



SAVING LIVES CS KAGWE SAYS INSTITUTE TRYING OUT A POWDER USED AGAINST HERPES SIMPLEX

Kemri exploring corona herbal cure

Scientists developed Zedupex from medicinal trees more than five years ago **PG4 and 5**



HAMMER AND TONGS: Andrew Gitau and other artisans breaking sweat at Kamukunji Jua Kali market on Wednesday last week / **FREDRICK OMONDI**

16-PAGE POLITICAL PULLOUT

SIASA

PAGE 5

Sonko, you were duped, the palace coup is now complete



PARIAHS

Covid-19 survivor tells horror story of stigma after recovery

His children test negative but they are bullied and called corona kids. His street is called a corona street, his estate a corona estate, his house a corona house. Ignorant neighbours and former friends give Salvador Agina a wide berth.

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FREAK DEATH

Police quiz 5 in Buruburu over banker's mysterious death

Detectives on Thursday questioned five people in a bid to unravel the puzzle of the death of a bank employee in a car under unclear circumstances on Tuesday. Terance Korir, 36, burnt to death in his Subaru Impreza at a parking yard.

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CHANGE OF GUARD

Uhuru appoints Kibochi Chief of Defence Forces

Takes over from General Mwathethe whose term expired on April 17

JULIUS OTIENO

@JuliusOtieno_04



President Uhuru Kenyatta on Thursday promoted Lt-Gen Robert Kibochi to the rank of General and appointed him Chief of Defence Forces.

Kibochi takes over from General Samson Mwathethe, whose term expired on April 17. Kibochi served as the vice CDF during Mwathethe's tenure.

Mwathethe's term had expired in 2019, but the President extended it for a year.

The President also promoted Lt-Gen Levi Mghalu and Lt-Gen Jimson Mutai to the ranks of Major General and appointed them Vice Chief of Defence Forces designate and Commander of the Kenya Navy designate respectively.

The officers will assume their new positions on May 11.

"I look forward to working with these officers closely in service to our motherland. For you, General Mwathethe, I wish you fair winds following seas; and the very best in your future endeavours," President Kenyatta said.

The President lauded Mwathethe for the role he played in protecting the country's territory and expanding the military.

"Since your appointment as the Chief of Defence Forces five years ago (May 2015), we have seen significant expansion in our military and enviable improvement in the defence capability of our forces; thus giving Kenyans confidence that their borders are well protected from any external aggression," Uhuru said.

"During your tenure, we detected and expunge early enough a number of plans by those who do not mean well for our country, in good time," the President added.

The Kenya Army was expected to



General Robert Kibochi



Lt-Gen Levy Mghalu



Major General Jimson Mutai

produce the new CDF in line with tradition to rotate the post among the three military units—Army, Navy and the Air Force.

Gen Mwathethe is a Navy officer and his predecessor, Gen Julius Karangi, was from the Air Force.

In this order, it was expected Kibochi would take over from Mwathethe.

Last year, when Mwathethe's term was extended, Kibochi had less than a year to retire. It, therefore, means he gets an extension in the military.

Deputy service commanders Maj Gen Albert Kendagor was posted to Kenya Army and appointed Deputy Army Commander. Brig John Omenda has posted to Kenya Air Force as Deputy Commander,

while Col Lawrence Gituma was promoted to Brigadier and made Deputy Commander of Kenya Navy.

"Ordinarily, there would have been no basis for the National Defence Council (NDC) to appoint another officer to jump him (Kibochi) on the line. But when the President makes the announcement, it will be curious to find out if Kibochi will be elevated this time round after being shelved last year," a source had earlier told a local daily.

Mwathethe is credited with the formulation and the ongoing implementation of the Defence Policy inaugurated by President Kenyatta in 2017 and the Gender Policy and Military Modernisation.

Mwathethe has been in the army for 42 years.

TO APPEAR NEXT THURSDAY

Senators summon Matiang'i after snub

LUKE AWICH/Interior CS Fred Matiang'i has been summoned to appear before senators next Thursday after snubbing a House committee a record four times.

The Senate committee on Covid-19 issued summons to the CS on Thursday after he failed to turn up and instead sent Cabinet Administrative Secretary Hussein Dado.

The CS did not communicate to the committee chaired by Nairobi Senator Johnson Sakaja why he was unable to honour their invite.

Senators Okong'o Omogeni (Nyamira), Michael Mbito (Trans Nzoia), Sylvia Kasanga (nominated), Mohamed Faki (Mombasa) and Abshiro Halakhe (nominated) described Matiang's conduct as unfortunate and demanded that he be compelled to appear.

"This is a big disappointment. I don't see why it is a challenge because the CS was the one who proposed the date for this meeting," Kasanga said.

Mbito said, "We have been postponing the meeting for long. This is not the way to go. We need to summon the Cabinet Secretary."

AFTER CHARGE READ TO HER

Four drowned men yet to be found

JOHN KAMAU/Drama The search for four men who drowned in the swollen River Athi was hampered by strong tides on Thursday.

The four were in company of two others who managed to swim to safety. They drowned on Tuesday evening after their boat capsized as they were crossing the river, which has burst its banks at Ngoliba, Thika East.

Thika East security committee chairman Thomas Sankei said the four men worked along the river and were crossing to tie a rope on the other side to stabilise their boat.

"They ferry people across the river on their boat and on the fateful day, the river had burst its banks following heavy rain pounding regions upstream. The heavy water waves overwhelmed their boat on reaching the middle of the river," Sankei said.

The deputy county commissioner who spoke to the Star on the phone on Thursday said the four had been warned by a local chief against crossing the river but they ignored him.

"They've worked on this river for years and probably they thought they knew it well but unfortunately, they failed and drowned," he said.



STAR SURVEY

TODAY'S QUESTION

Do you think the Health ministry spent Sh1bn on Covid-19 wisely?

YESTERDAY'S QUESTION

Do you think all Kenyan borders should be closed to keep coronavirus out?

YES 82%

NO 18%

COVID-19

Truckers to be tested at start of journey

MAGDALINE SAYA/ All Kenyan truck drivers will undergo mandatory Covid-19 testing at their point of origin in a new strategy to fight the virus.

The Ministry of Health said it would also commence mass testing in Nairobi's Kawangware estate on Friday after it emerged the area was leading in the number of positive cases in the county.

The estate had recorded more than 10 cases by Thursday.

EAC states have agreed on a protocol to ease clearance at the borders that requires truck drivers to be tested at their departure points.

"As members of the East African Community, we believe that these discussions and arrangements we have within the EAC will facilitate the testing of drivers in an efficient way while at the same time not impeding the flow of trucks and cargo across the borders," Health CAS Rashid Aman said on Thursday.

Last week, five Kenyan drivers tested positive in Uganda. Three had entered the country through Malaba and two through Busia.

Uganda announced trucks coming into the country would stop at the border and be driven by Ugandan drivers to their destination.

RAMADHAN

TIMETABLE

TOWN	SUHOOR	IFTAR
Nairobi	5:14	6:32
Mombasa	5:07	6:18
Kisumu	5:21	6:41
Garissa	5:03	6:22
Nyeri	5:13	6:33
Isiolo	5:10	6:31
Eldoret	5:19	6:40
Busia	5:23	6:44
Lamu	5:00	6:15
Malindi	5:06	6:19
Kajiado	5:16	6:32
Lodwar	5:10	6:34
Embu	5:11	6:30
Nakuru	5:17	6:36
Marsabit	5:07	6:34
Machakos	5:12	6:28

Allah on this day make my efforts worthy of appreciation and my sins forgiven my deeds accepted my flaws concealed, O the best of those who hear.

HOLY QUR'AN

SHUNNED LIKE THE PLAGUE

Survivor tells horror story of stigma after recovery

Salvador Agina reveals his children are not allowed to mingle with others

KEVIN CHERUIYOT
@TheStarKenya

His children test negative but they are bullied and called corona kids.

His street is called a corona street, his estate a corona estate, his house a corona house.

Ignorant neighbours and former friends give Salvador Agina a wide berth after his discharge with a clean bill of health. They think Covid-19 is a death sentence and survivors are still infectious despite testing negative.

Many times they've been told they're wrong, but they don't want to listen. He is still treated as a pariah. You'd think he was a leper or had Ebola.

Agina shared his story with the Ministry of Health, which is campaigning for the acceptance of many survivors who are stigmatised. Most people survive and are healthy.

It released a video of Agina sharing his ordeal. Even his county was not revealed, lest he and his family suffer more discrimination. We don't know his age or occupation but listen to a masked man tell his story. "It's painful being labelled, stereotyped, discriminated against," he said.

"Surviving the coronavirus disease doesn't mean enduring a physical battle - that's just the beginning - but often a psychological and emotional one later."

Although he washed his hands, wore a mask and avoided crowds, he still contracted Covid-19. He was placed in isolation and treated. His case wasn't very serious.

The loneliness and boredom he experienced during isolation



Salvador Agina, a survivor to the novel coronavirus /COURTESY

made him turn to social media, which was full of falsehoods and horror stories, he said.

He called some information on social media "scary and stressful" to him. It caused unnecessary panic among his family members.

Some patients under treatment vowed never to look at social media. "Some patients had even stopped checking social media sites because they were giving us a lot of negative information that your sickness is getting worse," he said.

After he tested positive, his family was shunned. Now that he's healthy, they are still shunned.

It was so bad that his children, who tested negative, were not allowed to mingle with others and play with other children. That was before the advisory to stay indoors and observe social distancing whenever possible.

Agina pleaded with the public

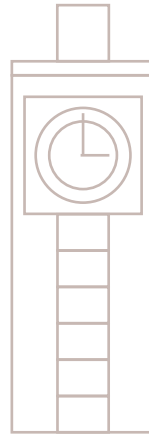
to heed government directives to prevent more infections. "I was washing my hands and doing everything that the ministry had advised. Unfortunately, I was infected," Agina said.

According to him, Kenyans typically ignore government directives, though they are meant to save lives.

The Covid-19 survivor has also said it is unfortunate some people classified some communities, homes and even roads as 'corona areas' once word went around of a positive case. "People should not label a house as a corona house because I was hearing people saying that road has corona. We should avoid classifying estates, lanes and some communities as having corona," Agina said.

On Wednesday, Health CAS Mercy Mwangangi urged the public to accept and warmly receive virus survivors' back home.

CORRIDORS OF POWER



POLITICAL GOSSIP

Who is doing what and where in the world of politics

★ **A ROGUE COUNTY** commissioner in one of the western counties is taking advantage of the directives to fight the coronavirus to extort money from well-wishers. The government directed that all donations go through the office of the county commissioners but this particular official, who was posted to the county last year, has become a tyrant. He recently demanded Sh200,000 from a well-wisher to distribute relief aid. First, he demanded Sh150,000, which the well-wisher paid. Then he stopped distribution and demanded Sh50,000, which was paid. The well-wisher hopes Interior CS **Fred Matiang'i** (pictured) will move with speed to save residents from the rogue administrator.

★ **THAT THE PREVAILING** curfew has upset the normal social order is not in doubt. The new normal has, however, made a philanthropic senior officer in Rift Valley get creative in arranging his liaisons at the office away from prying eyes. Corridors understands a senior officer in the Office of the Governor decided to quench his thirst by savouring the boss's secretary to the astonishment of the county staff. The man has been threatening everyone with a lawsuit should the escapade leak. Those in the know say this has been his modus operandi and he is spending generously after the Sh250 million Covid-19 fund was approved.

★ **A JUBILEE GOVERNOR** has bitterly fallen out with one of his most trusted communications officers. The county boss has stopped the man, who used to boast to journalists that he was the closest among his peers to the governor, from setting foot in county offices. Over the weekend, the man forwarded to the governor a journalist's post of a screenshot of a newspaper containing the images of governors who have performed best and worst during this Covid-19 period. The county boss's name was missing. But the governor replied harshly, telling him that he has failed to do his PR work.

★ **THAT POLICE OFFICERS** have been harassing citizens found in breach of curfew and virus prevention rules is not news. What may come as a surprise is the concern by some of their colleagues that some curfew enforcement operations could be illegal. An officer has told Corridors that a number of policemen - who have a penchant for demanding bribes from violators - have been operating without orders from their bosses. Affected persons want Inspector General of Police **Hillary Mutyambai** to clarify his orders on exactly what is and is not allowed and how police in the wrong are dealt with.

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

CARTOON



FINDING CURE CS MUTAHI KAGWE SAYS KEMRI TRYING OUT A POWDER USED AGAINST HERPES SIMPLEX

Researchers turn to herbal medicine to treat Covid-19

JOHN MUCHANGI
AND ALPHONCE GARI
@TheStarKenya

Kenya has identified some traditional and herbal medicines likely to treat Covid-19.

The front-runner is a herbal product developed by the Kenya Medical Research Institute to treat herpes simplex, a common viral disease that causes sores on the mouth and genitals.

The Ministry of Health says Zedupex was developed by Kenyan scientists from medicinal trees more than five years ago.

"Kemri has commenced exploring the efficacy of its in-house product (Zedupex) and other natural products against Covid-19," Health Cabinet Secretary Muthahi Kagwe said in his response to questioning by MPs on Wednesday.

Zedupex was developed by three scientists at the institute's Natural Products Research and Drug Development Research Programme.

It was patented in 2016 and registered as a herbal product by the PPB the same year.

It is available in powder form packed in 250-gramme containers.

The prescription for herpes simplex is a teaspoonful of Zedupex powder in a cup of boiled water.

"It is one of the herbal products with antiviral properties we are testing for efficacy. But it is definitely safe and that's the most important," Dr Festus Tolo, one of the researchers behind the drug, told The Star.

The trials are being done at Kemri's city laboratory. The drug, which is a Kemri intellectual property, has not been administered on any coronavirus patient.

Tolo said it is too early to speak

about the drug's efficacy against Covid-19.

Both herbal and traditional medicines of plant origin have, according to Tolo, provided templates for synthetic drugs and will play a role in the search for Covid-19 treatment.

"For instance, the oldest malaria treatment, quinine, was developed from a tree extract before it was synthesised," he said.

Kenya is not the only country exploring the treatment of the disease with herbal products.

Chinese scientists are investigating the Japanese knotweed, scientifically known as *polygonum cuspidatum*.

The Chinese use the weed to treat various conditions including pneumonia. It is listed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as one of the world's 100 worst invasive species.

Tolo cautioned Kenyans against rushing to unproven herbal products for treatment.

Last week, Kaya elders in Kilifi invited Kemri scientists to study medicinal plants they claimed could cure Covid-19.

Lawyer Joseph Mwarandu, who is the secretary of Malindi District Cultural Association, claimed a respiratory disease that broke out at the Coast in 1950s was treated with extracts of trees in Kaya forests.

The Star could not authenticate the claims or the 1950s outbreak.

Mwarandu named the trees as Mkadama and Muhirihiri. Neem tree leaves are also boiled to treat the conditions.

The lawyer said the disease was called kivuti, which in some Bantu languages, refers to herpes simplex.

Its symptoms include coughing, sneezing, body pains, fever and



difficulty in breathing.

"The symptoms of coronavirus are similar to those of kivuti. Personally, I saw my mother affected by the virus when I was young and she was treated using traditional herbs. She never went to hospital," he said.

Kemri's Zedupex is being tested as an alternative therapy.

Kenya will also test four standard drugs in hospitals, in a trial approved by the World Health Organisation.

The International Standard Randomised Controlled Trial, the WHO-backed registry for clinical trials, says the standard drugs are Remdesivir, Chloroquine or Hydroxychloroquine, Lopinavir plus

Ritonavir, and Interferon-beta.

Some are given as daily pills and others as daily injections.

The latest update from other trial sites across the world shows Hydroxychloroquine has largely failed, while Remdesivir has promising results.

The Kenyan trial is open to consenting adults above 18 years sick with Covid-19.

"Patients invited to join the study will be those who are admitted to a collaborating hospital," WHO said.

Each patient will only receive one of the treatments. The patients will be followed up for the entire length of their hospital stay.

"Death from any cause will be

BOTH HERBAL AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINES OF PLANT ORIGIN HAVE PROVIDED TEMPLATES FOR SYNTHETIC DRUGS AND WILL PLAY A ROLE IN THE SEARCH FOR COVID-19 TREATMENT - DR FESTUS TOLO



Herbal id-19



Health CS Mutahi Kagwe during a press briefing at Afya House on April 24 / **MERCY MUMO**

recorded and this will be the main result used to determine whether a drug is effective. Length of hospital stay and time to first receiving ventilation (or intensive care) will also be recorded and used to determine the drug's effectiveness," WHO said.

It said all of the drugs tested in the study have been shown to be reasonably safe and other than Remdesivir, the study drugs are used routinely to treat other conditions.

All participants will receive the usual care for people with Covid-19 in each location as well as the study drug.

WHO said unexpected serious side effects may occur as with any clinical trial of medicines.

"It is also possible that treatment with one or more of the test drugs worsens Covid-19 and increases the risk of severe illness or death," WHO said.

The study is being run from WHO's headquarters in Switzerland and will end in 2021.

There is no specific sample size, but it is anticipated at least several thousand patients will be recruited in all the participating countries.

The countries are Kenya, South Africa, Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Lebanon, Malaysia, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Switzerland and Thailand.



CS MUTAHI KAGWE

Kemri has commenced exploring the efficacy of its in-house product (Zedupex) and other natural products against Covid-19



Kaya elder Katana Mwagona, Magarini Cultural Centre director Tsuma Nzai and women elders show herbs used to treat kivuti on April 26 / **ALPHONCE GARI**

THE OPTIONS AGAINST COVID-19

KENYA IS CONSIDERING VARIOUS ANTIVIRALS AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPIES AGAINST THE NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

ANTIVIRALS

HOW THEY WORK

- The Covid-19 virus is a doublestranded RNA virus with 29 proteins
- An RNA-dependent Polymerase protein is unique to the coronavirus that causes Covid-19; it is not present in humans
- Most antivirals are targeting to inhibit this protein, which would prevent the virus from replicating
- Some also target M-Protease, a specific protein that cuts host cell proteins for the virus to digest
- Toxicity and efficacy are important parameters for drugs to ensure that they do not harm essential cells in human beings instead

DRUGS BEING TESTED

REMDESIVIR

APPROVED FOR: Previously tested in humans for Ebola, but yet to be approved or licensed for it.



