood the second-hand market's in Africa. The twitter user by the name Masibili made the claim that second-hand clothes and beddings from Wuhan were set to flood the markets in Africa.

Though he did not name any specific country, Masibili said the move was a clear indication that the coronavirus ain't disappearing any time soon. We searched for the image used on Masibili's post and established that the photo was published on Chinese Website in Jan 2015.

It was later reshared 33 times within China Mainland, Taiwan 14 times and South Korea 2 times.

Other areas that the photo has been shared include the USA, Thailand, Algeria, Cameroon and Spain with a total of 83 results.

We called the Chinese Embassy to confirm this claim and the spokesperson Ms Xueqing Huang dismissed it as mere propaganda.

Huang said Wuhan has been on a total lock down and all travel was banned until April 8.

VERDICT: FALSE

The Star's fact-check terms this post as false since there is no airline that is operating outside Wuhan.

Chinese authorities said Tuesday they will end a two-month lock down of most of coronavirus-hit Hubei province at midnight, as domestic cases of what has become a global pandemic subsides.

China barred people from leaving or entering Wuhan beginning January 23 in a surprise middle-of-the-night announcement and expanded that to most of the province in the consecutive days.

Trains and flights were cancelled and checkpoints set up on roads into the central province.

The outbreak has since been brought under control, and Hubei has seen almost no new infections for more than a week.

THE WEEK/ IN PICTURES



1



2



3

1. MTWAPA: Police keep vigil at a barrier in Mtwapa along Mombasa-Malindi highway at the start of the curfew on March 27 /**ANDREW KASUKU**

2. PIPELINE: Residents rush home to beat the curfew in Pipeline /**MERCY MUMO**

3. NAIROBI: NYS personnel disinfect Kenyatta Avenue to curb the spread of the coronavirus /**MERCY MUMO**

4. NAIROBI: Bindi Shah and Joshua Kimemia during Nairobi street families food donations at Oshwal Community on March 30 /**WILFRED NYANGARESI**

5. NAIROBI: A man sorts oranges inside a truck at the end of a night curfew in Nairobi on March 29 / **REUTERS**

6. NAIROBI: Cynthia Achieng' prepares a meal for her children inside a classroom at Nyamasao camp in Ombaka village, Nyandosubounty after their home was maroon by raging floods /**DANIEL OGENDO**



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5



6

TOP 4 STORIES

MONDAY, MARCH 30

1,000 medics to be hired as Covid-19 cases reach 42

At least 1,000 medics will be hired to handle the rising number of coronavirus infection. The new medics include nurses, clinical officers, lab technologists and doctors, among others. Health CS Mutahi Kagwe said they will also increase the number of makeshift Intensive Care Unit beds by about 1,000. Kenya has about 400 ICU beds. Kagwe said the World Bank has also donated 250 ventilators, and the government was trying to buy some more from abroad, but was facing a shortage.

TUESDAY, MARCH 31

State assembles top scientists to fight coronavirus

The government has unveiled a team of experts, who are expected to save Kenyans from the coronavirus. The team includes the Ministry of Health officials, experts from the NGOs, the private sector and academia. This is also the team fighting to protect the healthcare system from being overwhelmed and wrecked by disproportionate infections. At the top of Kenya's response team is the national emergency response committee, unveiled by President Uhuru Kenyatta on February 28.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 1

Ticking time bomb as health workers catch coronavirus

A clinical officer in Nairobi has become Kenya's first health worker to contract coronavirus in the line of duty. She was taken ill last week at Ngara Health Centre in Nairobi, where she works. Her husband has also been confirmed positive. Both are admitted and isolated at the Kenyatta National Hospital IDU at Mbagathi. Their children and househelp have been evacuated for isolation and testing. The senior clinical officer, who has worked for about 25 years, had not been supplied with protective clothing.

THURSDAY, APRIL 2

Brenda and Brian now immune to Covid-19 - doctors

Two Kenyans announced to have recovered from Covid-19 have gained some immunity against the virus, doctors said on Wednesday. A doctor who oversaw the treatment of Brenda Ivy Cherotich and Brian Orinda, however, said it is not clear how long such immunity could last. As such, Brenda who was known as Patient 1, and Brian (Patient 2) will need to practise social distancing and take precautions like every other Kenyan.

ECONOMIC POLITICS **CORONAVIRUS EFFECTS**

With Covid-19, it is time for a Kenyan universal basic income

The state's economic response has only scratched the surface. Recently announced tax breaks — whether aimed at corporates, MSMEs, or PAYE — mean little for workers in the popular economy

**KEVIN P. DONOVAN
AND ROBERT
MWANYUMBA**

@TheStarKenya

Donovan is a lecturer at the University of Edinburgh Centre of African Studies, while Mwanyumba is a social protection professional in Nairobi

After watching the novel coronavirus make its way across the world, African states and citizens are jumping into action with reports of growing numbers of infections on the continent.

As of Wednesday, April 1, Kenya had 82 cases.

The government has restricted travel, limited public gatherings, and begun funding public health initiatives. Given the ferocity of this disease and the limited social safety net in the country, much more will need to be done. Clear communications about social distancing and providing healthcare workers with appropriate equipment are important, but Covid-19 presents an especially acute danger in an economy where so many live in close proximity and have little in the way of savings.

Thus far, the state's economic response has only scratched the surface. For instance, recently announced tax breaks — whether aimed at corporates, MSMEs, or PAYE — mean little for workers in the popular economy. Across the country, millions of Kenyans depend on making money daily, and whether selling vegetables or driving a taxi the working poor lack the privilege of working from home or dipping into their savings.

Already, reports suggest that business is slowing down, meaning the problem is not taxation so much as income. Some are returning to rural homes to ride out the insecurity with the relative benefits of access to land. Others are forming mutual aid groups to provide clean water or supplies. These important efforts can only do so much.

In order to avoid coronavirus tipping from a health emergency into a generalised crisis, policymakers in Kenya and across the continent need to provide universal income support.