TRIALS FOR COVID: Gilead has initiated two randomised human trials. Results about safety and efficacy of the drug expected by May 2020.

KEY RESEARCH: A University of Chicago study involving 125 COVID patients shows the condition of 123 improved after taking the drug

LOPINAVIR/RITONAVIR

Brand names: Emletra/ Lopimune
Approved for: HIV



TRIALS FOR COVID: Oxford University is conducting human trials. Trials are also on using a third immunomodulator drug (interferon beta) by WHO

KEY RESEARCH: Trials at the Jin Yin-Tan Hospital in China found the drug helped improve symptoms rapidly after being administered to 199 patients

HYDROXYCHLOROQUINE

Brand name: Plaquenil
Approved for: Malaria



TRIALS FOR COVID: Novartis plans human trials in the US to test the drug against COVID-19

KEY RESEARCH: Early studies from US and China show disappointing results in treating Covid-19

ALTERNATIVE THERAPY

ZEDUPEX

Developed at: KEMRI
Patented: in 2016
Registered with: Pharmacy and Poisons Board. Currently used to treat Herpes Simplex Given in powder form



EXPERT COMMENT
DR RICHARD AYAH

Covid-19: Save lives, riches will come later

By April 29, the total deaths from Covid-19 in Kenya were 15, translating to a crude death rate (CDR) of 3.9 per cent.

The crude death rate has risen rapidly across the world in the last 28 days. On March 30, 2020, the global CDR was 4.8 per cent. Currently, the global CDR is 6.9 per cent mainly driven by Europe, where the CDR as at April 29, 2020, was 9.1 per cent. In Africa it is 4.0 per cent.

However, what should concern Africans, is that by and large, Covid-19 appeared at least one month behind the other continents.

The Ministry of Health has recently, began giving a breakdown of the number of Covid-19 cases by county. Each county in Kenya has a population of roughly one million, except Lamu. Of the 384 Covid-19 cases (by April 29), about two thirds are in Nairobi, while 28 per cent are in Mombasa county.

One way to assess this information in terms of risk, is to take into account the relative county populations. Viewed that way, Nairobi county has a Covid-19 incidence rate of 5.5 per 100,000 persons.

Mombasa has an incidence rate of 8.77 per 100,000 persons. Covid-19 infection is worse in Mombasa than in Nairobi, despite having less than half the cases Nairobi has. Mandera county has an incidence rate of 0.92 per 100,000 persons, while all the other counties have very low rates. Kenya as a whole has an incidence rate of 0.8 per 100,000 persons. In Europe, Luxembourg, which many of us would struggle to find on the map, has the highest Covid-19 incidence rate at 621.42 per 100,000.

If this were the incidence in Kenya, we would be having 27,324 cases. Total population of Luxembourg is just over 600,000, so it is roughly the size of Laikipia or Vihiga county. Can any of our counties survive such a case load?

Even in term of number of tests as a country, we are now around 20,000 tests. Luxembourg is one of the richest countries in the world per capita, yet it is suffering.

The challenge of each of our governors is to ensure public health is adequately supported. Riches can come later.

Director, Science and Technology Park, University of Nairobi



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NEWS GENERAL



NO ARRESTS

Five quizzed over death of Buruburu banker in car blaze

ANDREW KASUKU/Detectives on Thursday questioned five people in a bid to unravel the puzzle of a bank employee who died in a fire in his car under unclear circumstances.

On Tuesday, Terance Korir, 36, burnt to death in his Subaru Impreza (pictured) at the parking yard of Mai Mahiu court along Katulo Road in Buruburu Phase 5. Those who have written statements at Buruburu police station include his wife Ruth Wanjiru and their house help.

A neighbour who was the first to respond was also called to record a statement. Others are two private security guards manning the main entrance of the court. They were also among the first responders and participated in putting out the fire.

Buruburu subcounty police commander Adamson Bungei said nobody has been arrested so far and the five were allowed to go home after recording statements.

Sources said police were pursuing the possibility of suicide. A source at Mai Mahiu court said the couple loved each other. "People are saying maybe it's the wife who killed the husband, but he used to escort her daily while she left for work," the source said when the Star visited the estate on Thursday.

LEGAL QUESTIONS RAISED

Ipoa to give reports on Garissa varsity attack in court

SUSAN MUHINDI/The Independent Policing and Oversight Authority has been directed to furnish court with investigation reports they are holding on the Garissa University attack.

The directive comes after victims of the attack and lobby group Kituo cha Sheria said the security of the country will not be compromised if the reports are made available as the court can apply various measures to ensure protective disclosure is made.

Justice James Makau said the parents and the lobby (petitioners) have demonstrated there is greater public interest in disclosure of the information in ensuring they obtain a remedy from the court and further in promoting accountability.

"The court ought to be furnished with such reports in exercise of its judicial authority as provided in the Constitution," Makau said.

The Commission on Administrative Justice will also be required to furnish the report to the petitioners and the court.

SAYS SHE IS FINANCIALLY STABLE

Case where man challenges order to give ex-wife Sh180k monthly referred to judge

ANNETTE WAMBULWA/A case in which a man has challenged an order to pay his ex-wife Sh180,000 monthly upkeep has been referred back to the High Court for review.

The Court of Appeal on Friday last week ruled that the High Court erred in law when it did not review the maintenance as had been asked by the man who was seeking review of the orders issued in 2010 by Justice Kalpa Rawal. The couple got married in 1988 but dissolved their marriage in 2008. Justice Rawal ordered the husband to pay Sh120,000 monthly maintenance and another Sh60,000 for anticipatory rent.

At the time, he appealed the decision and managed to get a stay of the execution in 2010,

However, in 2017, the former wife filed a case seeking to lift the

stay orders leading the case to the High Court before Justice Aggrey Machelule.

In their ruling, justices Roselyne Nambuye, Martha Koome and Fatuma Sichale held that Machelule had erred in law by not determining the issue of review of the terms.

"It is our finding that the judge exercised his discretion wrongly in deeming the orders of February 11, 2010, to have lapsed with the withdrawal of the notice of appeal because these were the very orders that appellant had appealed against. They could not, therefore, have lapsed with the withdrawal of the notice of appeal," the court ruled.

However the court said the judges would not determine the request made and would also refer it to the High Court.

STAY ORDERS

Court bars retired judge Githinji from being sworn into tax tribunal office

ANNETTE WAMBULWA/Retired Judge Erastus Githinji will not be sworn into office as the new chairperson of the Tax Appeals Tribunal after the Employment and Labour Relations Court temporarily barred him from taking over the office pending hearing of a case filed in court.

Chama Cha Mawakili has sued Treasury CS Ukur Yatani and the Attorney General over the appointment of Githinji to the job.

Justice Hellen Wasilwa on Thursday issued temporary orders barring the retired judge from taking oath of office or assuming the functions of the office.

She directed CCM to serve all the parties pending the inter-parties hearing on May 12.

In an affidavit by their director Georgiadis Majimbo, the lobby group argues that Justice Githinji's

appointment violates the section of law on transparency and fair completion as there was public participation.

"On April 15, the Treasury CS appointed Githinji to be the chairperson of the Tax Appeals Tribunal for a term of five years effective the same date," court documents read.

Majimbo says he is aware that Section 4 (3) (a) of the Tax Appeals Tribunal Act, 2013 provides that a person shall not be appointed chairperson to the tribunal unless that person is qualified to be appointed as a Judge of the High Court.

However, Justice Githinji served as a judge of the Court of Appeal and retired last year on December 29 upon attaining the mandatory age of retirement hence he is unqualified to be appointed as a judge of the High Court.



PHOTOSTORY: A Muslim faithful conducts his afternoon prayers for Ramadan outside his home in Ziwani in Kariokor, Nairobi, on Thursday. The government closed down mosques and churches to curb the spread of coronavirus /VICTOR IMBOTO

GREENLIGHT

NTSA to allow grounded long haul buses to ply short routes

Transport CS Macharia says move aimed at cushioning operators from further losses

JULIUS OTIENO
@juliusotieno



Long-distance public service vehicles have been allowed to ply short routes after the government imposed travel restrictions that grounded their operations.

President Uhuru Kenyatta on April 6 ordered the cessation of movement in and out of Nairobi, Mombasa, Kilifi and Kwale counties to contain the spread of coronavirus.

Most long-distance matatus have been grounded because most of their trips either end or start in Nairobi and Mombasa counties.

The vehicles can not change routes without authorisation by the National Transport and Safety Authority.

NTSA on Thursday said it will start issuing short-term licenses for such

vehicles to operate within the counties where they are grounded.

Transport CS James Macharia said the move is aimed at ensuring operators do not suffer huge losses as a result of the order meant to arrest the spread of Covid-19.

"NTSA is considering introducing short-term licenses to these affected operators upon application because we don't know how long those vehicles will lie within the premises where they are grounded," Macharia said.

Macharia told the Senate ad hoc committee on Covid-19 that the vehicles will ease transportation problems especially at this time when PSVs are required to carry fewer passengers. The minister said Kenya Railways has added 40 new passenger coaches to its trains to address the problem in Nairobi.

"We want to ensure that we carry

as many people as possible while at the same time maintain the social distance," Macharia said.

The CS said the ministry had also started procuring a system for cashless payment of bus fare in the country to avoid the use of notes and coins to limit the transmission and spread of Covid-19.

"What we have done is to get NTSA to engage public transport stakeholders to see how they can put a system in place. Specifications have been put in place aimed at safeguarding the interests of all parties," he said.

The minister said he has reached out to the Nairobi Metropolitan Service director general Maj. Gen Mohamed Badi to waive seasonal parking fees for matatus in the city during this period of Covid-19 pandemic.

The move is aimed at cushioning

the owners of the vehicles from further losses due to stringent measures introduced to curb coronavirus spread.

On the matter of long-distance truck drivers who have been blamed for spreading the virus, Macharia said the issue has been addressed jointly by all the East Africa countries as it involves cross-border movements.

Among the measures introduced are mandatory tests for the drivers at the point of entry and exit and issuance of surveillance forms to track their whereabouts and movements.

"This had been a problem because the idea was to make sure we have a uniform way of handling it. It has also been escalated to the presidents to ensure we have seamless movement of cargo," Macharia told the committee chaired by Nairobi Senator Johnson Sakaja.



**Gifty Quarcoo, born August 24, 1956 in Ghana,
passed on April 28, 2020 in Nairobi**

It is with humble acceptance that we announce the untimely death of Gifty Quarcoo, beloved wife of Patrick Quarcoo, the CEO of Radio Africa Group.

She was the mother of Irene, Clarence and Rachael.

In line with prevailing government regulations, there will be no gatherings or prayer meetings at her home and the funeral arrangements will be private.

“You will do everything you have promised: Lord, your Love is eternal.
Complete the work you have begun.” - **Psalm 138: 1-3, 6-8**

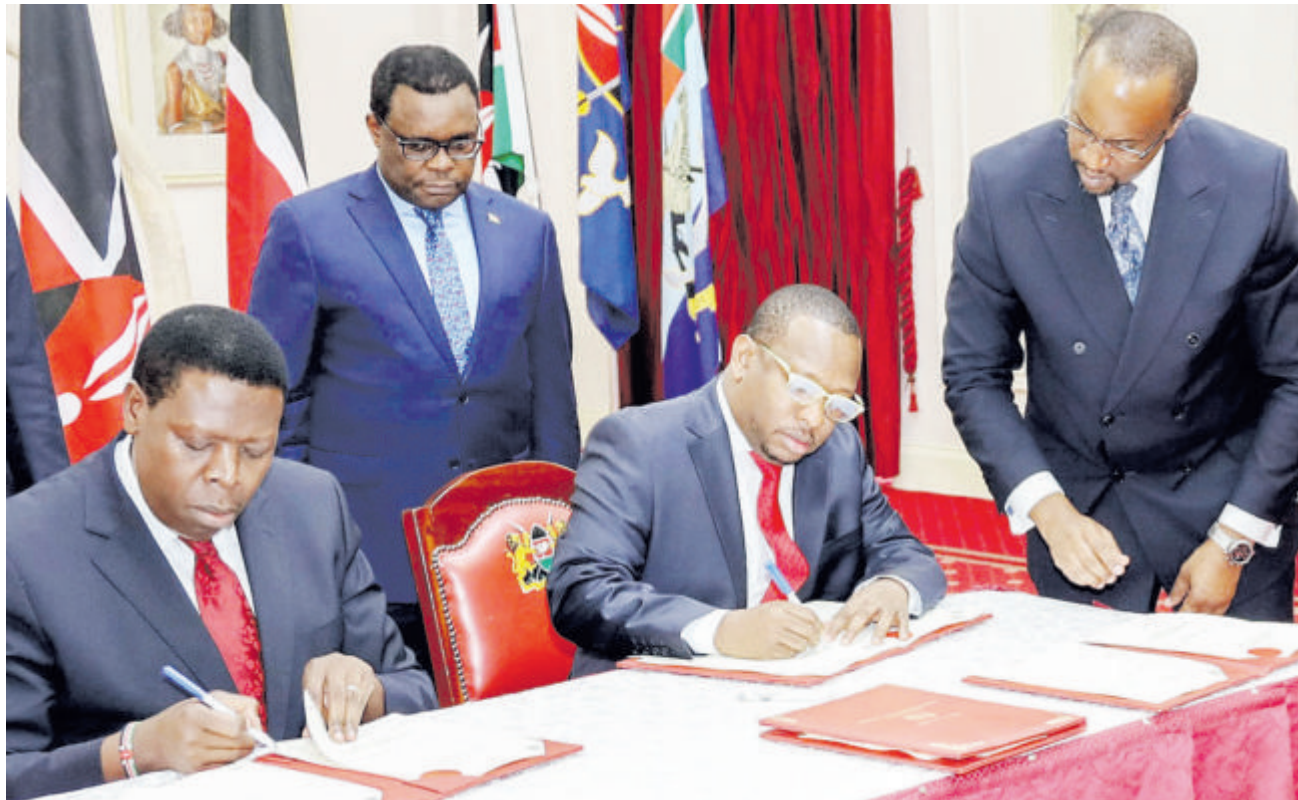
There will be a memorial service at a later date.

NEWS GENERAL

TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS TO STATE

Senators probe contentions around takeover of Nairobi

Governor threatened to start the process of terminating the deal



JULIUS OTIENO
@TheStarKenya



A Senate committee has launched investigations into the controversies surrounding the transfer of key Nairobi county functions to the national government.

The Devolution and Intergovernmental Relations committee kicked off the inquiries on Thursday in the wake of threats by Governor Mike Sonko to pull out of the transfer deal.

Chairman John Kinyua said the probe will revolve around the funding of the transferred functions and the roles of the county and Nairobi Metropolitan Service in the arrangement.

"We met today (Thursday) to set the drums and agree on who we are

going to invite to appear before us. We are concerned as a committee with what is going on at City Hall," Kinyua said.

Sonko signed away Health, Transport, Public Works and Planning and Auxiliary services to the national government.

But barely two months later, the transfer ran into problems with the governor threatening to start the process of terminating the deal.

The county boss has protested breach of the deed of transfer by some unnamed government officials around the President who he claimed have hijacked the process.

He has also had problems with the transfer of Sh15 billion to the NMS in the revised county budget.

Kinyua said his committee will prioritise the issue of funding of the transferred county functions.

This, the Laikipia senator said, has been necessitated by the move by the Treasury and the National Assembly to retain billions of county funds in the national government.

"Our resolution was that the money should go to the county first because it is county money. It is from there that it can be sent to NMS after the county assembly approved the budget for the functions," he said.

The chairman further disclosed that the committee was considering proposing amendments to the Intergovernmental Relations Act to lighten the loose nuts surrounding the transfer of functions to either level of government.

Specifically, the committee wants the Act to provide for mandatory participation of both the county assembly and the public before transfers are done.

Senate Speaker Kenneth Lusaka and Solicitor General Njee Muturi witness as Devolution CS Eugene Wamalwa and Nairobi Governor Mike Sonko sign the agreement on March 12

/PSCU

CARELESS DRIVING

Chinese firm to pay road accident victim Sh700,000

JILLO KADIDA / A woman who sustained head injuries after a vehicle owned by China Wu Yi rammed her car has been awarded Sh1 million compensation.

Angela Katunge Musau will, however, only get Sh700,000 because 30 per cent of the total award is discounted.

In his award, Justice George Odunga said the award given to Musau by a magistrate court's was low.

"Considering the lapse of years and the inflationary tendencies as well as the resultant consequences in both cases, I find that the award made by the trial magistrate was inordinately low. Accordingly, I substitute the award of Sh700,000 in general damages with Sh1,000,000," he said. The accident occurred on January 3, 2012, along the Mombasa-Nairobi road.

COVID-19 VICTIM

Njiru's portrait to represent his body in Meru cathedral crypt

GERALD MUTETHIA / A portrait will be hung in a crypt at Meru Catholic Cathedral where Bishop Silas Silvius Njiru would have been buried.

Njiru, the first African bishop of Meru diocese, died of Covid-19 on Tuesday in Turin, Italy, aged 92. He was diagnosed with the virus and hospitalised three days before his death. The death was announced by Fr Pedro Jose da Silva Luoro, the secretary-general of Consolata Missionaries. Njiru retired in 2004 after serving for 25 years as Meru bishop. He thereafter moved to the Blessed Joseph Allamano house in Alpignano, Turin.