Getting cash to residents will mean they can continue to pay rent, buy food, and cover medical costs. It will stop Covid-19 contributing to other ills: Food insecurity, gender violence, and public unrest.

Emergency cash injections are already on the table in the US, the UK, and elsewhere; poor and middle-income countries must not imagine such responses are only for richer locales.

Donor organisations must not be distracted by disarray in their own countries. From London to Seattle, Geneva to Beijing, development actors must begin organising the money and infrastructure to support incomes as the pandemic spreads across the global South.

In fact, Kenya is well-positioned to rapidly unroll a universal grant.



Government and donors can rely on the country's expansive mobile money infrastructure and its existing social protection schemes, such as the Hunger Safety Net Program (which supports poor residents of Kenya's arid counties) and the Older Persons Cash Transfer (which supports vulnerable elders). These have been effective at reducing poverty, improving nutrition, and spending more on healthcare. Providing cash allows recipients to direct the money to their own needs, and it is less likely to fall prey to the misuse that has dogged other public spending.

VIABILITY OF UNIVERSAL BASIC INCOME

Moreover, for the past decade, economists at GiveDirectly have been testing the viability of a universal basic income in parts of Western Kenya. Households that received the unconditional cash transfers had less hunger and were able to invest in their farms or small businesses. Even more, economists studying the effects found that for every \$1 sent to poor households, the effect was equivalent to \$2.60 (a significant "fiscal multiplier" for what a stimulus program).

While these existing examples are targeted to particular commu-

nities, in the context of Covid-19, Kenya should make a grant truly universal. Now is not the time for excluding based on income: this is a generalised crisis, one that will hit the working poor and salaried classes alike. Nor should this grant be disbursed only to citizens. Kenya has long been a meeting ground for people across the region — a foundation for its economic and cultural vibrancy. Collective well-being is the task right now, not the tedious and expensive task of paying only a subset of those exposed to the disease.

The cash transfer is not a panacea for the pandemic but an integral component of a concerted effort that can provide a multi-pronged approach based on income relief, essential healthcare service provision, and mitigating actions against spreading Covid-19. So far, the government has hunkered down on providing essential healthcare services recognising the potential strain on the healthcare system were there to be a surge in new infection cases and making the case for mitigation measures that forestall these new infection cases such as social distancing.

However, the economic stimulus will fail to take off as measures are currently directed at businesses

A man prepares breakfast outside a food-kiosk at the end of a night-long curfew in Nairobi on March 28 / REUTERS

without necessarily being cognisant of the day to day labourers. The Central Bank's actions only reach so far: Reducing interest rates and lowering reserve ratios mean less to wana-chi than it does to businesses who deal closely with banks. An end to blacklisting at the credit reference bureaus — while welcome — will mean little if lending dries up. What the majority need is cash to allow them to stay at home and make ends meet; Kenya should take advantage of its world-leading financial infrastructure to deliver it.

Admittedly, the cost of a universal monthly payment is not cheap. Assuming a Sh2,000 (\$20) monthly payment to 30 million adults, the outlay will be significant. But the cost of doing nothing could be even greater: As purchasing power dries up and social distancing is required, business will come to a standstill.

This means that the popular economy, which provides over 80% of all jobs, will have no recourse to income that is spent on food, housing, or transport. Investment and tax revenue will stall. In this scenario, a universal basic income might be more than a humanitarian necessity; it would be good public investment and an economic stimulus.

Making sure Kenyans can make ends meet, limit the number of sick people straining health services, and keep the economy running are sine qua non right now. The question should be how — not whether — to finance a universal bank income for Kenya.



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THE ECONOMIC STIMULUS WILL FAIL TO TAKE OFF AS MEASURES ARE CURRENTLY DIRECTED AT BUSINESSES WITHOUT NECESSARILY BEING COGNISANT OF THE DAY TO DAY LABOURERS

COMMENTARY RESEARCH FUNDING

Governor Mutua's vitriol on dons over Covid-19 research misplaced

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Machakos Governor Alfred Mutua made an attempt to address an adage issue of the worth of a university don.

He, however, picked it up before waking up. Time and time again, Kenyan university dons have been effortlessly trying to make this government know the worth of a lecturer in terms of what they can do for this country.

Sorry to remind Mutua that in all his two terms as a governor, he has never addressed any issues concerning lecturers, including the Machakos University, which he has only visited twice. First, during the gubernatorial debate show and the second time when he launched his Maendeleo Chap Chap party.

This despite the institution being in his backyard

Upon the arrival of the coronavirus in the country, universities were ordered closed, like other institutions of learning. They were not involved in that decision, as is always the case.

Not that they would have objected to the idea, but, they would have offered other alternative ideas like what Mutua is talking about — research on Covid-19 vaccine. They would have discussed fundings for such research.

Before Governor Mutua ridicules professors for doing nothing in regards to the coronavirus global pandemic, he should first start by finding out what goes on in the universities. Him and his ilk hardly have time for such. Instead, they benchmark abroad to find out how cows in Europe produce more milk,



Machakos Governor Alfred Mutua /FILE

or how boda boda riders in Rwanda operate.

Politicians in leadership positions have denied professors the opportunity to be creative and innovative in Kenya. All they do is name-call and ridicule dons into submission of their wrongdoings.

What can a professor do when his or her students are not given a chance to construct a local bridge, instead the tender is given to a Chinese firm that is ready to give a kickback? The professor and his students are all frustrated by this bourgeois government.

We have been waiting for their involvement in our institution. Do they even know what we teach? Most of them only appear in convoys during graduations.

It is good that our politicians are now showing up how much they are scared to a point they are realising that medics and academicians can offer solutions to human challenges. It is my hope that in the future, they will know that these professionals also have stomachs and families to take care of.

Formerly pure dons seem to have stopped thinking in the right direction. They do not even want to be related to those institutions of thinking, because such places might remind them, time and again, that they are behaving badly by going abroad for treatment of a common cold.

Now that they are all locked in here, you hardly, hear of any of them going abroad for treatment. Where

are all those diseases that they used to troop with to JKIA, in and out?

The whole country knows how many times we have been trying to address them to recognise whatever little we do at the universities. Anytime we even come up with a simple proposal to fund, they always turn them down because we don't include "20 per cent cut for administrative balances". It is even a struggle for those offices to offer our students attachments because there are no kickbacks.

I heard it from the radio when the good governor said we don't need money to conduct the Covid-19 vaccine research, as was done previously with Penicillin and Malaria medicines. I pity that reasoning.

What it implies is that professors should be working for free, pro bono. They should emulate the late Mother Teresa. University professors should always be selfless in a country with leaders. How much is Governor Mutua's government spending on research or he thinks professors and PhD holders should do that research with their salaries?

It is high time this country rethinks and start questioning the worth of a university don. Biomedical researches are what would drive this debate now, not rhetorics from our leaders.

All these years medics and university dons have been striking and demonstrating all over for a better working environment, government priorities have always been obscured towards personal gains, rather than national gains.

Coronavirus will go away, but not BBI



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A common refrain from governments and health authorities across the globe concerning the coronavirus is to stay away from public places and take precautions to protect yourself, your family and those around you.

The rest is for governments and health professionals to do.

It is important to keep in mind there will be life after the pandemic. Sadly, it will have taken many lives.

For life after coronavirus, each country will have to regroup from where the pandemic disrupted things. In the United States, for example, that will be Democrats trying to find which Oxygenarian among them will be sent to remove President Donald Trump from office.

In Kenya, BBI combatants will re-

arm and resume their battles. In case you were not following closely, the proponents of the BBI led by former Prime Minister Raila Odinga, with the acquiesce, President Uhuru Kenyatta, led on both points and on the road—and by quite a margin.

Coronavirus disrupted things, but it is not hard to imagine the BBI train will continue steamrolling to the intended destination — the implementation of its major proposals be it by referendum, or by other means.

Whichever means, one thing is for sure: There'll be a need to change the Constitution once again, which was expected.

Prof Yash Pal Ghai, an authority on constitutionalism, led the last efforts to revamp our Constitution but even he and the other experts who advised the government in the

process will readily admit—and they have as much — that the end product was not exactly what they had in mind. It was far from even near perfect.

They and many of us knew even with the passage of the much-heralded new constitution, there would come a time to address its various flaws. That time is nigh and the vehicle to do that is BBI.

The question is how to do it. The answer depends on who you ask and where they fall in the political divide between Uhuru/Raila and [Deputy President William] Ruto camps.

The experts are in hiding and may have to put their fingers in the air to decide which side to align with.

On his part, Prof Ghai made an eloquent case in a column appearing in this paper why a non-executive president would be better than what BBI proposes. There's no space to rebut the good professor but, let's just say on this one, he has it wrong: Kenya cannot do without an executive president. Put another way, it would not be practical to have a ceremonial president as that position and what it entails is so ingratiated in the psyche of the public, to tam-

per with it would be futile.

What needs to be done, however, is to reintroduce and this time make it part of the Constitution specific mandatory checks and balances on the presidency, not the current weak system any president can manipulate as many despots want.

Once that's done, let's re-establish the office of Prime Minister and his or her two deputies, who will also double as the checks and balances on the presidency.

Becoming a PM should and must be a function of the electoral outcome in lieu of the president appointing him or her. In other words, the presidential ticket will now comprise of the presidential candidate, deputy president and prime minister as an up or down ticket.

Once elected, both the president-elect and prime minister-elect will each appoint one deputy prime minister. The losing presidential candidate will automatically become an MP and leader of the opposition.

This solution will go a long way in addressing the governance and political woes that have bedeviled the country.

HEALTH PRIVACY

Why disclosing coronavirus patients doesn't meet legal, moral threshold

There have been calls for the government to disclose the identity of persons with the coronavirus. The argument is that this will assist in tracing persons who may have come in contact with the patient

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The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions

Whatever things I see or hear concerning the life of men, in my attendance on the sick or even apart therefrom, which ought not to be noised abroad, I will keep silence thereon counting such things to be as sacred as secrets. - The Hippocratic Oath, 4th Century BC

There have been calls for the government to disclose the identity of persons suffering from Covid-19.

The argument is that this will assist in tracing persons who may have come in contact with the patient. But would it be legal? Will it not have an effect of stigmatisation on the patients and their families?

During treatment, sensitive or intimate information is disclosed to a medical officer. When a patient discloses such information to a medical professional, a duty of confidence arises. Confidentiality between a health professional and a patient is one of the most important principles of medical practice. It goes to the core of the privacy of the patient.

This privacy is of critical importance to the protection of an individual's human dignity. Private space must be protected from unwarranted and unjustified interference. Privacy protects an individual from arbitrary and unjustified use of power by government or other private citizens and organisations.

RIGHT TO PRIVACY

The right to privacy is an international human right. Article 17(1) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides: "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary or unlawful interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to unlawful attacks on his honour and reputation".

The Human Rights Committee in General Comment No. 16 states: "As all persons live in society, the protection of privacy is necessarily relative. However, the competent public authorities should only be able to call for such information relating to an individual's private life the knowledge of which is essential in the interests of society as understood under the Covenant ... Compliance with article 17 requires that the integrity and confidentiality of correspondence should be guaranteed de jure and de facto. Correspondence should be delivered to the addressee without interception and without being opened or otherwise read ... Effective measures have to be taken by States to ensure that information concerning a person's private life does not reach the hands of persons who are not authorized by law to receive, process and use it, and is never used for purposes



incompatible with the Covenant".

Our Constitution provides for the right to privacy. Article 31(c) provides that "information relating to their family or private affairs unnecessarily required or revealed."