He was succeeded by Bishop Salesius Mugambi. He had succeeded Bishop Lawrence Bessone. A requiem mass in Meru was yesterday presided over by Mugambi during which he announced that the portrait would be symbolic as Njiru's body cannot be brought home.

UNFAIR ACCUSATION

Approval of service board nominees 'can't be rushed'

STAR REPORTER / Kitui assembly Speaker George Ndotto has dismissed accusations by Governor Charity Ngilu that he is a stumbling block to the appointment of the County Public Service Board.

On Wednesday, Ngilu said Ndotto had caused an undue delay to the ratification of the nominees presented to the assembly on February 14.

But the speaker, in a statement to the media on Thursday, said there was no unreasonable delay in the vetting process by the county assembly as alleged. He said the vetting and approval or otherwise of the CPSB members was a legal process and could not be rushed.

"In fact, the assembly has made a lot of effort to have the process concluded despite not receiving very crucial information from the appointing authority as well as working under very stressful times because of coronavirus," the speaker said.

KEEPING IT LOCAL

No more imports for police uniforms – CS

Says fight against contraband is on

MAGDALINE SAYA / The government will not back down on local sourcing of materials and production of goods, Interior CS Fred Matiang'i has said.

"A while ago, our overalls (coats) used to be imported from China but never again. These coats are made

locally and they are warm enough," Matiang'i said.

He spoke at his Harambee House office after receiving a donation of jungle green police jackets from Kenya Association of Manufacturers chairperson Sachin Gudka and United Aryan Limited chairperson

Pankaj Debi. All coats, gear and boots for the National Police Service will be made locally. "We have to promote local businesses and create employment," he said.

The CS said the government is determined to improve the economy and not allow the exportation of jobs.

He thanked those who have donated handwashing units, masks and sanitiser to police stations.

"I am happy that people have learnt to say thank you to the security personnel. I was impressed by the women in Tala who cooked for our police officers manning a roadblock."

Matiang'i reiterated that the government will not back down in the fight against contraband goods to

protect local manufacturers.

"We have taken very ruthless measures. Whenever we impound trucks ferrying contraband goods like sugar, the seizures are destroyed immediately. That is how we can protect local industries," he said, adding: "Protecting Kenyan jobs and businesses is now a national security issue. We can no longer allow our businesses to go south."

Interior PS Karanja Kibicho said the NYS, who exclusively sourced local fabric and knitted police uniforms in Ruaraka, will henceforth be assisted by the private sector to hasten the process.

"This week, we signed contracts so that the uniforms will be ready by June 30," Kibicho said.



National Youth Service personnel at NYS School of Fashion and Design on April 16 / WILFRED NYANGARESI

NEWS JUDICIARY

BREACH OF PUBLIC DUTY

Ex-KMC boss ordered to repay Sh11.5m he looted

Ibrahim found guilty of dishonest expenditure, will refund with interest

BENJAMIN IMENDE
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The former chief executive officer of Kenya Meat Commission Ibrahim Haji Isaak has been ordered to refund Sh11.5 million he fraudulently took from the parastatal.

Justice John Onyiego said the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission had proved that Isaak withdrew the money from the KMC account but failed to account for it.

He will repay the money with interest at court rates of 12 per cent from April 30, 2012.

The EACC case was that on or about April 2012, Isaak proceeded to the head office of First Community Bank situated at Jamia Mosque in Nairobi and presented a letter requesting to withdraw Sh11.5 million.

The bank officials approved the withdrawal. Subsequently, the commission received information that the amount withdrawn by the CEO was not accounted for. No paper trail was filed with the KMC office to show how the money requisitioned was spent.

Investigations conducted by the commission revealed that Isaak did not follow the laid down procedure in requisitioning the money.

The withdrawal was termed as fraudulent and in total breach of trust placed in the office of Isaak by the public. EACC said the withdrawal was made purportedly on behalf of KMC but the funds were used for private gain as no receipts of accounts were filed.

Judge Onyiego said Isaak failed to account for the public funds. He was duty-bound to refund the money to the corporation through the EACC. He said the former boss did not explain to the satisfaction of the court how he spent the money withdrawn.

Isaak defended himself that the



Auditor General's financial report for the year ending June 30, 2012 did not flag any irregularity and that the commission was given a clean bill of health.

But Onyiego ruled that the absence of an accurate auditor's report could not invalidate the available strong evidence.

"I looked at the report attached by Haji which seemed not to have captured any specific expenditure on the account in question," the judge said.

The report, he said, was not con-

clusive per se and if there was other available strong evidence to hold a party liable, a court could not be swayed by an auditor's report especially when they are conflicting.

Isaak had claimed that he used the money to buy livestock for the commission in Narok and Garissa.

But evidence on record by various witnesses indicated that he was not authorised by the corporation's management or board to withdraw the cash. He was also not supposed to go to the market to do direct cash purchase of livestock.

Former Kenya Meat Commission CEO Ibrahim Haji Isaak in a Milimani court /FILE

SH10 BILLION AT RISK

Omtatah sues state over abolition of SGR trust fund

JILLO KADIDA/An activist has asked the High Court to suspend a legal notice which abolished the Strategic Food Reserve trust fund, putting at risk Sh10 billion in its accounts.

Okiya Omtatah says if the notice is not suspended, there is a high likelihood that the money will be misappropriated or put to other uses. He has sued Treasury CS Ukur Yatani, the Attorney-General, Agriculture CS Peter Munya and the National Cereals and Produce Board.

He says the notice was not subjected to public participation as required by the Constitution hence it should not be allowed to stand.

The fund was established to provide the Strategic Food Reserve with physical stock and cash equivalent.

The SFR includes maize, beans, rice, fish, powdered milk and canned beef. Currently, no other organ has the mandate to discharge the functions of the reserve fund.

The fund's mandate is to stabilise the food supply and prices, arrange for procurement, storage and sale of food commodities and maintain adequate food reserves in physical stock or cash equivalent at any given time.

According to documents filed in court, the initial capital of the fund was Sh2.2 billion appropriated by Parliament in 2014-15. Additional capital of the fund was made in the subsequent financial years.

The fund also solicits and receives funds and other assistance to promote the object of its establishment.

Omtatah believes no public interest will be served by abolishing the fund, which he says is well-managed and is executing its mandate perfectly.

HEALTH REGULATIONS

Kitui priest to be charged with exposing others to Covid-19

MUSEMBI NZENGU/A Kitui priest will on Monday be charged with exposing Kenyans to Covid-19.

Fr Nicholas Maanzo was to appear in court on Thursday but the arraignment was postponed due to a technical hitch, Kitui county principal prosecution counsel Bonny Okemwa explained. He said a key prosecution document from the medical department had not been finalised and Maanzo's lawyer was held up in Nairobi, which is on partial lockdown.

"We are thrashing out the issue to come up with the best way we can prosecute the case without a hitch. We are gathering all the relevant documents so we have a watertight case," Okemwa said on the phone.

Fr Maanzo returned to Kenya from Ireland in late March and was advised to self-quarantine for 14 days. However, a day after he arrived at his home in Kitui he allegedly went to an ATM at a bank in Kitui town and attempted to access a supermarket. He was not allowed into the supermarket as it was about to close.

Days later the priest was rushed to Mbagathi Hospital in Nairobi with coronavirus symptoms.

APPEAL FLOPS

Githurai killer officer to spend 15 years in jail

FAITH NYASUGUTA/ The appellate court has dismissed an appeal for acquittal by a police officer found guilty of gunning down a suspect in Githurai seven years ago.

Titus Ngamau Musila, aka Katitu, who was popular among Githurai residents for combating crime, will still serve 15 years at the Kamiti Maximum Prison.

In 2018, High Court Judge James Wakiaga convicted Katitu of murdering Kenneth Kimani Mwangi in March 2013.

It was the prosecution's case that Katitu confronted Mwangi, a notorious criminal in the area who

had snatched a mobile phone from a passenger and tried to run away from the scene.

"The officer suddenly reached him, pushed him to the ground, drew his pistol and shot him," a witness testified.

Katitu denied the charges. Though confirming being at the scene of the shooting, he maintained that he only responded to an alarm that had been raised.

He added that upon seeing Mwangi, who was in a group of several youths, fleeing, he fired three times in the air as he pursued him.

The court, however, did not buy

the accused person's defence.

Katitu's arrest in 2014 sparked protests, demonstrations and running battles between residents and law enforcers in Githurai 45.

The residents demanded his release, saying he had helped reduce crime in Githurai 45, Zimmerman and Githurai Kimbo.

In his judgment, Justice Wakiaga said the suspect did not deserve to die the way he did.

"The victim was well known in the area but the police officer should have protected the society by arresting him if it was true that he was a robber," he said.



Titus Ngamau is led to Milimani court cells on September 17, 2014 /FILE

NEWS GENERAL



COVID-19 EFFECTS

Families preserve bodies at home to avoid morgue fees

Government has directed bodies be buried within 48 hours

GORDON OSEN
@TheStarKenya



Families upcountry are no longer taking their dead to mortuaries, choosing instead to preserve bodies using traditional means at home before burial in a day or a few hours.

Phelgon Juma is one such case. When she died last week, her family did not take the body to a mortuary. They preserved her body and buried her the next day.

Mati Nyamai, whose wife Vidia Nduku died in a botched birth operation on March 29, took her body home in Makueni for burial the following day, rather than keep it in a morgue.

"It is better to keep the body at home rather than incur the cost in morgues yet they want us to bury [bodies] as quickly as possible," he told the Star.

This change in burial practices follows the directives by the Ministry of Health on mourning to con-

trol the spread of the coronavirus. The government banned gatherings of more than 15 people during burials. Burials must also be conducted within 48 hours after death.

The restrictions have led to people being buried without some of their close family members and relatives present. Ordinarily, funerals attract large crowds, especially in western Kenya.

For instance, when Hezron Kizito, 76, died early this month in Kanyakwar village, Kisumu, he was buried within 24 hours, which before was unheard of among the Luo.

LONG QUEUES

In normal times, the community would not rush the burial of a person of his age and stature. The body would have been kept in a mortuary for more than two weeks as elaborate funeral plans were made.

"It is very sad that my father was buried hurriedly as though he was unwanted," Kennedy Kizito said.

Jane Nyangweso has gone to Nyayo House for two days now, hoping to get papers to allow her

relatives to transport her brother's body from Nairobi to Oyugis for burial.

She first went to the building on Monday after her brother passed away on Sunday, but the queue was too long and she was not served.

She tried again on Tuesday, arriving there before 9am but by midday, she had not yet been served.

The government has banned movement in and out of Nairobi and four other counties. Bereaved families have to get a permit to transport bodies for burial upcountry.

An administrative officer at Nyayo House said the queues are long because they have to thoroughly scrutinise each case to ensure only genuine ones are given passes.

Speaking on condition of anonymity, the officer said scrutiny was heightened after it was found that some applicants are lying.

"Some of the applications were questionable. The long queue will be here for some time as scrutiny is enhanced," he said.

Brenda Akinyi weeps on the grave of her mother, Ursula Namoonja Buluma, at Mbaraki Cemetery in Mombasa county. Her mother succumbed to the coronavirus disease a few weeks ago. Brenda missed her mother's burial after she was taken to Coast Provincial General Hospital / JOHN CHESOLI

PREVENTION

Girls due for second HPV vaccine dose

JOHN MUCHANGI/ Thousands of girls who received the Human Papillomavirus vaccine in early October are due for their second and final dose.

The vaccination was launched by then Health Cabinet Secretary Sicily Kariuki last year on October 18, to reach all girls aged 10 with two doses administered six months apart.

Pilot studies in Kenya showed for the two-dose schedule to be effective, it has to be timed just right.

Unicef Kenya, which supported the rollout last year, has called on parents to ensure their girls do not miss the second and final dose.

Dr Peter Okoth, a health specialist at Unicef Kenya, also urged parents whose girls are turning 10 to avail them for vaccination at health facilities.

"Vaccination has not stopped and is ongoing in all health facilities," he told the Star.

The East African region has the highest burden of cervical cancer in the world.

In Kenya, where HPV is the number one cause of cancer in women between the ages of 15 and 44, approximately 5,250 new cases are diagnosed annually.

Safe and effective HPV vaccines can prevent up to 90 per cent of all cervical cancer cases.

"Nearly all cases of cervical cancer can be prevented through vaccination, potentially saving around 3,000 women's lives in Kenya every year," Unicef Kenya Representative Maniza Zaman said last year during the launch.

The ministry is targeting about 800,000 girls in one year and so far, at least 400,000 have received their first doses. Dr Okoth also urged parents to ensure their babies receive their routine immunisation.

"Health facilities have already been issued with guidelines to ensure there is no risk to children during the Covid-19 outbreak so parents have no reason to fear," he said.

Dr Okoth said failure to vaccinate babies could lead to a resurgence in measles, whooping cough and other serious, vaccine-preventable illnesses.

Immunisation coverage in Kenya now stands at about 85 per cent, up from a low of 60 per cent in 2016. Last year, the country also rolled out malaria vaccines for children in eight malaria-endemic counties in Western Kenya.

The immunisation schedule is given by the division of vaccines and immunisations in the Ministry of Health and is commonly known as the Kenya Expanded Programme on Immunisation. There are also additional vaccines commonly offered in private hospitals that may not be in the Kenya Expanded Programme on Immunisation (KEPI) schedule.

Until 2011, Kenya did not have a pneumococcal vaccine in its national childhood immunisation schedule.

Last year, a study published online in *The Lancet*, evaluated the effect of this vaccine, called PCV10, on a large scale in Kenya.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine is administered to a 10-year-old girl during the launch of the HPV vaccine at Ziwani Primary in Mombasa county /PSCU



LOW ENROLMENT

Colleges' dilemma over reduced appetite for teaching profession

LEWIS NYAUNDI/ Teachers' colleges are in a dilemma as the number of students enrolling for teaching programmes continues to decrease.

The 2020 Economic Survey report, which was unveiled in Nairobi on Tuesday, indicates a downward trend in enrolment of students seeking to pursue certificate and diploma courses.

According to the survey, the number of teachers training colleges reduced from 406 in 2018 to 384 in 2019.

Over the same period, the population of trainees dropped by a quarter to 31,737 from 39,000.

The reduction is partly attributed to the low number of candidates scoring C plain in KCSE, which is the minimum entry score to teacher training colleges.

However, the report also attributes the reduction in the number of trainees to the one-year halt on admission as the colleges upgrade the current certificate—popularly referred to as P1—training to diploma.

These colleges have since witnessed a decrease in enrolment by half to 11,111 in 2019, further risking hundreds of academic staff jobs in the institutions.

Admission is expected to resume in September.

The number of those currently taking diploma teaching programmes also declined by 5.6 per cent from 2,158 in 2018 to 2,037 last year. During the review period, enrolment of male teacher trainees in diploma colleges decreased by 13.0 per cent, while that of female teacher trainees increased by 3.8 per cent.

NEWS GENERAL

CARNAGE

Road accidents increased by 13.6%

Blamed on improper overtaking, speeding and crossing the road without due care at junctions

GILBERT KOECH
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The number of people who died in road accidents last year increased by 13.6 per cent to 3,586, latest statistics shows.

The Economic Survey 2020, which was released on Tuesday, shows that the number of reported traffic accidents also increased by 39.3 per cent from 5,158 in 2018 to 7,184 in 2019.

“The number of reported casualties increased by 22.3 per cent to 15,747 in 2019,” the survey shows.

It shows that the number of people that were seriously injured in the accidents increased by 48.5 per cent to 6,952.

In 2015, reported road traffic accidents were 5,310, while in 2016 had 5,296.

In 2017, there were 4,452 reported accidents compared to 5,158 in 2018 and 7,184 last year.

Those killed in 2015 were 3,057 and 2016 had 2,965. In 2017, some 2,919 victims died as a result of a road crash. A total of 3,158 passed on in 2018 and 3,586 last year.

The survey shows that 4,731 victims were seriously injured in 2015 as compared to 4,661 victims in 2016.

In 2017, 3,943 victims were seriously injured as compared to 4,681 in 2018 and 6,952 last year.

Further, the survey shows that 4,350 victims were slightly injured in 2015 as compared to 5,533 in 2016.

In 2017, some 4,353 victims were slightly injured compared to 5,038 in 2018 and 5,209 last year.

“The reasons given for the increase in accidents were losing control of vehicles, improper overtaking, speeding and crossing the road without due care at the junctions,” the survey says.

The number of vehicles and motorcycles being registered and those responsible for road accidents is in-

creasing on Kenyan roads.

According to the survey, the number of newly registered motor vehicles increased by 7.6 per cent from 102,036 units in 2018 to 109,751 units in 2019.

The number of station wagons registered also increased by 13.0 per cent to 72,512 units.

The number of new minibuses registered more than doubled from 812 units in 2018 to 1,932 units in 2019.

This may be attributed to improved performance of public transport coupled with increased acquisition of buses by learning institutions.

The survey shows that the number of newly registered motorcycles increased by 11.4 per cent to 217,425 units in 2019.

This was mainly driven by an 11.2 per cent increase in the number of newly registered motor and autocycles that rose from 188,994 units in 2018 to 210,103 units in 2019.

Newly registered three-wheelers increased by 17.0 per cent from 6,259 units in 2018 to 7,322 units in 2019.

However, the number of newly registered saloon cars decreased by 5.1 per cent to 9,971 units while that of panel vans and pick-ups dropped by 9.2 per cent to 10,189 units in 2019.

Similarly, the newly registered wheeled tractors shrunk by 55.1 per cent from 4,040 units in 2018 to 1,815 units in 2019 while trailers dropped from 2,083 units to 1,639 units during the same period.

The decline in newly registered wheeled tractors may be attributed to the continuation of major construction projects that had started earlier while the reduction in trailers registered was largely associated with the use of SGR as an alternative mode of transport.