Justice John Mativo in the case of Kenya Human Rights Commission v Communications Authority of Kenya & 4 others (2018) eKLR stated: "(52) Privacy is a fundamental human right, enshrined in numerous international human rights instruments. It is central to the protection of human dignity and forms the basis of any democratic society. It also supports and reinforces other rights, such as freedom of expression, information, and association. The right to privacy embodies the presumption that individuals should have an area of autonomous development, interaction, and liberty, a "private sphere" with or without interaction with others, free from arbitrary state intervention and from excessive unsolicited intervention by other uninvited individuals ...

Part II of the Health Act provides for rights and duties. Section 11(1) of the Act provides: "(1) Information concerning a user, including information relating to his or her health status, treatment or stay in a health facility is confidential except where such information is disclosed under order of court or informed consent for health research and policy planning purposes."

However, disclosure of such information may occur only under circumstances provided for under Section 11(2) of the Act, which are, the user consents to such disclosure in writing in the prescribed form; a court order or any applicable law requires such disclosure; or non-disclosure of the information represents a serious threat to public health.

HIV CASE

In order to determine whether the

disclosure of information in relation to patients currently under Covid-19 treatment is proper and legal, it is of importance to examine how such an issue has been dealt with in the fight against HIV-Aids.

Part V of the HIV and Aids Prevention and Control Act provides for confidentiality. Section 22(1) forbids disclosure of information concerning the result of an HIV test or any related assessments to any other person except under circumstances provided for under the Act. The Act emphasises that proper consent must be obtained or one must have a court order for such information to be disclosed.

The HIV and Aids Tribunal had the opportunity to examine disclosure of one's status in the HAT Case SNW v Asha Gulam [2019] eKLR, where the tribunal held that "(16) ... Section 22 of HAPCA must be understood in this context - it protects against the unnecessary revelation of information relating to the HIV status of a person.

Such information forms part of a person's private affairs, which disclosure can potentially cause mental distress and injury to a person and there is thus need to keep such information confidential.

Taken in that context, the right to privacy in relation to a person's HIV status protects the very core of the personal sphere of an individual and basically envisages the right to live one's own life with minimum interference and without the risk of stigmatization, discrimination and rejection by family, friends and the community.

One of the arguments raised on the need to disclose the particulars including names and photographs, of Covid-19 patients is to enable other persons to seek testing and or quarantine themselves.

Health Cabinet Secretary Muta-hi Kagwe has on several occasions

Health Cabinet Secretary Mutahi Kagwe with Brian Orinda and Brenda Cheruitich at Afya House on Wednesday / **NICHOLAS NTHENGE**

been quoted saying "the government is undertaking contact tracing of persons who have come to contact with Covid-19 patients" pursuant to information disclosed by the patients.

Based on government pronouncements, is there a need to disclose the identity of the patients?

On March 18, it was widely reported that a person identified as George Kotini Hezron, a Kwale resident was killed by a mob. It is said George was sneezing as he passed a group of youths seated by the roadside.

His sneezing reportedly attracted the youth who accused him of being a coronavirus patient. Based on what George went through, would it be safe to disclose the identity of Covid-19 patients?

Based on the three conditions for disclosure placed by Section 11 of the Health Act, it is my humble view that such a disclosure under the current circumstances would not meet the legal and moral threshold.

It is humbly submitted that there is no danger or serious threat to the public due to the fact that all the person currently under treatment, their details especially persons they were in contact with, have been provided to the government. Kagwe has already assured that contact tracing is an ongoing process.

Disclosure of the patients would have an effect on their own and their family security. This cannot be understated, the Kwale killing is a classic example.

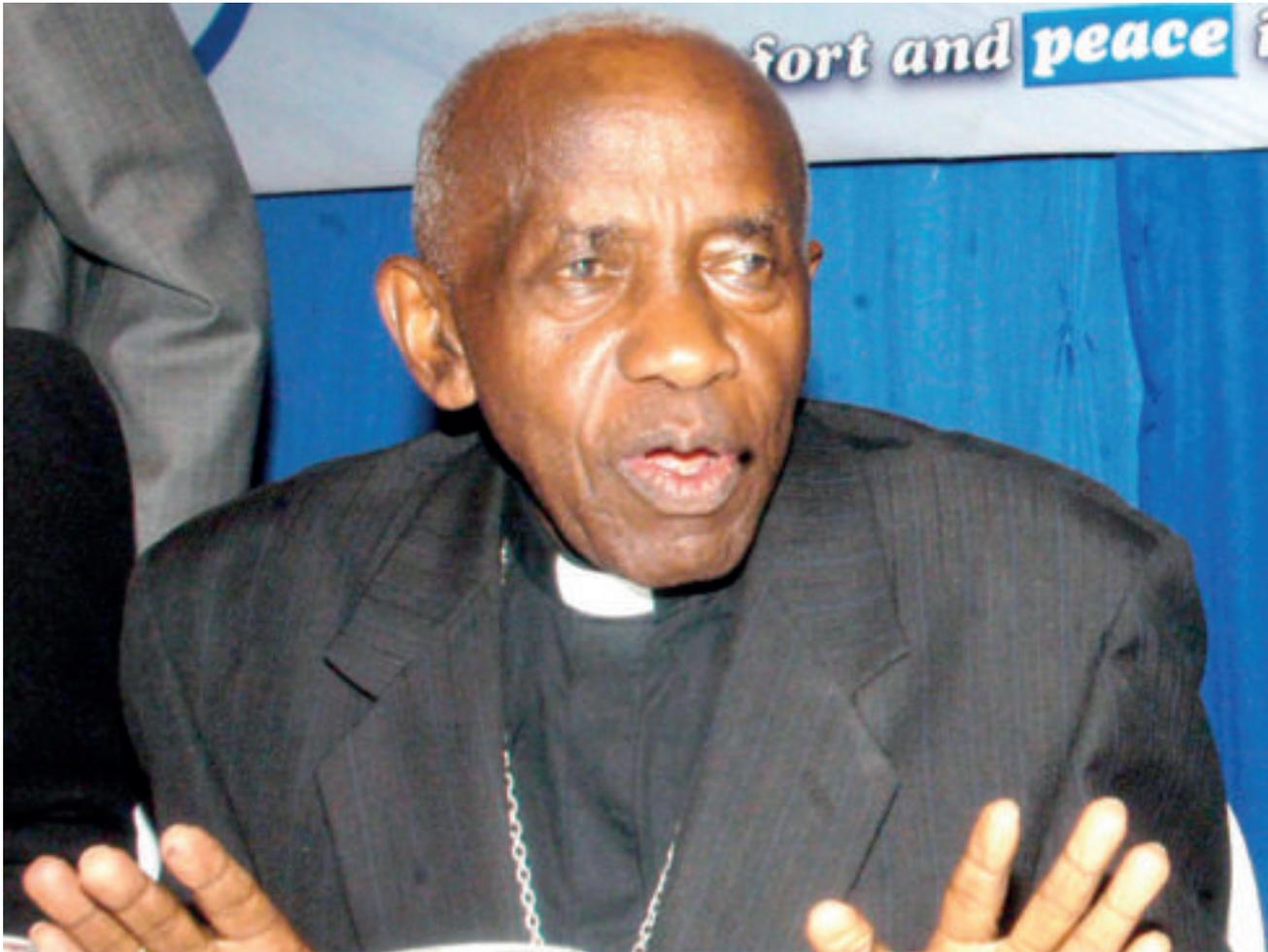
The public is yet to fully appreciate the symptoms and how the virus is spread. It is my humble opinion that disclosure would lead to stigmatization, discrimination and rejection by family, friend and community.