The number of PSV licences issued rose by 10.3 per cent from 57,949 in 2018 to 63,938 in 2019.

An onlooker at the scene of an accident at Kamulu involving a City Shuttle bus and a private car on March 23 /COURTESY



SATURATED GROUND

Landslides destroy 5,000 acres, floods displace 300 people

Heavy cultivation and deforestation have removed vegetation with deep roots that held the soil together

ALICE WAIHERA
@alicewangechi



More than 5,000 acres have been ruined by landslides in Murang'a county and more than 300 people affected by floods and mudslides.

Central region Red Cross manager Gitonga Mugambi said landslides have mainly affected Mathiyoa and Kigumo subcounties where tens of families have been displaced and about 10 hours destroyed.

The Red Cross is assessing the extent of damage and numbers of people displaced and in need.

Gitonga also said the assessment will establish how the coronavirus has affected residents and how the destitute can be assisted.

“All these people have had their livelihoods disrupted and their source of income destroyed,” he said.

Most of the affected people already were in need, he said, calling on the county government to provide urgent assistance.

In the region, Murang'a has the highest number of landslides, followed by Kiambu, Nyeri and Kirinyaga.

About 200 families have been affected.

Gitonga urged people displaced by the rains to avoid camping in schools and encouraged other families to take them in to avoid spread of the coronavirus.

About 25,000 people are suffering from the economic effects of Covid-19 and require assistance.

“The virus has aggravated the situation and made it impossible for the people who depended on casual labour to continue working normally,” Gitonga said.

Trail left by water from Kirimiri dam in Maragua after it broke last December /ALICE WAIHERA

Murang'a director of meteorology Paul Murage said the consistent heavy rains have caused the soil to reach its maximum saturation level.

Heavy cultivation and deforestation have removed vegetation with deep roots that held the soil together. These conditions may lead to more landslides in higher tea zones where bushes grow on slopes.

Last week, the landslides caused a water shortage in Murang'a town after the intake pipe of the Murang'a Water and Sanitation Company was destroyed.

The Maragua River that flows from the Aberdares and joins the Tana River also overflowed its banks at the Matithi area, flooding farms.

Landslides may increase as rains continue to pound the area. Lower Kiharu and Maragua areas are at risk of flooding, weatherman Murage said.

Huge cracks have appeared in Murarandia village, Kahuro subcounty, causing residents to panic.

In December last year, 12 families were displaced after their land started sinking.

Nakadaini Dam, which provides 82 per cent of the water consumed in Nairobi county, has never stopped spilling over since it filled up in November last year.

Murage said the overflow only declined during the first months of the year.

He warned that Waruiru 1 and 2 dams, also known as the Mariiki dam, need to be inspected as they had a leak late last year.

“Most community-run dams that are from the colonial period and should be inspected to have their safety status established,” Murage told the Star.

NEWS BUSINESS



Kenya Airways planes are seen parked at the Jomo Kenyatta International Airport, Nairobi, Kenya./REUTERS

TURBULENCE

KQ now losing Sh9.3bn a month as operations remain grounded

The global aviation industry is estimated to have lost Sh27.6 trillion since January

MARTIN MWITA
@MwitaMartin



Kenya Airways has lost an estimated Sh9.3 billion in revenue for the last one month, management has revealed, as international flights remain banned.

The national carrier which flies to 53 destinations globally has grounded its passenger services since March 25, when it "temporarily suspended" all international services.

The reduced operation between January through to April from forward bookings has resulted in a loss in revenue of \$ 70 million (about Sh7.5 billion), as the global aviation industry remains on its knees as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The government suspended inter-

national flights in March to curb the spread of the virus, which originated from Wuhan-China, after an outbreak in December last year.

On April 5, Transport CS James Macharia extended the ban for another 30 days, effective April 6. This ends on Tuesday next week.

"We started feeling the effect in February after we stopped flying to China, then Italy and the rest followed," Kenya Airways CEO Allan Kilavuka told the Star. "We are now looking at a loss of \$87 million a month in revenues."

The airline has grounded majority of its 36 aircraft, which includes nine Boeing 787 Dreamliners, 10-Boeing 737 aircraft, and 17 Embraers.

"Customers affected by the suspension will be able to change their bookings for later travel or exchange

their booking for vouchers for future travel within 12 months," Kilavuka said before the airline suspended passenger services.

KQ, as it is known by its international code, is currently surviving on the cargo business which is currently cushioning most airlines.

A number of renowned global brands have already gone under with the global aviation industry estimated to have lost \$ 258 billion (Sh27.6 trillion) and Africa \$4.2 billion (Sh450.7 billion) since January.

Kenya Airways is using its passenger planes to transport cargo, complementing its existing cargo fleet of two-Boeing 737-300 freighters.

"Technically, all our passenger aircraft are now at the disposal of the cargo team for use in the carriage of freight, courier, and mail," KQ cargo

general manager Dick Murianki said, noting the planes have not been converted into freighters.

"We just changed the usage with minimal modifications in the passenger cabin to allow loading of packages," he said.

This, however, is limited to what is approved for passenger aircraft carriage and weights per piece.

In essence, KQ can use from the largest aircraft in its fleet (B787-800- with the ability to lift over 42 tons) to the smallest aircraft- (Q400- with the ability to lift around 4tons and above). With the introduction of the wide-body aircraft, KQ now has the capacity to operate long-haul flights for cargo purposes.

Adding to Africa, it has charters to London, Amsterdam, Paris, Dubai, Geneva among other destinations.

INFLATION

Cost of living maintains an upward trend in new data

Food inflation in April stood at 11.58 per cent

SUSANNYAWIRA / Kenya's inflation rate in April increased to 5.62 per cent from a revised 5.51 per cent in March, as Kenyans continued to pay more for food and daily expenses.

According to the Kenya Bureau of Statistics, the high cost of food led to an 1.77 per cent increase in the food and non alcoholic drink's index, while year on year food inflation in

April stood at 11.58 per cent.

"The increase was mainly attributed to increase in prices such as loose maize-grain, sukumawiki, onions, irish potatoes and carrots which increased by 4.00, 4.41, 6.87, 6.41 and 3.58 percent respectively," KNBS said in a statement.

Onions had the highest price increase, shooting up from Sh 110.60

for a kilo to Sh 118.20

The price of a kilo of irish potatoes also shot up from Sh 69.81 to Sh74.29. One kilo of loose maize flour increased from Sh 53.36 to 53.73.

During the same period, housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels' index increased by 0.41 per cent.

This was mainly attributed to an increase in the price of electricity and cooking gas which slightly outweighed the decrease of 19.10 per cent that was recorded in respect of the cost of kerosene.

Hike in matatu and taxi fares due to the 60 per cent occupancy directive led to a 1.32 per cent increase in the transport index during the review period.

However, prices of petrol and diesel dipped by 16.32 per cent and 4.29

per cent, to Sh93.78 and Sh98.51, respectively, over the same period.

The Consumer Price Index increased by 0.86 per cent from 107.00 in March to 107.92 in April.



Kiambu market./FILE

THE DATA

107.2915

The indicative value of the shilling to the dollar

The Kenyan shilling was weaker on Thursday as oil and merchandise importers bought dollars to meet their end-month obligations amid thin inflows, traders said.

FINANCIAL MARKET

FOREX EXCHANGE RATES

Currency	Buy	Sell	Mean
US DOLLAR	107.1918	107.3912	107.2915
STG POUND	132.9494	133.2276	133.0885
SA RAND	5.9008	5.9171	5.9089
KES / USHS	35.3847	35.5438	35.4642
KES / TSHS	21.5008	21.6341	21.5675
JPY (100)	100.6118	100.8084	100.7101
IND RUPEE	1.4290	1.4318	1.4304
EURO	116.2935	116.5388	116.4162
CHINESE YUAN	15.1929	15.2237	15.2083
AE DIRHAM	29.1829	29.2380	29.2105

NSE BIGGEST WINNERS

	Price	Change (%)
E.A BRWERIES	172.75	7.13
E.A CABLES	1.85	6.32
CENTUM INVESTMENT	25.15	5.23
UNGA GROUP	29.20	4.29
SASINI TEA & COFFEE	16.10	3.87

NSE BIGGEST LOSERS

	Price	Change (%)
LIMURU TEA	427.50	10.00
KENGEN	4.55	6.38
KENYA POWER	2.01	5.63
WPP SCAN GROUP	16.00	5.60
HOME AFRIKA	0.38	5.00



TIP OF THE DAY

BE TRANSPARENT IN TIMES OF UNCERTAINTY

As the pandemic continues to disrupt business as usual, managers must grapple with overwhelming uncertainty about the future.

But even when you don't have all the information, you should be transparent with your team whenever possible. Think about your employees' perspective, and consider what you would want to hear if you were in their shoes. Allay their anxiety as much as you can.

You might say something like: "I wish I could tell you exactly what's going to happen. We're giving you updates as soon as we can." At the same time, don't sugarcoat bad news. You may be tempted to gloss over information that won't be well received, but that won't help anyone. Affirm your team's capabilities, and use positive, inspiring language to motivate them. Acknowledge that there will be hard times ahead.

NEWS BUSINESS

IMPACT

Drop in oil demand pushes Shell to first dividend cut since WW2

It has suspended next tranche of its share buyback programme



A Shell Petrol Station along Kenyatta Avenue./FILE

BBC / Royal Dutch Shell has cut its dividend for the first time since World War Two following the collapse in global oil demand due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The energy giant also suspended the next tranche of its share buyback programme.

The move came as it announced a 46 per cent fall in first-quarter net income to \$2.9 billion.

Chief executive Ben van Beurden warned of “continued deterioration in the macroeconomic outlook”.

He said Shell was taking “further prudent steps to bolster our resilience” and “underpin the strength of our balance sheet”.

Shell is cutting its quarterly dividend by two-thirds, from 47 cents to

16 cents, starting in the first quarter of this year. The company said it had also cut activity at its refining business by up to 40% in response to the sharp fall in demand for oil. Earlier this week, rival oil giant BP said its first-quarter profit had dived by two thirds, and warned it was facing an “exceptional level of uncertainty”.

Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell, said: “Shell’s decision to reduce its dividend is devastating to investors across the country, as so many people own its shares directly or through their pension as an important source of income.

“Investors risk putting money into the markets in order to stand a chance of achieving a better return than cash in the bank. While rates on cash savings accounts have been drifting down for a while, investment dividends were widely considered to be much more reliable.

“Sadly that is no longer the case, given how more than 300 companies on the UK stock market have this year said they won’t be paying dividends for the time being or paying a much lower level than before. This figure includes 41 companies in the FTSE 100.”



ENTREPRENEURS' TOOLBOX

BY SAMUEL MPAMUGO

How to thrive post COVID-19

Now, every day feels like a scene in an action thriller movie. Uncertainty is in the air. The world is confused about what would happen post-COVID-19. Will the world ever get back to normal?

I don't know what post-COVID-19 would look like; generally, people are unsure. I don't pay attention to people recommending all kinds of strategies for after the pandemic from a certainty standpoint because we don't know. But I know that the core of humanity will not change. We are people designed to love and be loved and that will not change. Also, we are creative beings – it's in our DNA, and COVID-19 will not take that away. So based on these facts, how do we prepare for the new world post-pandemic? Here are three tips to help you.

Humility: Now we need humility more than ever; I truly believe that the humble will thrive post-COVID-19. First, I need to put humility in context because I'm not talking about the common social or religious definition of humility. Here, humility is the willingness and capacity to learn, grow, and change. It's an adaptive mindset.

Humility is a skill that helps you reinvent yourself in a crisis and here is how. With a humble attitude, you are poised to unlearn, learn, and re-skill quickly. You know that this socioeconomic reality is a new terrain; you probably have not lived through a pandemic at this scale. So, to survive and thrive, you must learn fast, grow accordingly, and change quickly. Now, humility is a powerful skill to have.

Collaboration: This is not the time to be a one-man army. It is time to create stronger networks if you wish to thrive. Your chances of success could be limited if you insist on going this stretch alone.

Connecting with people across cultures, nations, and industries would give you renewed strength and leverage to successfully advance. In the post-COVID-19 economy, I suspect that the lone ranger is likely to have it rough. You're better off joining your expertise or resources with others.

Empathy: Post COVID-19, you would need to show people greater care and understanding. Now, smart entrepreneurs and businesses are finding ways to make their customers' lives easier because many have been adversely affected by this crisis. Businesses that will thrive are those that enhance their customer care delivery.

The harsh economic downturn has left many people stranded and they would need help. Those who would rise are those who would give customers a helping hand.

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DROP

KRA misses 9-month revenue target amid Covid-19 effects

A Sh132.3 billion shortfall in ordinary revenue collection was recorded as of March

CYNTHIA ILAKO
@LadyKanyali



The government's tax and Appropriation-in-Aid revenues stood at Sh1.33 trillion as of March 2020, falling short of its 2019/2020 financial year nine-month target.

The state targeted to have collected Sh1.54 trillion during the period, resulting in a deviation of Sh211.9 billion.

“This shortfall from target was attributed to deviation from targets of the ordinary revenues by Sh132.3 billion and Ministerial A-in-A by Sh79.6 billion,” Treasury CS Ukuru Yatani told the senate ad hoc committee on the Covid -19 pandemic.

He added that the performance was being impacted by a slump in import-related taxes including import duty, VAT on imports, import declaration fees, and railway development levy.

Ordinary revenue collection amounted to Sh1.22 trillion (11.7 percent of GDP) against a target of Sh 1.35 trillion.

According to Yatani, the Sh132.3 billion shortfall in ordinary revenue collection was recorded in all broad categories with excise taxes recording a shortfall of Sh35.2 billion.

Other categories of taxes that performed below target were Income tax at Sh39.2 billion, import duty Sh17.8 billion, and VAT Sh34.8 billion.

“At the same time, other domestic taxes have shrunk due to declined

incomes and depressed consumption as the Government enhanced Covid-19 containment measures that restricted movements of persons within four counties and the rest of the Country,” Yatani said.

A slowdown in business activity as a result of the Covid-19-induced trade and travel restrictions is expected to further deplete tax revenue. This is as a result of reduced tax collection from workers and businesses. Consumption taxes are also expected to decline.

The below-target tax collections are also expected to deepen further in the coming months after President Uhuru Kenyatta assented to the Tax Laws (Amendment) Bill 2020.

The law exempts those earning less than Sh28,000 from paying income tax while those earning above this will benefit from a PAYE tax reduction of between 30 and 25 per cent.

It further lowered turnover tax from 3 to 1 percent, reduced VAT from 16 to 14 percent, revised corporation tax from 30 to 25 percent, and lowered Non-Resident Tax on Dividends from 10 to 15 per cent.

“The extent of COVID-19's impact on the economy could add excess fiscal pressures resulting in another round of fiscal slippage, which could derail efforts to contain debt growth and further crowd out private sector-led growth after the crisis,” the World Bank said in its Kenya Economic Update.

Early last month the Parliamentary Budget Office said revenue collection is likely to drop by Sh122.2 billion.



Treasury Cabinet Secretary Ukur Yatani launch the 2020 Economic survey at the treasury building on April 28, 2020. Photo/ **FREDRICK OMONDI**

NEWS WORLD

HERO

Flypast, promotion for UK fundraising World War II veteran

REUTERS/ British World War Two veteran Captain Tom Moore, who has become a national hero after raising almost £30 million for the health service, celebrated his 100th birthday on Thursday with an honorary promotion and two military flypasts.

Moore has raised 29.4 million pounds (\$3.9 billion) for charities that help front-line National Health Service staff by completing laps of his garden with the help of a walking frame, having initially set out to raise just £1,000 (\$133,605).

That figure means he now holds the Guinness World Record title for the most money raised by an individual through a walk, and he has also since become the oldest person to notch up a number one single in Britain's main music chart, featuring on a cover version of "You'll Never Walk Alone".

NO-NONSENSE

Big fines for hungry Singaporeans who break quarantine

REUTERS/ A Singaporean man who broke his coronavirus quarantine with 30 minutes remaining to buy prata flatbread worth a few dollars was fined \$1,000 (\$107,190), the latest in a string of tough punishments for those who breach the city-state's Covid-19 containment rules.

The tiny island nation, known for its no-nonsense law enforcement and widespread surveillance, has one of the highest coronavirus caseloads in Asia due to mass outbreaks in cramped migrant worker dormitories.

But it has won international praise for its strict quarantine and contact tracing regime that have limited infections in the wider community.

In mid-March, 22-year-old financial adviser Tay Chun Hsien was ordered not to leave his home after he was suspected of being a contact of a coronavirus patient, court documents show.

But just 30 minutes before the order was due to expire he headed to a nearby food court where, according to local media, he ate roti prata, an Indian-inspired flatbread popular in Southeast Asia. As he was eating, an officer monitoring his quarantine called his mobile phone to check if he was at home but Tay said he had left to buy food because he was hungry, according to the case records.

Tougher punishment was doled out to Alan Tham Xiang Sheng, a 33-year-old businessman, who broke an order to stay home to eat bah kut teh – a pork rib soup common to Singapore and Malaysia.

Tham was given the order to stay home for 14 days in mid-March when he returned from Myanmar, one of a number of countries subject to travel restrictions at the time to curb imported infections.

The night he returned home, Tham went by bus to a local food court to eat the soup and posted pictures on social media, case records show.

DOES THE BBC TRULY BELIEVE IT CAN CONVINCE IT IS BETTER TO LET PEOPLE COUGH AND SNEEZE ON OUR BARE AND UNPROTECTED FACES THAN ON A FACE COVERING?

COMMENT

TR LANSNER

Global journalism & media educator and trainer, former international correspondent for the London Observer, and currently visiting prof at Sciences Po Paris.