The Ministry of Health should thus reject calls to disclose the identity of Covid-19 patients unless express well-informed written consent is obtained from the patient.



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TRANSITION ROLE FIGHTING HIV-AIDS PANDEMIC



Ndingi Mwana A'Nzeki in April 2006 / FILE

country, people get involved in HIV-Aids when they drink ... with a condom in their pocket," he explained.

VISION FOR CHURCH GROWTH

A review of the archbishop's life and from the interview, it is clear he harbored a forward-looking Catholic church and jealously defended its interest in the country, even as he sought to improve human lives.

This was the case when he stood by the Nyumbani Children of God Relief Institute based in Nairobi. It was founded by an American Jesuit in Kenya named Fr. Angelo D'Agostino to house HIV positive children who would be given care.

The home was accused of allowing foreign scientists to collect blood samples from the children for research abroad and then patent the outcome without the knowledge of the government.

Amidst the controversy, Mwana a'Nzeki maintained the home enjoyed his confidence and support because "I think, so far, they are doing very well."

"...at least those children have some place where they can be taken care of. If it happened, having blood tests taken outside of the country without permission, it's very unfortunate. It should not be allowed," he said.

He also pushed for the appointment of an African pope, saying this would be a recognition of the hard work the African church has played in the Catholic circles.

"An African who would understand us and encourage us. For example, I would like to see more liturgical participation. I would like to see more translations of liturgical books in the language that our people understand. At the moment, it's not bad. But you can have somebody come along who starts restricting things," he said.

He also pushed for translation of the liturgical books into ethnic languages in the country to enable people participation at the grassroots level.

On whether the Catholic church faced any threat from the wave of Pentecostalism that saw mushrooming of evangelicals in the country, the Archbishop believed Catholicism was still on the forefront and its work could be seen.

"....what have they done? We can show our schools, we can show our hospitals, we can show our work for the old people, for the children, for the dying, and now at the moment instructing the people with AIDS and so on..." he said.

Ndingi had a stinging assessment of the evangelical groups in the country.

"They come out forcefully, but they don't seem to keep their stamina. They seem to burn out quickly," he said in the interview.

"....they're a minority. Don't let anybody deceive you that they're a majority...When they travel, they have a big group....They will have a big meeting in the stadium, but people come from all over the whole town... They do attract people, but at the same time, people resent them sometimes, especially when they accuse other religions. People don't like to hear a minister accusing another minister," the Archbishop added.

How Archbishop Mwana a'Nzeki maintained anti-condom stance

Ndingi asserted that the only way to beat HIV-Aids scourge in Africa was through behavioural change and abstinence from early sex



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News reporter

When HIV-Aids was ravaging the country in the early 2000s, Archbishop Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki stood out in keeping a hard-line stance against condom use.

He argued that it would provide the way for promiscuity and mass infection.

His argument, which doubled as the Catholic Church in Kenya's position, also included an anti-contraceptive stance. And he didn't shy away from speaking his mind and taking a stand.

The conservative and straight-talking retired archbishop died on Tuesday morning at the age of 88 after a long illness.

Mwana a'Nzeki was ordained as a priest in 1961, serving under then Archbishop JJ McCarthy of the Nairobi Diocese. He was appointed bishop in 1969 and served in Machakos Diocese for two years before being transferred to Nakuru.

He would later be appointed as Coadjutor Archbishop of Nairobi in 1996 to assist Cardinal Maurice Michael Otunga.

Mwana a'Nzeki succeeded Otunga in 1997 as the Archbishop of Nairobi and retired on October 6, 2007 after attaining the age of 75 years.

John Njue, who was his assistant in Nakuru, succeeded him.

As head of the church, Ndingi

rubbed Moi's administration the wrong way, calling it out for manufacturing tribal clashes, during electoral periods. He also opposed Kibaki administration's policy of shoot to kill against the Mungiki adherents.

Politicians led by President Uhuru Kenyatta and ODM leader Raila Odinga eulogized the prelate as a diligent leader who did not shy away from speaking his mind.

In an interview with National Catholic Report, a weekly issue

“

In fact, in this country, I would say without fear that the use of condoms has been the greatest means of increasing the cases of Aids.

published on September 17, 2004, Ndingi asserted that the only way to beat HIV-Aids scourge in Africa was through behavioural change and abstinence from early sex.