A reporter briefly removes his mask to ask a question as US President Donald Trump meets with Florida Governor Ron DeSantis about the coronavirus response in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, US, April 28
/REUTERS

TRUMP, TEDROS WRONG ON FACE MASKS

Unwillingness to quickly make public face covering compulsory to stem the spread of Covid-19 will one day be reckoned among history's greatest public health blunders. We are losing many too many lives unnecessarily as we miss a clear chance now to "flatten the curve" and more quickly revive our economies.

Yet not covering faces is a matter on which US President Donald Trump and World Health Organization head Dr Tedros Adhanom seem glad to agree, as both ignore their own experts' published advice. And in the UK, a strong supporting role is BBC boosterism of the British government's official "no-mask" policy: Don't wear masks, the BBC ardently advises, with the dumbfounding rationale that "they can be contaminated by other people's coughs and sneezes". Does the BBC truly believe it can convince it is better to let people cough and sneeze on our bare and unprotected faces than on a face covering?

Here the BBC says it takes its lead from WHO and official UK scientific advisors. A BBC video "explainer" uses BIG BLACK Xs to ensure we grasp that face covering is deemed utterly unwarranted by both WHO and UK government. And a call by London Mayor Sadiq Khan – leader of one of the world's greatest cities – for Londoners to use face coverings was buried in the BBC website's London regional section.

WHO's current and CDC's now lapsed advice rose from a scarcity of masks that should be saved for caregivers. This is eminently reasonable: Proper medical masks must be preserved to protect those brave people caring for Covid-19 patients. But CDC believed, and WHO apparently still does, that the public must not be trusted with the truth that covering faces with scarves, bandanas, home-made cotton masks, with almost anything at all, will help keep us from spreading Covid-19 to others.

This is despite WHO's own October 2019 recommendation that during a "high" or "extraordinary" level pandemic the public should wear masks, which was cited in a March 2020 piece on the "WHO's confusing guidance on masks in the covid-19 pandemic" in the British Medical Journal.

Across the Atlantic, after months of rejecting public face covering, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reversed course. In early April, it warned bluntly that the "virus can spread between people interacting in close proximity – for example, speaking, coughing, or sneezing – even if those people are not exhibiting symptoms." We are now cautioned that even simple conversation can spread Covid-19, including talk from people who feel utterly fine but are asymptomatic virus vectors.

Allowing anyone to wander uncovered during this pandemic is making all our public spaces virus free-fire zones. CDC now suggests everyone wear a face covering in public if they cannot maintain social distance.

On April 8, Trump belittled this CDC guidance: "I don't know,

somehow sitting in the Oval Office behind that beautiful Resolute Desk – the great Resolute Desk," he mused, "I think wearing a face mask as I greet presidents, prime ministers, dictators, kings, queens, I don't know. Somehow, I don't see it for myself."

Leadership matters. France's President Macron, Ethiopia's Prime Minister Abiy, and other world leaders are today seen wearing masks in public. By dismissing CDC's advice, Trump gives America's Covid-deniers – and even those who just find face covering uncomfortable or inconvenient – licence not to cover their faces. Yet WHO seems unable to accept that it is wrong and update its confusing advice, as did CDC. And the UK government, despite appeals from many scientists, appears ready to defend its no-face covering policies to its citizens' last breath. When pandemic comes, as I have written, truth and trust must not be the first casualty. The BBC, with its immense global reach, has a particular responsibility to not serve simply as a megaphone to promote misguided official advice.

AMPLE EVIDENCE LAID OUT IN PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS AS WELL AS MASS MEDIA HAS CONVINCED DOZENS OF NATIONAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO REQUIRE FACE COVERINGS IN PUBLIC

Ample contrary evidence laid out in peer-reviewed journals as well as mass media has convinced dozens of national and local governments to require face coverings in public; the latest is Nigeria's mega-city of Lagos, which launched its #MaskUpLagos campaign on April 26.

The British Medical Journal article 'Face masks for the public during the Covid-19 crisis' argues that despite conflicting perspectives, the "precautionary principle" must now prevail; if face

coverings might help, and have little potential harm, they should be used now. The WHO report cited above agrees.

Not all people can be fooled all the time, as the saying goes, and official disinformation discouraging face covering is already proving costly to public trust in official pronouncements. In France, an April 9 poll of 1,003 people found that 77 per cent feel the government lied about the public's need for masks.

A poll of 2,005 UK residents published April 26 by the Observer apparently did not ask about face covering, but found trust in the UK government's actions falling. The pollsters suggested that the "rally around the flag" effect that buoyed faith in official actions early in the pandemic crisis might be fading. The poll also reports that nearly four times as many respondents felt the "UK government has handled things better" than the US government. Even in this macabre comparison, faint praise, indeed. But perhaps less damning enough to spin a BBC headline.



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COUNTIES NAIROBI

RUIAI'S ENDLESS TROUBLES

Distraught settlers count losses as state reclaims sewerage land

Theirs is a tale of displacement from the city's Mathare, Timboroa and Kibera estates

AKELLO ODENYO

@TheStarKenya



It had rained heavily the previous night, and the black cotton mud on the ground was fizzling with every step.

The stench from Ruai sewerage plant a few metres away choked the air. Young men carrying stones from a building site breathed heavily, struggling to keep their gumboots from slithering the mess.

The real mess was, however, all on the residents' faces - anger, gloom, frustration and hopelessness.

Said Rashid's wife dragged her feet slowly towards her husband who was standing by a cart packed with a mattress, solar panel, water containers and other household items.

She held her overflowing dress with the left hand so that it was not drenched in mud while maintaining her balance with the right hand.

"Surely what kind of nonsense is this? Why is it always that when two bulls are fighting, it is the grass that suffers? Now with the coronavirus where do they expect us to get money to pay for transportation? How can people be so cruel?" she asked after sitting on a jerrican. She punctuated the questions with several clicks.

Rashid had bought six plots in the area in 2016 and had started digging the foundation for a cosy home he would retire to.

"This has always been the place I come to when I am sick of the hustle and bustle of the city. It is far away from town, very quiet and peaceful," he reminisced.

On Sunday, the area chief broke the peace by asking the residents to pack their belongings and bring down their houses as the government was reclaiming the land, which decades ago had been reserved for a sewerage treatment plant.

"The chief came with police officers and gave us 72 hours to clear the area, otherwise the government would bulldoze everything down," he said.

On Monday, a number of tractors were brought to the site, sending the residents into panic. An excavator was already digging a trench across the road that led to the estate.

"We are saving what we can, leaving the rest. It is raining, we are broke having been at home to avoid contracting Covid-19. We cannot manage to take everything away," Rashid said.

His more than Sh4 million investment was disappearing as he watched. But he counted himself lucky - he has a house in Kibera where he was moving to.

Stephen Owino got his plot in 2012. Until then he lived in Mathare.

"They were expanding Mathare Primary School, so those who were affected by the expansion were relocated here. We only paid Sh3,000 for registration," Owino said.

He put up a house worth Sh400,000 on the plot.

"I have a wife and three daughters. I have rented a one-bedroom house to relocate to," he said.

Mary Otieno intended to move into a house she had just completed this month. She had bought two plots for Sh600,000 and spent Sh1.8 million on the house.

"Last week, my neighbour called to say there were demolitions. Why didn't they give us enough time to relocate? I have built my house with loans and now all that is gone," she said as she supervised its demolition.

There are those with nowhere to go. They include 2007-08 post-election violence victims and Mathare residents who, like Owino, were moved out to give way for the expansion of Mathare Primary School.

Mary Wanjiku, 70, arrived from Timboroa as a post-election violence victim. She had her three children had hitchhiked in lorries ferrying goods to Nairobi. They were settled at a camp in Mathare slums.

Four months later, the government moved them to the sewage area in Ruai. All was well until the order requiring them to move came last week.

"The chief came here asking us to



A woman carries away her belongings after demolishing her house on the 1,600-acre Ruai sewerage land on Tuesday / ANDREW KASUKU

move out, but where would we go? We left nothing but death in Timboroa - blood and evil. Our properties were looted, houses burnt, people butchered. What would we return to?" she asked tearfully.

Wanjiku and her children had nothing but the clothes on their back when they arrived in Ruai. The place was a bush, inhabited by wild animals.

"We cleared the bushes and using old pieces of clothes and carton boxes, we built a place where we all slept in a crowd, keeping together for safety and warmth," she recalled, occasionally wiping tears from her sunken eyes with her wrap.

Several months later, Wanjiku said families began buying materials and built makeshift houses.

"Some of us earned money by washing clothes for people in nearby estates. Others collected plastics which they sold to recycling plants. We spent some of the returns on food and other needs and saved the rest to build structures," she said.

Soon, every family had a place to live in. More land was cleared for

settlement.

Their bliss was short-lived. Heavy rains flooded the area and sewerage and filthy water spread on their new-found home. They had to move.

"The Kenya Red Cross came to our aid and moved us to Ruai Primary School where we stayed for eight months before we came back here, starting all over again," she said.

Ruth Waitthera is another internally displaced person. She has five children, all born in Ruai. Her last born is only four months old. She has nowhere to go.

"I'll just sit here and wait for the bulldozers. When they are done and gone, we'll return, build and wait for them to come back," Waitthera said.

On Wednesday last week, the government moved to recover the land grabbed from the Dandora Estate Waste Sewerage Treatment Plant in Ruai.

Water PS Joseph Irungu and his Lands and Physical Planning counterpart Nicholas Muraguri said the plant is the only wastewater treatment plant for the city. The first phase was done in 1975.

Said Rashid holds his poultry during the ongoing evictions from Ruai sewerage land on Tuesday

/ ANDREW KASUKU



Residents outside their shanties during the ongoing evictions from Ruai sewerage land on Tuesday / ANDREW KASUKU



COUNTIES CENTRAL



A man passes near an overflowing dustbin in Mudavadi market, Nyeri town
/EUTYCAS MUCHIRI

to dump it at the moment. She said the county administration is trying its best to look for an option.

"We are trying our best but even if we collect [the garbage], we have nowhere to dispose of it," she said.

GARBAGE TRUCKS

Karimi said collection trucks are still loaded with garbage after they were barred from offloading at Karindundu dumpsite by Mathira leaders.

Keeping the garbage in the trucks for a long time is spoiling the vehicles too, she said. This has also prevented the trucks from moving around estates collecting garbage as they remain full of refuse.

"When we were prevented from dumping [at Karindundu dumpsite], our vehicles had garbage. So you can imagine they have had garbage since Wednesday," Karimi said.

She said before an agreement is reached, the county will try to reduce the garbage by burning what can be burnt such as papers.

NO MORE DUMPING

On Wednesday last week, Konyu MCA Eric Wamumbi turned away county government officials who had visited Karindundu dumpsite, a move that led to his arrest. He was later released without charge.

In a video clip circulated in social media, the ward representative is seen ordering county government officials, including CEC Karimi, out of the dumpsite.

Mathira MP Rigathi Gachagua said the decision to stop the dumping of garbage in the area was made by all Mathira MCAs and himself.

Gachagua said no garbage from Nyeri town will be dumped anywhere in Mathira.

He said Karindundu, where the county government is dumping garbage, is a residential area and therefore a health hazard.

The dumping site is also illegal as it has not been approved by the National Environment Management Authority, Gachagua said.

HEALTH HAZARD

Nyeri engulfed in garbage stench as leaders bicker over dumpsite

The most affected are three Nyeri town markets, which generate tonnes of waste daily

EUTYCAS MUCHIRI
@TheStarKenya

Nyeri town residents have started to feel the effects of the stand-off between the county government and Mathira constituency leadership over garbage disposal.

The feuding has led to an accumulation of heaps of garbage in Nyeri town after collection ground to a halt on Wednesday last week.

The areas most affected include

the three Nyeri town markets, which generate tonnes of garbage a day. The markets are Mudavadi, Nyeri town open-air and Soko Mjinga in the CBD.

Simon Mberua, a loader at the Nyeri town open-air market, said waste has not been collected for a whole week and the town is developing a terrible stench. This has hurt business.

He said the foul smell is causing respiratory complications, among other problems, especially for those

who have allergies. The dumpsite inside the market is full and the refuse is overflowing to the nearby General Kariba Road near the lower matatu terminus.

The heaps, he said, have encouraged people to turn the road into a dumping site.

"If this situation persists for the next one week or so, traders along this road will have to close shop because no customer can buy while standing on a heap of garbage,"

Mberua said. He called on the county government to look for a lasting solution. The problem is the same on the estates.

Petronilla Waigumo, a resident of Kamakwa, said the skip on the estate is overflowing with garbage, posing a health risk to children who are out of school.

For her part, however, Environment executive Beth Karimi said the garbage has accumulated because the county government has nowhere

FOUR HOSPITALS

Kiambu to procure oxygen in readiness to fight coronavirus

JOHN KAMAU / The Kiambu government is in the process of procuring oxygen in bulk for four health facilities to tackle the coronavirus pandemic.

Governor James Nyoro said the county government is getting quotations from suppliers like BOC Kenya Ltd and Hewa Tele.

The governor said on Wednesday the oxygen will be installed at Gatundu, Thika and Kiambu level 5 hospitals and Tigoni Level 4 Hospital.

He had earlier announced that Tigoni Hospital will be turned into an exclusive Covid-19 facility, adding that the facility had 200 beds and there were plans to add 100 more.

He said unlike ventilators, which are costly and limited to serving one patient at a time, a single oxygen cylinder can serve over 100 patients at a go.

"We've consulted widely to reach this decision. Once we instal oxygen in the health facilities, piping will be done. Ventilators are good but each costs not less than Sh4 million. But at this difficult time when we are facing even a cash crisis, it's good to have surplus oxygen in our facilities," the county chief said.

The county chief also noted that Intensive Care Units at the three level-5 hospitals and one at Tigoni Level 4 Hospital are being worked on and will be fully equipped with ventilators, monitors and beds by the end of this week.

Nyoro said they are relying on the meagre funds the county has, as well as donations being channelled through the County Emergency Response Fund. "From huge budget cuts from the



Kiambu Governor James Nyoro, Kenya Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund officials and Kiambu county officials receive donations worth Sh20 million from Capwell Industries Ltd in Thika on Wednesday
/JOHN KAMAU

national government to not collecting revenue, we are really suffering, and we need a lot of support because we do not know how long this [pandemic] is going to last," he said.

The county chief spoke while receiving donations from two Thika firms.

Nyoro was accompanied by Deputy Governor Joyce Ngugi and Kenya Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund directors Jeremy Awori and business mogul Narendra Raval, popularly known as Guru. They received dona-

tions from Bakex Millers Ltd (a subsidiary firm of Broadways Bakeries Ltd) and Capwell Industries Ltd.

Already, a committee headed by former Cabinet Minister George Muhoho and chaired by Eddy Njoroge is coordinating donations to cushion vulnerable families in Kiambu from the adverse effects of the coronavirus.

Bakex Millers Ltd donated Sh7.5 million and 10,000 bales of wheat flour (Phulka Atta Mark 1) worth Sh12.5 million to the Kenya Covid-19 Emergency

Response Fund. The wheat flour will benefit 60,000 families.

They also donated Sh5 million to the Kiambu County Emergency Response Fund.

CEO Bimal Shah said Kiambu county will get 1,000 bales of the wheat flour. Embu, Isiolo, Kirinyaga, Nyeri, Kitui, Makueni, Tharaka Nithi, Laikipia, Meru, Nakuru, Murang'a, Nyandarua and Uasin Gishu counties will receive 500 bales each to help needy and deserving families.

COUNTIES COAST

FRESH RECRUITMENT

Coast lobby group asks KPA board to televise interviews of 10 applicants for agency top job

BRIAN OTIENO/A lobby group in Mombasa wants the Kenya Ports Authority board to televise interviews for the managing director position.

This is among a raft of measures the Commission for Human Rights and Justice wants in place to ensure transparency in the recruitment process.

Apart from televising the interviews, CHRJ wants the list of all applicants for the job published in the local dailies.

The lobby also wants the date of the interviews and the steps taken to ensure the process is free, fair and transparent announced to the public prior to the interviews.

In a letter to KPA board chairman Joseph Kibwana, CHRJ executive director Julius Odogoh says the measures will ensure the board picks the right person for the job.

The KPA MD post has attracted 10 applicants. The deadline for online submission of applications was last Friday.

Among the people who applied for the job are acting MD Rashid Salim, KPA finance general manager Patrick Nyoi-ke and former corporate service general manager Justus Nyarangi.

Others are general manager in charge of the Lamu port Abdullah Samatar, Sudi Masingo, in charge of the Kisumu port, head of strategy at the Kisumu port LCD Yobesh Oyaro and former engineering general manager Joseph Atonga.



A trader at Kongowea market collects his iron sheets after the Mombasa government demolished their stalls at night saying it wants to build a road / **JOHN CHESOLI**

BLISSFULLY INNOCENT

We've never heard of corona, Lamu's remote villagers say

Kisii stone miners of Timboni on Manda Island have neither TV nor radio sets

CHETI PRAXIDES

@TheStarKenya



As the country battles the coronavirus disease, residents of a remote village in Lamu are going about their lives as usual without a clue as to the existence of the deadly contagion.

Timboni village is located in the deepest part of Manda Island in Lamu West. Villagers are not aware that the world is under siege from the viral flu. There are about 100 households, all of whom are stone miners from the Kisii community.

Timboni village is so disconnected from the rest of the world that residents rarely make contact with the nearby islanders and the rest of Lamu.

The villagers keep to themselves, only depending on fish and other seafood for survival.

They have a few kiosks but have no electricity, piped water, market, hospital or dispensary, or school. They neither own TV sets nor radios.

Worse still, the area has poor mobile phone and road network, making communication and movement almost impossible. They are literally in a small world of their own.

While the rest of Kenyans are busy sanitising, keeping social distance, wearing face masks and staying at home to keep the virus at bay, residents of Timboni are socialising in their small circles and continue to be the close-knit community they have always been.

Stone quarrying is the sole economic activity, so every morning as the men rush to the quarries, women stay back and take care of the homes.

Even the miners go about their business in large groups unaware of the risk involved in contact and groupings.

During an interview with journalists on Wednesday, the villagers appeared genuinely shocked that there was such a disease in our country. Luka Makori said no one had come to their village to warn



Above:
Timboni village
on Manda Island
/ **PRAXIDES CHETI**

Villagers receive
aid from well-
wishers on
Wednesday
/ **PRAXIDES CHETI**

them about it. Asked whether they were aware of the precautions needed to keep the disease away, Makori laughed and asked how they were expected to practice something they had no knowledge of.

"I am hearing about social distance and the rest of the precautions from you. I don't even know how that is supposed to be achieved," he said.

"But the county government is aware of our being here, why didn't they send health workers to warn us? It's unfair that we are learning of this through you."

Mama Jedina Irungu says social distancing for them is impossible as they have lived as a close-knit

community always sharing the little amenities they have.

She, however, said they are ready to do whatever it takes to keep safe from the disease considering they have no medical facilities.

"We don't have a dispensary here and so if such a disease was to attack us, we would die for sure.

"We are appealing to the government to send us health workers to enlighten us so that we don't die from ignorance.

"Let them know that we are ready to listen," Irungu said.

She laughed at the thought of having to wear a face mask for an entire day but said "if it was for our own good, then why not?"

DESTROYED LIVELIHOODS

2,000 left jobless after demolition of kiosks in Kongowea

BRIAN OTIENO/ Traders at Kongowea market in Mombasa on Wednesday woke up to a rude shock after their kiosks were razed.

Over 500 kiosks were destroyed by the county government of Mombasa, which says traders were notified.

The kiosks support about 2,000 traders including food vendors, tailors, brokers and dhobis. Property worth about Sh5 million was destroyed.

The traders pointed an accusing finger at the county government, saying a county bulldozer was seen demolishing their kiosks supervised by county askaris.

"We don't know what our governor's intentions are. There was no word, no warning, nothing! We just woke up to this rubble," said Tom Okode, a mitumba trader who has operated from Kongowea for over 20 years.

"First, they burnt our kiosks. We rebuilt. Now they have razed them. Where do they want us to go? They should provide an alternative ground for us then," he told the Star.

However, Kongowea market manager Salim Hamumi said the traders were given three months notice to vacate the area and pave way for construction of a road to the new stalls.

Hamumi told the Star on phone they pledged to take them to an alternative area to trade from. "They refused. I am a neutral person. I am only three months old here but the things I have seen from these people can make one get high blood pressure," Hamumi said.

On January 26, a mysterious fire gutted the mitumba section amid a tug-of-war between the traders and the county government, which wanted to construct a road to the market.

The traders had been uneasy about recent events over the market.

They suspect senior officials in the county government have sinister motives.

"We don't know what their intentions are. The recent events here at the market have made us feel someone somewhere wants to get us out of here so they can benefit from this land," said Tobias Sule, the mitumba section chair.

Sule said the way they were being treated by the county government was wrong.

"We are business people who pay taxes to the county government like any other businessperson. We are here legally, not illegally. Why should we be treated like criminals?" Sule said.

The traders and the county government have held talks to get an amicable solution to problems arising in the market.

The mitumba section chair said they were allocated the kiosks using allotment letters. The same means should have been used, if the county government wanted them out.

"If they wanted us out, they should have approached us and we agree on the way forward. We are not against any development.

"They wanted a road, we moved and paved the way for construction. Why do they treat us inhumanely like this? We are Kenyan, not Ugandan," Sule said.

THERE ARE ABOUT 100 HOUSEHOLDS TUCKED AWAY DEEP IN LAMU WEST

COUNTIES RIFT VALLEY



Residents search for bodies of relatives killed by mudslides and floods in Chesogon at the border of West Pokot and Elgeyo Marakwet counties /COURTESY

THE DATA

SH50K

Amount to be given to bereaved families of landslide tragedy

Government will also resettle 4,000 IDPs displaced by mudslides in West Pokot and Elgeyo Marakwet.

SRC REJECTS MOVE

Bomet medics to get allowances, despite opposition

FELIX KIPKEMOI/Bomet Governor Hillary Barchok has said his administration will pay health workers Sh16 million in motivational allowances during the fight against the spread of the coronavirus.

The Salaries and Remuneration Commission (SRC) has opposed extra payments saying counties don't have enough money.

Barchok said the front-line medics in isolation centres should be inspired in their work and the only way was to reward them financially.

"We value the work of our medics and we must motivate them and so with or without the approval of the SRC we are going to give allowances to them," he said.

The SRC has already written to the governors warning them against paying 'motivational' allowances to health workers, saying counties don't have enough money.

Barchok said the county assembly has already set aside the funds that will go a long way in keeping medics at work as they combat the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking at Siwot Vocational Institute in Bomet East during the launch of production of face masks, the county chief called on all entities handling Covid-19 funds to spend prudently.

RISKY AREAS

State to resettle 4,000 mudslide IDPs from Kerio escarpments

West Pokot and Elgeyo Marakwet slopes to be reforested to help prevent flooding

MATHEWS NDANYI

@ndanyimathews



Valley regional coordinator George Natembeya said on Thursday.

He said they so far had listed more than 350 displaced families.

"Resettlement of these families is part of our long term plan because it's an issue that must be handled by various agencies and budgeted for so alternative land is found for them," the coordinator said.

It was not known when resettlement might take place.

Natembeya visited the area on Wednesday to assess the humanitarian situation.

Agriculture CAS Linah Kilimo and Elgeyo Marakwet Governor Alex Tolgos have proposed families on the escarpments be moved away and the land turned into forests to help reduce flooding and mudslides.

"The priority here is to save lives because the mudslides occur every rainy season and we lose many lives, Kilimo said.

Families are still searching for bodies of their relatives. the government said it will use DNA tests to identify body parts.

"Sixteen people are still missing and we have searched all over the area where we only recovered many body parts that cannot be identified except through DNA tests," Natembeya said.

He asked families to give DNA samples so body parts can be identified. They are being preserved in morgues at Tot and Kapenguria.

Each family who lost a relative will be given Sh50,000 to help with the burial.

"Once relatives have identified the remains and we confirm the missing people, families will be given the money," Natembeya said.

Most of the dead were from the Elgeyo Marakwet side where Natembeya said about 150 families had been displaced. Another 130 families were displaced on the Pokot side.

About 70 families have been moved from risky, mudslide-prone areas.

Natembeya said the team including the military had searched extensively before calling off the mission. Families said they should have continued to search.

"We have been on the ground and searched all over. We cannot resume the search, it's clearly not possible to trace any more bodies," he said.

FEARS THE NUMBER COULD RISE

Over 5,000 displaced by floods around Nakuru lakes

GEORGE MURAGE/ The Nakuru government has directed families living around lakes Naivasha and Nakuru to relocate to safer grounds following a sharp rise in water levels.

More than 5,000 families have been affected by the heavy rains, with estates around the two water bodies hardest-hit.

Already, dozens of families living along rivers Malewa and Karati in Naivasha have been displaced, with one person drowning in Kuresoi.

Disaster Management Chief Officer Ann Njenga said there were fears that the number of those affected could rise in the coming days.

"We have over 5,000 families that have been displaced by the floods and the county is assisting them

with food," she said.

She said the worst-hit areas are Kihoto Estate in Naivasha, Mbaruk ward in Gilgil, Ndabibi and Kip-tagich in Kuresoi.

"In Kihoto and Mbaruk, we have residents who border lakes Naivasha and Nakuru, and we have advised them to move to higher grounds," Njenga said.

The county on Wednesday donated food and other non-food items to more than 300 families displaced by floods in Ndabibi, Naivasha.

The county, she said, is using the Sh58 million set aside for emergencies to assist those affected by the current crisis.

"The county had set aside Sh3 million per ward to fight Covid-19, and we have been forced to dig



Officials give food to flood victims at Ndabibi centre in Naivasha /GEORGE MURAGE

deeper to assist those affected by floods," Njenga said. MCA Gathariki Kamanu said the area had in the past recorded similar flooding but termed the current one serious.

The Maella MCA said the only solution in addressing the prob-

lem is for people to relocate to higher grounds. "These families have legal title deeds allocated by the government but the land has turned out to be uninhabitable and hence to need to move them to safer grounds," Kamanu said.

RUNNING ON EMPTY

Debts stall Nandi operations, fight against virus

MATHEWS NDANYI/Nandi county is running on empty.

The county is unable to pay more than Sh400 million owed to fuel suppliers, causing shortages that have stalled most operations, including the fight against the spread of the coronavirus.

The total amount of bills stands at more than Sh900 million.

The county has been forced to ground most of its vehicles leaving only the official cars for the governor, his deputy and ambulances. These are only allotted a maximum of 50 litres per week, hampering health services.

The county has grounded more than 100 cars including those that would have been used by the health department to carry out public education and monitoring the coronavirus situation.

COUNTIES WESTERN

'ONLINE HEARING INEFFECTIVE'

Bungoma lawyers want courts reopened

JOHN NALIANYA / Lawyers in Bungoma have urged the National Council on Administration of Justice to find an urgent solution so courts can resume their usual hearings.

Led by LSK local chapter chair George Murunga, the lawyers said they were finding it difficult to hear clients' pleas through video link. They said most of their clients are farmers who have no access to online services.

He asked the state to allow the Ministry of Health to ensure tougher court inspections and allow sessions to

continue with their operations. "Most of our clients are unable to access online services, which is a big problem," Murunga said.

He said since the government banned all public gatherings, many lawyers are not getting cash to sustain their daily operations, including paying employees and rent. "Our courtrooms are big enough to accommodate five to six people provided the court indicates the correct time when a claimant or the accused is slotted to appear," Murunga said.

He said reaching out to clients is very hard because sometimes getting their phone numbers and their emails is challenging.

Murunga said the online hearing is not good because many law firms risk being closed down by the end of this month if the pandemic persists as they will lack the cash to sustain operations.



Bungoma LSK chairman George Murunga / **JOHN NALIANYA**

BALLISTICS

KFS rangers under probe over death of Kakamega villager

HILTON OTENYO / Nine Kenya Forest Service guards have surrendered their firearms for ballistics analysis following the shooting of one person during a confrontation with the local community in Kakamega forest on Monday.

The deceased was reportedly among a group of men who responded to a distress call from villagers. Armed with pangas and clubs, they confronted forest guards around the Shamiloli forest block, precipitating the Monday morning clash. The body was taken to the Kakamega County Hospital mortuary. County police commander Bernard Muli on Thursday said investigations were ongoing.

Last Saturday, a woman lost her pregnancy in a violent confrontation between the Kenya Wildlife Service guards and villagers at Handolo in a flare-up of hostilities between residents and government officers over forest resource protection.

The woman, who was admitted to the Kakamega County Hospital, was reportedly attacked and brutally wounded for allegedly blocking the KWS officers from carting away sacks of charcoal impounded from homes during a random raid for forest products.

PHOTO STORY



A health official takes the temperature of residents crossing to Uganda at the Malaba Port Health department, amid the Covid-19 crisis / **EMOJONG OSERE**

MULEMBE NATION

Choose your leaders wisely in 2022, Mudavadi tells Luhyas

Urges them to nurture their own for top seat 'as opposed to being led every time'

MARTIN OMBIMA
@OmbimaPatrick

Kenyans should make the right choices come 2022 election, ANC party leader Musalia Mudavadi has said.

He said Kenyans should choose leaders who are capable of reviving Kenya's economy that is currently dwindling and leaving a huge population in poverty.

Mudavadi said the current state of the economy with huge loans will sink the entire nation if Kenyans don't vote wisely in 2022.

Most Kenyans are currently struggling to put food on the table, with the Covid-19 crisis frustrating them. Speaking in one of the local radio stations based in Nairobi, he

urged the Luhya community to register in large numbers.

"We are the second largest population in this country but the problem is that we don't register as voters. This time am appealing to you make sure you fully register and when that day come also come out in large numbers to vote," Mudavadi said.

More than 50 years since Kenya attained Independence, we are only being led by two communities it's time we also rise and fight for that seat, he said.

However, he reminded his community that they are not the only competitors for the top seat and that other communities have lined up and are nurturing their own.

"It's high time the Luhya

community made a choice towards State House or remain led for the rest of life; we should stop moving blindly as if we have no future in politics," Mudavadi said.

The ANC party boss wants the community to stop demoralising their own leaders. He said the Mulembe nation has failed to embrace their brothers and sisters who have the capacity to fight for the top seat.

Every individual has his weakness, even those great kings and queens have theirs but they are nurtured to come out for the leadership.

"If we fail to reverse this culture of mocking and underrating our own leaders about the top seat we will never learn to nature our own leaders."

“

It's high time the Luhya community made a choice towards State House or remain led for the rest of life; we should stop moving blindly as if we have no future in politics

COVID-19 FEARS

MP wants Kagwe to assure border residents of safety

EMOJONG OSERE / Teso North MP Oku Kaunya wants Health CS Mutahi Kagwe to explain measures the national government has put in place to secure Malaba border residents against Covid-19.

The lawmaker said on Thursday that his constituents in Malaba town and those living along the Bungoma-Malaba highway are at risk of contracting the virus because of their interaction with cargo truck drivers.

The Health Ministry should come out and assure residents of their safety as the number of coronavirus cases continues to rise, he said.

"While appreciating the measures the Ministry of Health has taken to contain and bring to end the spread of the coronavirus in the country, it is of concern that the spread of the virus has mainly entered into the country through its ports of entry that require the application of stringent control measures," he said.

"Malaba border is one of the entries into Teso North constituency. It is a high-risk area since it is the most exposed to and unprotected from coronavirus pandemic."

Kaunya said the government, by now, should have moved with speed to reduce the risk truck drivers and turn-boys pose to Malaba town residents and surrounding areas following confirmation of Covid-19 among cargo truck drivers.

COUNTIES NYANZA



Osodo village in Wang'chieng' ward of Karachuonyo constituency in Homa Bay county on Thursday /ROBERT OMOLLO

CROPS DESTROYED

600 more families displaced as Homa Bay floodwaters surge

More than seven villages Karachuonyo constituency affected as River Mirui break banks

ROBERT OMOLLO
@robertomollo3



More than 600 families across seven villages in Karachuonyo constituency have been displaced by floods over the past six days.

Their homes were flooded following heavy rains that continue to fall in several parts of the country.

River Mirui broke its banks and spilled into a number of homes in Osodo, Kowuor Agindo, Konyango, Komenya, Kasirawa and Kobuya villages in Wang'chieng ward of

Karachuonyo in Homa Bay county. The flooding has been worsened by the backflow of Lake Victoria waters.

Some families were camping at Osodo primary and secondary schools, Osodo SDA Church and at Chuowe Pentecostal Church.

Others have sought safety in the homes of their relatives while some have rented houses at trading centers on safe grounds.

Residents Kennedy Ochola and Willys Okeyo said the situation had exposed victims to the risk of the coronavirus.

"The social distance required for

containing the spread of coronavirus is not likely to be adhered to in the camps. The victims have thronged the camps because they have nowhere to go," Ochola said.

He asked the government to send humanitarian assistance.

Okeyo said the floods will cause unprecedented famine after crops were destroyed.

"With crops destroyed in flooded farmlands, we are going to suffer from famine in a few months," Okeyo said.

They asked the government to find a long-lasting solution to perennial flooding.

Okeyo said residents should conserve the environment to minimise such disasters.

"The floods are a result of environmental degradation. Let us embrace environment conservation," he said.

Homa Bay county disaster management director Eliud Onyango said they have assessed the situation and appropriate action will be taken as soon as possible.

"The Homa Bay government together with the national government is laying modalities to assist the victims. We're getting food and non-food items to be distributed to the affected families," Onyango said.

CITE SH1.4BN ARREARS

Sony Sugar staff and farmers want mill's bosses out

MANUEL ODENY/Workers and sugarcane farmers want the management of debt-ridden Sony Sugar Company overhauled, citing failure to pay their arrears amounting to Sh1.4 billion.

Speaking separately to the Star on the phone on Wednesday, the Kenya Federation of Sugarcane Farmers' secretary-general for Sony, Argwengs Adongo, and the Kenya Union of Sugarcane Plantation and Allied Workers secretary-general for Sony, John Ogutu, demanded an immediate overhaul.

Adongo said more than 40,000 farmers are owed at least Sh700 million. The arrears have not been paid for 16 months. Ogutu said more than 2,000 permanent employees and casuals were also demanding more than Sh700 million that have not been paid for 13 months.

They told Sony Sugar Company Board, led by chairman Owino Likowa and MD Stephen Ligawa, to step aside for failing to steer the factory to profitability.

"We have reached a situation where sugarcane farmers are tempted to organise a demonstration despite orders against mass gatherings to tell the government how much affected we are," Adongo said.

Ogutu said workers were already resigning so they can demand their pension to take care of their families. About 100 have resigned, he said.

"For over a year, workers have been reporting to work daily without any pay some have lost hope and resigned to at least get part of their pension," Ogutu said.

SH6 MILLION RAISED

Donate to assist vulnerable families, says Governor Awiti

MAURICE ALAL/Homa Bay Governor Cyprian Awiti has asked elected leaders and residents to donate to the county's kitty to cushion people from the effects of coronavirus pandemic.

Awiti said the leaders and well-wishers should make their donations to the Homa Bay Covid-19 Emergency Fund chaired by Ken Onditi.

The committee has raised more than Sh6 million for the fight against coronavirus.

"I urge leaders, residents and friends of Homa Bay to embrace collective responsibility in fighting the virus. Let's donate to the kitty even foodstuff, cash and others donations to help us mitigate the impact of this disease on our people," Awiti said.

Woman Representative Gladys Wanga has set up a workshop that produces 1,000 face masks daily.