"For me, a condom is not the answer," he said, adding that instead of curbing infections, condoms were the fuel to the disease's fire in Africa.

"In fact, in this country, I would say without fear that the use of condoms has been the greatest means of increasing the cases of Aids. Take our university students, students in schools of higher studies, where condoms are available upon demand. They have had the greatest number of deaths due to HIV-Aids," he added.

At the time, the pandemic had killed across the country, leaving thousands of young children as orphans. The disease threatened the social fabric of the Kenyan society.

Mwana a'Nzeki argued that abstinence was the only guarantee against HIV-Aids as it costs nothing and has no side effects.

He believed that the ease with which the Aids death struck was enough to cause people to fear and easily change their behaviour and refrain from irresponsible sex.

"Practically every family has seen somebody dead or suffering, or attended a funeral. Fear, fear of death, makes them change. In most of the

Pay every Kenyan Sh2,000 per month

Kenya should consider paying Sh2,000 to all its 30 million adult citizens to combat the economic impact of the coronavirus.

This radical proposal by an American academic and a Kenyan analyst appears in *Siasa* (Page 10). It deserves serious consideration.

It is radical because it is egalitarian. Every single Kenyan adult would get Sh2,000 per month – from Gideon Moi down to the pastoralist in Mandera. It is possible because virtually every Kenyan has a phone with mobile money or M-Pesa.

There are some existing cash transfer programmes in Kenya for old people or disadvantaged communities but these have limited scope. A universal monthly transfer would be much easier to administer as everyone would receive it without discrimination. It could be argued that Gideon Moi does not need Sh2,000 per month but there are very few Kenyans in his category. For most Kenyans it could help them survive the coronavirus lockdown, especially those who work in the informal sector.

Government has tried to mitigate the impact of the lockdown by reducing corporation tax, PAYE and VAT. But these measures primarily assist companies and white collar workers. They do not help the most vulnerable.

A universal monthly transfer of Sh2,000 would cost around Sh60 billion per month. It would not be cheap but it would pump money into the economy and help businesses as well as ordinary citizens.

HISTORICAL QUOTE

“We are not just here to manage capitalism but to change society and to define its finer values.”

TONY BEN

The British politician was born on April 3, 1925

COMMENT #POLICEBRUTALITY



Friends and relatives of late Yassin Moyo (right) shot by police at a balcony in Huruma pay their last respect during his burial at Kariokor / COURTESY



Yassin Moyo: Another innocent life lost through police bullet

Kenya is an example of a rogue system that has chosen to criminalise poverty



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Thirteen-year-old Yassin Hussein Moyo is no more.

His life taken away by a bullet fired from a gun that ought to have been protecting his life, not taking it. He was shot just 20 minutes from the onset of the first day of the curfew on Friday, March 27.

He was not in the streets throwing stones or riding a boda boda in defiance of the curfew. He was inside their home – a place we were all told we would be safe. Yet from the balcony of their third floor home, Yasin was shot in the stomach.

At first, his mother did not believe it when Yasin told her he has been hurt. Not until she saw the blood. Yasin's brothers and sisters quickly rushed him downstairs and straight to Mama Lucy's Hospital. Unfortunately, due to the curfew, it is reported it wasn't until after about two hours when Yasin received medical attention. Since then, he remained in hospital fighting for his life. All the time, his family members were by his side, praying for his recovery and return home. Unfortunately, in the early hours of Tuesday, he lost his life.

Yasin lived in the sprawling Kia-maiko estate in Nairobi where the inhabitants are regarded by the police as nobodies. In many informal settlements in Kenya, be it Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu or Nakuru, police reign terror and kill at their pleasure. The sanctity of life in the slums is

totally ignored by the police, who have become the law unto themselves unleashing terror at will.

It is of little wonder that on that fateful day, police did not care whether their bullets would hit a person or not. They just shot carelessly and now, young Yasin is no more.

One thing is for sure, if Yasin lived on the third floor of a flat in Lavington or Runda or Nyali in Mombasa, he would be alive today. This is the sad situation that is Kenya today. Police modus operandi is selective and those with wealth are given not just preferential treatment but are even allowed to escape with crime. However, if you are poor, you are guilty even before uttering a word. Kenya

I HAVE A FEELING YASIN'S CASE WILL BECOME A MERE STATISTIC OF YET ANOTHER EXTRAJUDICIAL KILLING. BUT FOR HOW LONG WILL THE POOR CONTINUE TO LIVE IN THIS WAY?

is a perfect example of a rogue system that has chosen to criminalise poverty.

To confirm that Kenya has a rogue system, Yasin's case is not isolated. Khamisi Juma, 49, was on the first day of the curfew confronted by police officers in Likoni, almost at the same time as Yasin and was injured

severely. Coming from a low income area in Kiteje, his family could not rush him to hospital due to the curfew until the next morning. By that time, his injuries had worsened and although doctors and medics tried to treat him, he lost his life in the early hours of Monday morning. Yet another poor victim of the curfew.

Such incidences have not been reported in posh areas where the rich and politically correct live. With stocked fridges and food stores, the wealthy are lavishly enjoying their time at home, sharing curfew memes and spreading coronavirus rumours. While they happily social distance and waste away, police stand outside protecting them and their properties. Should they need to venture outside during the curfew nights, they are escorted by the police to ensure their safety. Utumishi kwa Wote is Utumishi kwa Matajiri and Utumwa kwa Maskini!

Article 159 (2) (a) of the Constitution provides that “justice shall be done to all, irrespective of status”. As Yasin's mother said, “We are waiting to see if justice will be done for Yasin”.

I have a feeling Yasin's case will become a mere statistic of yet another extrajudicial killing in Kenya. But for how long will the poor continue to live in this way? When will the police shape up and appreciate the lives of the less privileged in our society? When will Kenyans stand up for the rights of the poor?

POLITICS **DIGITAL DEMOCRACY**

Coronavirus offers us chance to embrace voting through M-Pesa

If Americans are worried about their ability to preserve their democracy, we should be, too

PATRICK KARIUKI

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commentator

With the Covid-19 outbreak just a few months before the US elections in November, the New York Times has called for the polls to be secured by making it possible Americans vote from home.

This is in case the virus makes it impossible to vote in person.

If Americans are worried about their ability to preserve their democracy in the middle of a disaster such as Covid-19, we should be, too. But we are lucky.

Unlike the United States, we have a tool ready to go. It is called M-Pesa. The time has come for Kenya to consider voting by M-Pesa. We could call it M-Chaguzi. Why M-Chaguzi, you ask? Well, it is a tool that can ensure that democracy survives a pandemic. But there are other reasons too. Let's count the ways.

One is security. M-Pesa runs on a SIM card, not the handset. This enables it to interact with the mobile network regardless of internet coverage and creates a layer of security by separating it from the internet. M-Pesa does not support multimedia at all. In addition, it has identity verification and encryption features that make it as secure as a bank vault.

To deliver updates to M-Pesa, either the SIM must be returned and exchanged for a new one (which can be costly and inconvenient) or the updates must be delivered over-the-air using specialised, optional SIM features. All of this severely limits the number of updates or changes that can be made over any period of time, which vastly enhances its security. There is no such thing as perfect security, of course, but this is good enough for me.

The second touches on the ease of voter registration. But what voter registration? We are already on M-Pesa. We've been there for years. The number of registered users today is higher than the number of registered voters in the last elections. All the IEBC would have to do is to email Safaricom an EXCEL spreadsheet of the updated voter registration roll and for Safaricom to match voters to their M-Pesa accounts. Safaricom would then send an over-the-air update to the M-Pesa toolkit to activate M-Chaguzi and we are good to go!

All it would take is literally one email between the IEBC and Safaricom to get this done. No research or feasibility studies required. No expensive and lengthy procurement procedures necessary. No new software required.

The third is the convenience. In 2008, Treasury was under pressure from the banking community as they viewed M-Pesa as a threat. Banks lobbied so hard against it, that acting Finance Minister John Michuki had to order an audit of the popular application. In a year, it had grown to three million users and was



moving Sh4 billion a month.

"I am not sure M-Pesa will end well," Michuki said.

By any definition of the term, this was a crisis. Safaricom needed to move fast. So, sometime in late 2008, CEO Michael Joseph to Michuki's office to confront the issue personally.

Now, old Michuki was not a man easily dazzled by words. So like a good salesman, Joseph decided to show and not tell.

After a brief chat, Joseph asked the minister how he paid salaries for his workers at his farm. After the minister described the cumbersome process, the telco CEO whipped out his cell phone and paid the minister's foreman on the spot using M-Pesa. Like the astute Kenyan that he has become, Joseph instantly connected with the street smart minister by paying his bills.

When the foreman confirmed to the minister that he had indeed received the cash, Michuki was im-

pressed and instantly became an M-Pesa convert. It was a masterstroke. In one meeting, Safaricom had secured the trust of a powerful ally.

If old Michuki could appreciate the convenience of running his farm from his office, it's a sure bet that 20 million Kenyans would appreciate the convenience of voting from their comfort.

Fourth is cost. The infrastructure is already up and running, now moving Sh5 trillion a year and does so with 100 per cent accuracy and total system integrity.

Most countries vote only once every five years because elections are expensive, cumbersome and slow due to old-fashioned methods of voting. Whenever a national issue arises, I should be able to vote on it using my phone through an electronic referendum and I move on with my life! It is not only quicker, but cheaper! We can vote continuously on issues that come up such as the Building Bridges Initiative through the phone.

Technology enhances public participation in governance and Kenya is well-positioned to embrace such a digital political future.

HOW IT WOULD WORK

The IEBC could loan Safaricom Sh1 per voter and the telco could deposit one voting shilling into every M-Chaguzi account. To vote, the voter would send their shilling to the pres-

A customer
transacts on
M-Pesa
/REUTERS

idential account of their favourite presidential candidate. They would be able to send only one shilling to their favourite candidate. Each candidate's account would start off with zero shillings. At the end of voting, the candidate whose account has the most shillings wins.

In a scenario where there are 30 million voters, this entire exercise would cost only Sh30 million. And of course, once the vote is over and the winner announced (the one with the most voting shillings), all the money would revert to the IEBC, thereby costing the taxpayer nothing.

It would be impossible to rig the election because M-Pesa doesn't lie. The only way to rig the system would be by creating fake vote shillings. However, M-Pesa runs on the SIM card, which separates it from the handset and the internet, rendering it hack-proof.

Meanwhile, any changes instigated from within the network take a long time to push through as it is a very deliberate process. In other words, it would be impossible for unauthorised persons to create artificial voting shillings and feed them into M-Chaguzi.

Today, M-Pesa moves over Sh15 billion a day, or over Sh5 trillion shillings a year.

If we can trust it with this, we can trust M-Chaguzi to move a mere 30 million voting shillings every five years.



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M-PESA MOVES OVER SH15 BILLION A DAY, OR OVER SH5 TRILLION SHILLINGS A YEAR. IF WE CAN TRUST IT WITH THIS, WE CAN TRUST M-CHAGUZI TO MOVE A MERE 30 MILLION VOTING SHILLINGS EVERY FIVE YEARS

ROWING TO THE HOUSE



Residents of Budalang'i manoeuvre to their marooned houses following heavy downpour in Western Kenya. Several families were displaced / GILBERT OCHIENG'

LETTERS OF THE WEEK

Write to us letters@the-star.co.ke

Coronavirus economic hit likely to get worse

The coronavirus has not only had an health impact but an economic one as well

To assess the impact of the coronavirus on the economy, it is important to focus on the epidemiological profile of the virus and the ways consumers, businesses, and governments may respond to it. Covid-19 will most directly shape economic losses through supply chains, demand, and financial markets, affecting business investment, household consumption, and international trade. And it will do so both in traditional, textbook supply-and-demand ways and through the introduction of potentially large levels of uncertainty.