MPs Peter Kaluma (Homa Bay Town) and Martin Owino (Ndhiwa) have donated sanitation facilities in their respective constituencies.

WORST IN DECADES

Rice worth Sh800 million destroyed by Nyando floods

MAURICE ALAL/The raging floods in Nyando, Kisumu county have destroyed rice worth Sh800 million at Ahero and West Kano irrigation schemes.

Western Kenya Schemes senior manager Joel Tanui submerged after River Nyando burst its banks and flooded plantations.

He said the floods have also damaged the National Irrigation Board infrastructure at the two schemes.

"We have parts of land submerged and newly planted seedlings swept away into Lake Victoria by raging waters," Tanui said.

More than 7,500 farmers in the schemes have lost their yields. Tanui said the disaster was a huge setback to farmers. An estimated 4,000 acres have been destroyed.

The official said this year's flooding is the worst in decades.

Apart from crop destruction, most farmers have also been displaced from their homes. Several houses are marooned. Some have collapsed.

The flooding, Tanui said, was a threat to food security in the county with other crops including vegetables, maize and beans also destroyed.

He said infrastructure damaged included roads, culverts, canals and bridges which require a lot of money to rehabilitate.

Last year, farmers lost more than 20,000 bags of rice in the 681-acre scheme to hailstorms. The rice was valued at Sh57 million.

Farmer Mary Achieng said they have incurred huge losses and asked for support. "We have lost our crops,



A rice plantation in Kobura village, Nyando, on April 25 /DANIEL OGENDO

livestock, and houses to floods. It is a terrible tragedy," she said.

Tanui called for a swift building of dykes along the banks of River Nyando to prevent perennial flooding.

The manager also noted that the construction of the Sh40 billion Koru-Soin dam will provide a permanent solution to the menace.

The construction of the multi-billion dam has stalled since 2016. Muhoroni MP Onyango Koyoo also appealed for a bailout to farmers to enable them prepare their land.

He backed the projects saying the government should speed the construction of the dam and build dykes to prevent future flooding.

COUNTIES NORTHEASTERN/EASTERN

ILLEGAL BUSINESS

Fake sanitiser, cigarettes and alcohol impounded in Meru

Owner, woman aged 40, hides in bathroom forcing police to climb to roof to smoke her out

GERALD MUTHETHIA
@TheStarKenya

Police in Tigania East, Meru county, impounded fake sanitiser, cigarettes, banned polythene papers, distillers and ethanol in a house in Kiguchwa.

A woman aged 40, only identified as Gacheri, was arrested.

Tigania Central subcounty police commander Nixon Makokha said they were yet to estimate the value of the 100 fully packed cartons.

The haul consisted of Supermatch cigarettes for export, polythene papers, sanitiser and hundreds of empty bottles for alcohol.

Makokha said DCI officers led by Stephen Murega had to use extra force to open the doors of the house where the goods were found because workers at the den had run away.

"We struggled to gain entry into the main house because the main suspect refused to open. She is the owner of the building. She was cunning. She hid inside her bathroom, forcing our officers to climb on the rooftop to peep in through the iron sheets. There are underground rooms and exit points we suspect workers used," Makokha said.

Makokha thanked area residents for the tip-off which they acted on.

"We got a tip-off that suspicious deals were being conducted in the home. Our officers came here at 5am. It was hard to unravel the mystery inside the dark room where we confiscated substandard fertilisers and manufacturing items



Tigania Central police officers load illegal goods on their vehicles at the home of a suspect where sanitiser and other items were impounded on Wednesday /GERALD MUTHETHIA

for the same and alcohol processing items," he said.

Makokha said the suspect was tricky and villagers had insisted the home had no occupant.

A detective told the Star, one cigarette carton traded at Sh30, 000 and the 100 cartons could cost Sh3 million.

He said the sanitiser and alcohol posed a danger to the health of residents especially at the time the country was faced with Covid-19.

He said such businesses were detrimental to the growth of the economy because the manufacturers did not have Kenya Bureau of Standards approval, making the nation lose revenue.

Makokha said the suspect would be presented in court at later date but would be out on a police bond. "We urge residents to provide information about people operating illegal businesses risking lives of many," he said.

(+) FACT BOX

- 1 On April 16, truck driver Peter Mwangi charged with having ethanol worth Sh12 million.
- 2 On April 18, police burn fish worth Sh5 million intercepted in Lamu, smuggled from Somalia.

THREE MONTHS PROGRAMME

Mandera flags off 693 tonnes of relief food

To be supplied to needy families until June



Food flagged off by Mandera Governor Ali Roba on Wednesday /COURTESY

ASTEPHEN ASTARIKO/ More than 11,000 families in Mandera will receive relief food from the county government to keep them going during the coronavirus crisis.

Governor Ali Roba on Wednesday flagged off seven trucks ferrying the food rations for distribution.

"We have identified more than 86,000 vulnerable households in need of support. We have however picked about 10,000 households most desperately in need of food assistance for the next three months from April to June," he said.

The county has recorded eight Covid-19 cases. The patients are in isolation at the Mandera Teaching

and Referral Hospital. As a result, the national government has banned road and air travel into and out of the border county. The governor has closed the Kenya-Ethiopia border.

"The above, coupled with the onset of the holy month of Ramadhan, has exposed the vulnerable families to serious food insecurity challenges," Roba said. "The combination of all the above factors has contributed a lot of hardship to the vulnerable population of our county."

Addressing residents outside the county headquarters in Mandera town, Roba said the Special Programmes department had identified vulnerable families up to the village level.

They include 2,250 families in Mandera East, 904 families in Lafey subcounty, 1,230 in Banisa, 1,610 in Mandera South, Kutulo (890), Mandera West (1,080) and Mandera North (3,210).

"This population includes the most vulnerable, Dugsi/Madrassa teachers, those living with HIV, internally displaced persons and people living with [disability]," Roba said.

He was with county secretary Abdinur Maalim, Finance executive Ibrahim Hassan and Water executive Mohamed Ali.

The food includes 450 tonnes of rice, 150 tonnes of beans and 93 tonnes of cooking oil. It will be distributed to the families monthly for three months.

The second-term governor said the county's efforts were being complemented by the World Food Programme through its agents on the ground, KOKOP.

Roba said the relief agency had on Wednesday started distributing 470 tonnes of sorghum, beans and cooking oil across the three subcounties where it operates.

"We thank WFP and KOKOP for this good gesture and call upon other organisations to emulate this example," he said.

Roba urged the national government, NGOs and other development partners to support needy people in the county.

Resident Fartun Ali said the food was a blessing,

COUNTY HAS NO CASE

Makueni TTIs begin making face masks for vulnerable groups

MUTUA KAMETI/ Makueni technical training institutions have started making face masks to be distributed to the vulnerable in bid to stop the spread of Covid-19.

Health CEC Andrew Mulwa on Thursday said the county government had engaged 12 technical training centres that had started producing the face masks.

The first batch of 12,600 face masks made in the local institutions was dispatched on Thursday at the county assembly premises to be distributed through MCAs and Ward Covid-19 Emergency Response committees.

"Our target is 80,000 face masks to be distributed to our people who cannot afford to buy them to ensure they are protected from being infected with Corona virus," Mulwa said during the dispatch.

He was accompanied by majority leader Kyallo Mumo, minority leader James Mbalu and minority whip Jades Kalunda.

Mulwa said the face masks have been approved and they meet the required standards.

The assembly approved Sh45 million for the Covid-19 fight. Mumo said part of the money will be used to empower TTIs to manufacture masks.

"The identified technical institutions need additional machines and materials for them to be able to increase production," he said.

HUMANITARIAN AID

Meru nun, MCA distribute food to disabled people

GERALD MUTHETHIA/ A nun has lamented rape and other injustices meted out to persons living with disability.

Sister Winfred Nkanya of Nazareth Sisters, who works at Jesus Mary and Joseph Rehabilitation Centre, spoke when donating food to families in Tigania West. She was in the company of Athwana MCA Victor Karithi.

They distributed maize, maize flour, beans, oils, flour, soaps, sanitiser and Covid-19 protective gear to people living with disability and the less fortunate.

Nkanya said the families suffer rape, abuse and related insecurities.

"They are not at their homes as you can see. Some are chained while others are locked in their houses to avoid being raped," she said.

"Three months ago, we had a mentally challenged girl who gave birth. It was not possible for her to get justice because chiefs cover up such crimes.

"God loves them and we are here to enlighten them of the pandemic. I ask county and national governments to get a home for PWDs."

Karithi said many foreign donors are no longer available to provide for needy homes because of the coronavirus outbreak.

He said the families are forgotten and have no one to provide for them.

COUNTIES NORTHEASTERN

FACE JAIL

Enter Mandera or leave at your own risk – RC

Movement banned to stop coronavirus

STEPHEN ASTARIKO
@TheStarKenya

Northeastern regional coordinator Nicodemus Ndalana on Thursday warned Mandera residents against defying Covid-19 control measures, saying they risk being jailed.

He said Mandera has a low population and the virus could spread fast if not checked.

“I would like to warn people who continue to break the rules that are in place to help us mitigate the spread of the virus. We will arrest and impose heavy fines on you. I call upon everybody to be responsible to enable us to fight Covid-19,” Ndalana said.

Movement into and out of Mandera

has been banned after the county recorded eight coronavirus cases.

Ndalana said security forces will set up roadblocks at Takaba on the Moyale entry and exit and Kutullo along the Wajir highway.

Kenya borders Ethiopia to the north and Somalia to the east, with Wajir and Mandera residents sharing a lot in common with nationals of the two countries.

Apart from trade and healthcare, residents from Bula Sufti in Ethiopia and Bula Hawa in Somalia, which are less than 10 kilometers away, share blood relationships with Kenyans at the border.

Ndalana urged residents along River Daua to move to safe areas because



Mandera Governor Ali Roba flags off relief food outside the county headquarters on April 29 /COURTESY

their lives are at risk after the river flooded.

The river has displaced people as far as Mandera town, which is more than three kilometres away.

Governor Ali Roba said they have

identified 86,000 vulnerable households who need support.

Speaking at the launch of the food distribution programme, Roba said the most vulnerable groups include Dugsi/Madrassa teachers, people

living with HIV and internally displaced persons.

He urged the national government and other development partners to provide support to these categories of people.



DESPERATE

Deputy Governor Dagane appeals for humanitarian help for flood victims

STEPHEN ASTARIKO/ Garissa Deputy Governor Abdi Dagane has appealed to development partners and well-wishers to help fight Covid-19 and alleviate the suffering of flood victims.

He said they need support because the county has inadequate resources to cater to the affected communities.

“We plan to distribute food and other sanitary items to more than 10,000 needy households,” Dagane said.

Apart from floods, the county is battling the spread of coronavirus and other calamities caused by en-

vironmental degradation.

The deputy governor, who chairs the county emergency response committee, said floods from River Tana have risen to six metres and affected more than 7000 households.

“Displaced people cannot strictly follow handwashing and social distancing measures because they are desperate and are at higher risk of contracting coronavirus,” he added.

Dagane urged the national government to expedite assistance to the residents to prevent an outbreak of waterborne disease.

A house submerged in floodwaters in Garissa after the River Tana burst its banks /COURTESY

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SASA

COVER

Digital chief rallies to fight virus in K

Mapenzi makes liquid soap, masks and distributes to widows, elderly

BY ELIAS YAA

/ @TheStarKenya



Chief Juliet Mapenzi donates masks, handwashing soap and food to Asha Kaingu and her children in Kibao Kiche. Asha, a widow, was sent away by family members after the death of her husband 10 years ago / YAA ELIAS

When the first case of Covid-19 was first reported in the country, everyone was thinking of how to stay safe from the coronavirus.

As the government laid down plans to stem the spread of the coronavirus, initial efforts were put on populations in major towns.

In Kaloleni subcounty, a rural area in Kilifi county, life went on without any fear of the virus.

People congregated in funerals, oblivious of the dangers posed. This was further propagated by the social nature of the Mijikenda people.

It is through such challenges that a local administrator decided to take the bull by its horns, educating the community to shun their normal way of life due to the coronavirus.

It was a tall order because the administrator is a woman. Mijikendas 'do not' take orders or advice from women.

Seeing the tough fight ahead, Juliet Mapenzi, the assistant chief of Mbalamweni sublocation in Kayafungo location, decided to put youths in the loop through social media.

The administrator stepped in to fill the

gap politicians have left. "I am still in the youth bracket so I activated my networks through social media, and we started an online campaign to educate the community on basic hygiene and how to stay safe from the virus," Mapenzi said.

"When the campaign gained momentum, I brought onboard my village elders and Nyumba Kumi ambassadors, whose duty was to make sure government directives are being implemented.

"I used the elders because their approach is always tailored to the behaviours of the community. They do it in a humane way."

SOAP, MASK UNAFFORDABLE

Mbalamweni has 12 villages with 2,530 households. The elders went from household to household to make sure handwashing equipment is available.

They also advised the community not to meet in large groups.

"We educated people on how to improvise handwashing equipment and the response was awesome. The biggest challenge was soap," she said.

Every time we ask people to wash hands with soap, they said they have no money to buy soap. Purchasing a face mask is even

harder for the residents here."

Through the Mbalamweni Village Elders Association, the "digital chief", as she is commonly referred to, started teaching the village elders and Nyumba Kumi ambassadors how to make liquid soap.

"I talked to the deputy county commissioner, who was very supportive. We bought the chemicals and started making the soap. We made several litres, which we distributed to the most vulnerable members of the community for free," Mapenzi said.

"Our target was widows, the elderly and people living with disabilities. We also made face masks for free distribution to the most at-risk members of the community and the vulnerable."

The village elders also started a project to produce the soap and sell at a cheaper price.

In the area, a 500ml bottle goes for Sh50, but the elders are selling the same quantity at Sh30.

Happy Sidi, 19, from Kidzini village, who benefitted from the initiative, explained how challenging it is for people living with disabilities to observe the Covid-19 directives by the government.

Sidi, who uses a wheelchair, said she has to wash hands every time she moves



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es youth Kaloleni

erly and people with disability for free

around. She expressed fears that people living with disabilities could be hit hard by the virus as they are more than often neglected.

“I use a wheelchair and whenever I wheel myself to a different place, I must wash hands as the place I use to wheel myself sometimes touches the ground,” she said.

“Where do I get such an amount of soap to wash my hands? Before getting the support, I used to wash my hands with just water or sometimes I used ash then rinsed with water.”

At Kibao Kiche, we met Asha Kaingu, a widow who is living at the mercy of a well-wisher after she was chased from her matrimonial home when her husband died 10 years ago.

Kaingu expressed fears her family could be wiped by the coronavirus as even getting basic things like food is a challenge.

Kaingu lives in a makeshift house and sleeps on a mat with four of her seven children.

“We cannot maintain social distancing in my house because we have no space and I cannot send my children away. I use water from the water pan to wash hands but getting soap is not easy,” she said.

“When I am lucky to get menial jobs, then I have to make a choice between buying food and buying soap. When I received the support from the chief, it came as a relief to me.”

SWIMMING IN POVERTY

Sidi Kithuku, 76, from Panga Yambo, also received the support. Kithuku is a widow who fends for five grandchildren. She survives on the government’s cash transfer fund.

The granny has never had a face mask and washing hands with soap is also a challenge due to lack of money.

Mapenzi says when coronavirus was reported in the country, her first concern was how to shield the vulnerable from the disease.

“The coronavirus could have devastating effects on the rural population. This is what made me come up with this initiative,” Mapenzi said.

“Mbalamweni sublocation swims in poverty, and with the challenges brought about by Covid-19 pandemic, things are thicker.”

The support has so far reached 50 households.

“I also try to give them some food support but I have very little resources. Mbalamweni is open to well-wishers who are ready to support the community. The community is poor,” Mapenzi said.



HAPPY SIDI, 19

I use a wheelchair and whenever I wheel myself to a different place, I must wash hands as the place I use to wheel myself sometimes touches the ground. Where do I get such an amount of soap to wash my hands?



SOCIETY TALK

BY NABILA HATIMY

@realobserver



A first as Muslims fast in solitude



Masjid Noor in Nairobi's South C on April 25 as Ramadhan gets underway. The mosque would usually be packed with worshippers during this holy month of fasting /CHARLENE MALWA

Sense of community is the essence of Ramadhan. This year, the essence is lost

It is evident that we are facing a time of firsts as we continue the global fight against the Covid-19 pandemic. Up until 2019, most of us had lived blissful lives without wars, coups or dangerous outbreaks.

Since late last year, we can say nothing has put us to the test more than the coronavirus. We have had to stay indoors for weeks on end, we have had to stay away from family and loved ones, and some have had to bear the worst burden of all, not being able to bury their loved ones.

For Muslims across the globe, the last weekend was the beginning of a first for everyone. The first Ramadhan during social distancing. This is the first Ramadhan in history that Muslims have been unable to assemble in mosques or gather as families during the fasting period.

In Kenya, the Chief Kadhi maintained that Muslims will observe Ramadhan in accordance with the laws during the pandemic. That means mosques will remain closed to the public and no public gatherings will be allowed, even for special prayers. This unique Ramadhan is similarly being observed across the globe where most mosques remain closed.

Ramadhan is the ninth month of the Islamic calendar and is the one month of the year where every able-bodied Muslim is obligated to fast from dawn to dusk. It was during the holy month of Ramadhan that the Muslim Holy Book, the Quran, was revealed to Prophet Muhammad.

As such, Muslims aspire to read the entire Quran in the 30 days of Ramadhan. The sense of purity is heightened as Muslims abstain from more than just food and water. They are mandated to refrain from all evils during this month and focus only on devotion.

You see, Ramadhan is not just about being devout and increasing one’s good deeds; it’s about family and society. Muslims come together during this Holy month to pray in masses and share knowledge of the scripture through sermons. This is the main reason Ramadhan is predominantly a communal affair. People pray together and they break their fast together.