An epidemic that began in the depths of China's Hubei province is spreading rapidly. There are now significant outbreaks from South Korea to Italy and Iran, and the first deaths have been reported in America. The virus had disruptive effects on the global economy. It has disrupted the global supply of goods, making it harder for Kenyan firms to fill orders. It will also waylay workers due to lack of supplies, reducing labor supply on one end and on the other slow the demand for Kenya products and services.

Covid-19 outbreak is affecting supply chains and disrupting manufacturing operations around the world are increasing daily. But the worst is yet to come, the peak of the impact of Covid-19 on global supply chains will occur in the next few weeks, forcing thousands of companies to throttle down or temporarily

shut assembly and manufacturing plants in China and other markets. The most vulnerable companies are those which rely heavily or solely on factories in China for parts and materials such as electrical. The activity of Chinese manufacturing plants has fallen in the past month and is expected to remain depressed for months. Disruptions to global supply chains are one of the clearest effects of the corona virus. Looking more closely at global supply chains, there have already been significant disruptions, with the list of manufacturers outside of China forced to decrease production in their plants growing longer every day.

China shocks have spread across global financial markets before, including the surprise Yuan devaluation in 2015. Coronavirus is repeating the pattern, and on a larger scale, as equities plunge around the world and deliver knock-on blows to household wealth and business confidence. As the world grapples with the corona virus, the economic impact is mounting, with possibly of another global financial crisis. China is the world's second-largest economy and leading trading nation, so economic fallout from corona virus also threatens global growth.

Businesses in Kenya are dealing with lost revenue and disrupted supply chains due to China's factory shutdowns. Global growth is already slow, and financial markets already have very low interest rates, which mean that central banks in almost every major country have little ammunition with which to mitigate any potential economic fallout. This puts greater pressure on governments to use the power of their purse to counter the economic fallout from the corona virus.

NDIRANGU NGUNJIRI
Nairobi

Open letter to Magoha on containing Covid-19

Dear Sir,
The abrupt closure of schools was unprecedented move that caught many of school heads unawares thus jostling their plans and budgets. They were caught with large stocks of food mostly grains as they had planned for full term rations thus buying in bulk. The worry is having no idea about when this Covid 19 pandemic will end for schools to resume, these stocks of food might go bad, resulting in huge losses at the cost of the parents. Many of these parents are among the people government is trying to cushion through a stimulus package to keep the economy running. These are the people who are faced by eminent hunger as they have been laid off from jobs, or got salary cuts. The President, through the Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund has directed them to work with every ministry and Kenyans at large to pool resources both in kind and cash. This gives you an opportunity to liaise with the school heads through subcounty education officers to know the amount of grains in stocks across the country. These grains can be bought by MPs through the NG -CDF emergency fund or the Governor's kitty or directly by Covid 19 fund to be distributed to needy families within the respective constituencies. The heads of school can bank the monies until the situation normalises and schools re-open. By doing this, we will be mitigating the Covid 19 impact by feeding the poor and preventing losses. This will also help in preventing the spread of the virus by reducing the number of people going out to search for casual jobs to feed their families.

GIDEON GACHARA
Gituru ward, Kiambu county

STAR POINTS



Containing Covid-19

"There is no single death that can be attributed to your infection, Brenda. This is unlike others who did not want to quarantine, and ended up infecting numerous other people. The people, who infected others were older than you, were leaders, and should have known better."

President Uhuru Kenyatta
Video chat with Brenda Cherotich



Ndingi Mwana a'Nzeki

"Ndingi was one of the brightest lights to have graced our nation in our time. Kenyans knew they could always count on him to stand and speak out for truth and justice whatever the threat that posed to his life.

Raila Odinga
ODM leader

COMMENT

NGARE KARIUKI

@TheStarKenya

Pandemic offers parents time to talk about sexual health

The main reason people are being told to stay at home during this coronavirus pandemic is to reduce the rate of new infections and, consequently, avoid overwhelming the healthcare system.

With each new Covid-19 case, and hundreds of suspected cases, the already struggling healthcare system is in danger of being overrun. This also means less attention is being given to other medical conditions such as cancer and HIV-related complications.

It has, therefore, never been more necessary for Kenyans to be more equipped with the right information about their health. This is especially the case with women reproductive health, an area often marked by rampant ignorance, stigma and lack of access to key medical attention.

Many Kenyans are now dedicating their attention to coronavirus, and rightly so. We have never been more conversant with the symptoms of an infection than we are about this one.

But if the same amount of attention and dedication was given to educating ourselves about our sexual health, we would emerge on the other side of this pandemic, not just safe from one viral infection, but also better at managing and coping with many reproductive health issues that often prove difficult to handle.

For instance, with many parents now forced to spend many hours at home with their children — who would otherwise be at school — it offers a good opportunity to have that conversation that you've been postponing for months now.

This is the time to talk to our children about their sexuality and their sexual health, especially those who are at the gateway to puberty and adolescence. It is time to begin comprehensive sexuality education at home; and eventually, hopefully, continue the same at school.

If this pandemic has proven anything, it is that parents are still at the frontline in confronting and addressing majority of the reproductive health issues faced by their children.

The long hours spent at home will also be a good opportunity for men and women to brush up on how to best manage their reproductive health, family planning options and how much finances to dedicate to healthcare in general.

There is nothing like a global healthcare emergency to remind us all of how little attention we often pay to our healthcare. You may not be able to go to hospital for a general health checkup at this time, but you have all the time in the world to acquaint yourself with your sexuality and the information necessary to take care of it.

Let us not squander this rare opportunity.

Kariuki is the head of Communications Naya Kenya