The month is special to Muslims around the world because there is a lot of emphasis on community. Everyone shares the little they have with their neighbours and loved ones. Mosques and organised institutions share food in their respective communities so no one goes hungry.

This is the time where people strengthen their communal bonds; united in devotion. The congregational aspect of Ramadhan also stems from a special prayer that is observed only during Ramadhan. This prayer, called Taraweh, is conducted after the last obligatory prayer of the day and can only be observed in a congregation. During these prayers, most Imams try to complete the Quran recitation.

The sense of community is the essence of Ramadhan. This year, the essence is lost, the air is sombre and all is quiet by 7pm. The adhan is ringing in empty mosques and the echoes reverberating in the quiet neighbourhoods. Behind the locked doors and drawn curtains, families gather to break their fast in an atypical manner.

No one is making the special feasts, as they can no longer have communal iftaar with friends and families. The special dishes that are only made during Ramadhan are missing in the day’s menu as people are consciously using food supplies. Most supply stores are closed and people cannot find those special ingredients as well.

It is a unique experience to be fasting during the coronavirus pandemic. However, at this rate, unique experiences and firsts are slowly becoming the norm. We understand the severity of the disease and we know that the only way to stop the spread of the coronavirus is to maintain social distance.

We miss praying Taraweh at the mosque and breaking fast in groups, but we understand the necessity of taking these drastic steps. The idea of Eid being a solitary affair is also heart-breaking to all Muslims. Nevertheless, we cannot let this holy month just pass us by in our sombre moods. It is important to take advantage of this divine time to pray for healing from the coronavirus.

Moreover, since most people won’t be able to feed others during Ramadhan as they are accustomed to, it is essential that we look out for our communities by sending food to the less fortunate. We might be keeping social distance but the helping hand is without borders.

WE MIGHT BE KEEPING SOCIAL DISTANCE BUT THE HELPING HAND IS WITHOUT BORDERS

Digital work culture and future of reading

BY JKS MAKOKHA | /@TheStarKenya



It is now over a month since the learning institutions in Kenya were closed as the government rolled out strategies to combat the spread of the novel coronavirus.

Most children and youths in the country would have finished their April vacation this week had this been a normal year of learning. Second term was poised to begin on May 4 onwards. This is now unlikely.

On Sunday, Education CS Prof George Magoha announced the vacation will continue for another month as the government monitors the pandemic. Parents will be with their children throughout the month of May.

Today, May Day 2020, will be remembered for generations to come. Many will recall it in retrospect as the month where workers stayed at home, or worked from home, as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak.

To me, this unique month of May at home is a special chance to work on the habits and characters of our children. Parents can seize it as a golden opportunity to inculcate national values embodied in our work spirit of harambee.

They can do so by working on the reading culture of our



A man participates in an online coaching session using a laptop /SHUTTERSTOCK

Information Age, cultivating it in their offspring as they continue to enjoy unprecedented extended time together in their families.

Several schools have come up with alternative programmes for learning and instruction. Some have opted to continue their operations online. This is mainly the case with vocational and technical colleges, such as the Nairobi Institute of Business Studies (NIBS) Technical College, as well as universities, both private and public.

St Paul's University and Kenyatta University, for instance, continue to offer their courses, albeit online through virtual and distance learning. Dedan Kimathi University of Technology will hold a graduation ceremony virtually on Friday next week. It will be the first of its kind in Kenya.

Other schools are relying on local arrangements between parents and teachers to keep the students busy at home. They use social media platforms for maximum

advantage in terms of collection and dissemination of learning materials. This has been made possible using advances in mobile phone technology in the form of smartphones and social media platforms, such as WhatsApp.

Soft copy versions of instructional and assessment materials are shared easily in Controlled Virtual Groups (CVG) as the reality of our information-based knowledge societies of today becomes ever so clear and inevitable.

Learners in far-flung regions of the country have not been left behind entirely. The government has made use of its vast network of signals of KBC.

The Ministry of Education has enabled the Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development to broadcast lessons and learning activities through EDU channel using the KBC signals. EDU channel is a government media house located in Nairobi but whose learner-centred programmes are accessible via TV and radio services across our nation.

Additionally, other online reading resources for our children are now available to parents as they work at home or from home. Different depositories and actors in the book industry are offering access to free texts in soft copy as the pandemic persists. This is especially the case across Europe and the US, but online access enables us to make use of them from here.

Cambridge University Press, for instance, has offered free online access to higher education institutions in support of the youths who are now away from college for an indefinite duration.

SAGE, another leading academic publisher, is giving free access to

a research collection, where they curate over 1,000 academic journals and hundreds of new books in different areas of study. Both can be accessed online from the comfort and safety of home by use of our mobile phones. The same applies for preschool, with actors such as Vooks (www.vooks.com) offering free reading materials.

This Internet-enabled access to home-schooling resources is bound to be easier in coming months. The national government is set to spread widely mobile Internet access through a partnership it has with Google and Telkom Kenya.

Named Project Loon, Google balloons will help offer 4G lite Internet services from this second term season of Kenyan schools. Strong online connectivity will enhance e-learning experiences and access/distribution of online learning materials and soft copies of reading texts.

As Kenya enters the second phase of social distancing as well as partial lockdown in major counties, our collective spirit of harambee should inspire us to continue building the nation. Shifted locations of work from public places to the privacy of our homes should not water down our efforts to nurture the youth and children. A society that invests in the future is one that trains its young ones today.

This work needs to continue as we adapt to the inalienable role technology now plays in our society and education experiences. The future of reading and work is here. We have arrived at the virtual and digital horizons of the 21st Century.

Dr Makokha teaches Literature and Theatre at Kenyatta University

WORLD IMMUNISATION WEEK

BY ELIZABETH MBUGUA | @TheStarKenya

Immunity beyond Covid-19: The importance of vaccines

Vaccination will protect us from other diseases during pandemic

According to the World Health Organisation, vaccination is a simple, safe, and effective way of protecting people against harmful diseases, before they come into contact with them. Basically, it is a way of producing an immune response in the body without causing illness. Vaccines protect people for years, decades and some for life.

Immunisation on the other hand is the actual process where a person is made immune or resistant to a communicable disease by the administration of a vaccine. It is one of the most successful and cost-effective health interventions and this explains why there is a whole week set aside annually to highlight the collective action needed to ensure that every person is protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.

April 24- 30 is the World Immunization Week. This year's theme #VaccinesWorkForAll, focused on how vaccines, the people who develop them, deliver and receive them are heroes, because collectively, their efforts protect the health of everyone everywhere. Also, this year nurses and midwives are being celebrated for, among other things, the role they play as vaccine champions for all parents.

WHO in its 2020 World Immunization Week Campaign aimed at demonstrating the value of vaccines and their role in building the health of children, communities and the world at large. The campaign also outlined the importance of immunization as a foundation for robust health systems, and attainment of universal health coverage. WHO

highlighted the importance of building immunization progress while addressing gaps such as low investments in vaccine research and development.

2-3 million lives are saved every year from more than 20 life threatening diseases that can be prevented by immunization these include; polio, meningitis, rotavirus and many others.

When children are vaccinated against such diseases, they are given a chance to lead healthy lives from childhood to old age. However, not all children around the world receive vital vaccinations.

In 2018, WHO estimated that about 20 million children worldwide missed out on life-saving vaccines. These are children from countries that are vulnerable due to conflicts and poverty and

those with fragile health systems.

Although to-date only smallpox has been eliminated globally by the efforts of vaccination, the world cannot ignore notable success such as reduction of polio cases by 99.9% and reduction of measles mortality by 73% among many others. This goes to prove how important research and development of vaccines is.

The current Covid-19 pandemic risks interfering with the efforts the world has made towards strengthening immunization progress. In the quest of keeping safe from infection, parents and guardians are avoiding to take their children for their vaccination shots. This might trigger resurgence of vaccine-preventable diseases in countries. A good illustration of this is the measles outbreak that occurred in DRC during the Ebola pandemic causing more than 6,000 deaths.

It is important even during emergencies to carry on with immunization which is an essential health service. The last thing the world, most especially countries with fragile health systems, needs is to fight another pandemic on top of Covid-19. Should another disease emerge health systems that are already struggling to fight Covid-19 would be weakened further.

As a way of addressing the disruption of the routine

immunization activities as well as countering the possibility of vaccine-preventable disease resurgence, WHO on March 26, 2020 released interim Guiding Principles for Immunization Activities During the Covid-19 Pandemic. One key goal of these guidelines is to protect unnecessary loss of life from those diseases which vaccines already exist.

WHO is calling upon countries to protect immunization services in order to minimize disease outbreaks and loss of life. It recommends that governments temporarily pause preventative immunization campaigns where there is no active outbreak of a vaccine-preventable disease, but at the same time urges governments to prioritize the continuation of routine immunization [by adopting unique immunization delivery strategies] of children as well as adult vaccinations such as influenza for groups most at risk.

Countries should fortify the governance and leadership of national immunization programs; they should also expand immunisation services beyond infancy and diversify to older age groups. This way preventable diseases will be kept at bay while fighting those that do not yet have vaccines such as Covid-19.

Advocate of the High Court

★ SASA LIVING

G-SPOT

BY MWANGI G

/@MwangiGithahu



Hoax corona cures throwback to Pearl Omega, Ozone therapy



Prof Arthur Obel and quack Basil Earle Wainwright, alias Dr Stone, conned Kenyans they had cures for Aids in the '90s

The man some of my American friends refer to as the 'So-called Ruler of the United States' or Scrotus last week went on national TV to promote the idea that disinfectant could be used as a treatment for the coronavirus.

He said, "Disinfectant: knocks it out in a minute. One minute!" The world was variously shocked, amused, saddened and outraged.

A few days later, I read an article in the British newspaper the Guardian, in which it was revealed that the advice to 'Scrotus' had most probably come from some fellow called Mark Grenon.

Apparently, Grenon heads a prominent group in the US, peddling potentially lethal industrial-strength bleach as a miracle cure; and he had been in touch with the White House with his spiel, which clearly the President fell for.

Reading the story, I couldn't help thinking of a similar situation in Kenya back in the 1990s. In those days, there emerged on the national scene a certain Arthur Obel. Obel was an eccentric gun-toting professor of medicine, who managed to inveigle himself into President Daniel arap Moi's circle of advisers, eventually becoming one himself.

The story of Obel and his

DESPERATE AND, THEREFORE, MORE GULLIBLE THAN USUAL, KENYANS HAD BEEN MAKING A BEELINE FOR OBEL'S USELESS SYRUP QUIETLY FOR SOME YEARS AND HAD MADE AN ALREADY COMFORTABLY OFF MAN, VERY RICH

infamous Pearl Omega syrup that purported to cure Aids broke in March 1996. But according to the man himself, he had been doing secret research on the concoction with the blessing and financial support of the President's office (read: taxpayers' money) since 1992.

With backing from the President's office and, at least initially, the Ministry of Health, which would later turn on him, Obel swore blind that he had cured seven patients since 1991. He said his concoction was from a recipe handed down by his traditional healer grandfather.

Desperate and, therefore, more gullible than usual, Kenyans had been making a beeline for Obel's useless syrup quietly for some years and had made an already comfortably off man, very rich.

Some fearless medical professionals condemned Pearl

Omega as a hoax in the mid-90s. It wasn't until then that the Ministry of Health and the Office of the President remembered that under Kenyan law, any new drug must be analysed and approved by the ministry before it can be put on the market.

As no licence had been issued for the sale and distribution of Pearl Omega, the concoction was therefore illegally being sold at the professor's International Medical Foundation and at the government-sponsored Biodiversity Centre in Nairobi.

There was great embarrassment all around and, if I recall, there was even a lawsuit. But eventually, the matter was forgotten and Kenyans, as is their wont, moved on to the next thing.

In the late 1990s, there would emerge another miracle Aids cure in Kenya. This one was sold by a British jailbird and quack, Basil Earle Wainwright. He went by the alias Dr Stone and was wanted by the FBI and other law enforcement agencies but had managed to con his way into Kenya.

Stone, who was basically selling bottled air which he called "Ozone therapy", claimed to have cured over 500 Aids victims. He was eventually charged in court but I can't recall if he was ever jailed.

SAMANTHA'S CHRONICLES

BY SAMANTHA

@TheStarKenya



Home alone is booty call time

So Tory Lanez is on our cover. The man behind Quarantine Radio that several people around the world, including Kenya, are now trying to mimic.

Girls twerk on his Instagram Live feed, with celebrities watching alongside everyone else. The result is a strip club with no entrance fee or overpriced drinks. The girls are tipped by the public and Lanez himself when the show is over.

So far, he has reached 350k views — an Instagram Live record — only broken by Babyface vs Teddy Riley, who easily went over 500k and broke the Internet.

Tory has used the success of Quarantine Radio to promote his mixtape, and the story in our magazine gives practical tips on how our readers can be innovative and creative when it comes to selling products.

It's an excellent story, very well written and informative. They are producing great content without me. I groan and push my laptop away in frustration. I need to get back in the game before they think they are better off without me.

The good thing about being stuck at home — whether it's from a head injury like mine, or from social distancing for the rest of the world — is you get time to watch a lot of TV.

I never had the time before between constantly working, screwing and having meetings. One of the shows I have watched features hot singles in an exotic island for four weeks. They are then told they can win \$100,000 (Sh10 million) if they don't have sex, and this is somehow a huge problem for them.

So much so that the prize money at the end is considerably

lower. Because breaking the rules means the money is reduced. A kiss is a fine of Sh300,000. Sex is Sh2,000,000. And inexplicably, everyone keeps breaking rule after rule after rule.

What's the longest you've gone without sex? Why would four weeks be a challenge? It's all very strange to me. I want to suggest a cover story where we explore this. Are people locked up in quarantine having endless sex? Or are they stuck by themselves and abstaining?

I type an email and send it to my deputy, asking her to assign someone to do this story and send it to me when it's done. She responds fairly quickly. I read and re-read the email.

That angle is overdone. Many of the dailies have carried those type of stories and it will be stale by the time it gets on the cover.

Who does she think she is? She works for me! To make it worse, she has copied my boss in the email! Is she trying to make me look bad? Speaking of the devil, he sends an email. She is not copied.

Hi. You're supposed to be resting, Samantha. Doctor's orders! We are ok here for now. You concentrate on getting better.

Read: Your idea is crap. I log off my account and turn on the TV. Covid this, Covid that. I turn it off. They might not like my idea but it makes sense. What else is there to do while holed up at home?

And so what if other people have written about it? You simply find a different angle.

I pick up my phone and scroll through the numbers until I get to Frank. Nothing like an ex for a booty call. And nothing like a personal experience to write a good story.

Me: Hey. You want to come over?



★ SASA WORTH THE VISIT

Emakoko Lodge offers luxurious stay and satisfying game drives

The facility offers much-sought-after wildlife, high-end cuisine and panoramic views

SIMON MARSH

@TheStarKenya



It must have taken a great deal of vision and foresight for Emma and Anthony Childs to picture where the Emakoko Lodge would be best positioned. And subsequently, a terrific eye for design in its construction to end up with a product that blends luxuriously fitted accommodation into the natural environment.

Positioned close to the Moikoyet picnic site across the Mbagathi river is the reception area, which welcomes hot and thirsty visitors with a cool towel and a tangy refreshing juice.

For many making their first visit to Africa, a 45-minute drive has taken them from the hustle and bustle of Mombasa Road after leaving the airport to the serenity of Nairobi National park through the East Gate. Often, the only prior sightings of African wildlife have been at the zoo, and with a good chance of seeing lions, black rhinoceros or buffalo on the way to the lodge, the safari is off and running.

Many of the guests at Emakoko spend the first day or two of their Kenyan safari here before moving off to other parks and reserves. It gives them a wonderful introduction to Kenya and to luxury safaris with a very real prospect of seeing four of the big five in one day. There have even been excellent and regular sightings of several leopards in close proximity of the lodge, and the skilled guides know exactly where to look.

It's not all about animals, of course. Looking down from the wooden footbridge across the river approaching the lodge, there could well be a crocodile basking itself on the bank, though never fear, as they keep well away from the lodge itself.

Adjacent to the reception area is a small gift shop, which then flows through to a large, open airy bar lounge with deep, comfortable sofas and an open fireplace. Many happy hours can be spent here, enjoying the house speciality drink, a chili



Emakoko private house /SIMON MARSH

dawa, while the lions provide the bush choir. The frequent nocturnal visitors include genet cats, who will opportunistically seek out a dropped morsel or two.

The cuisine here is high-end. The owners and chefs are always seeking to explore new dishes and menus and to incorporate particular dietary restrictions of guests. Being allergic to gluten, they freshly baked some delicious gluten-free bread for me and ensured everything was gluten-free, while negating any drop in taste but tantalisation.

For those who enjoy their wine, there is advice available on pairing a wine to bring out the best of the

flavours in the dish and vice versa.

In most cases, however, people come from far away on the trip of a lifetime to see the big five, and the guides seek to fulfil those desires as best they can.

The guides and management are in regular contact with other frequent park visitors and know the areas the prides of lions, grumpy black rhino and even the elusive leopards frequent, and few guests are likely to return from a game drive disappointed. In fact, the guides have become so good at finding leopards that some have even been named after the lodge in recent years.

The newest addition to the lodge is the resplendent private house, which sits right at the top of the hill. However, there is no need to overly exert oneself, as the electronic funicular will effortlessly take you up the slope, while you savour the view over the park and at the top step onto the platform.

The private house has its own pool, bar and fireplace, and with a small kitchen, the staff can provide your meals here as well, so you don't even need to leave. The two rooms, each equipped with spacious bathrooms and individual terrace, open up to the spacious living room with a large fireplace and deep sofas.

It's the view, however, that makes it stand out. From the top of the hill, you have a commanding view of the park, and there is a handily placed powerful

telescope with which to identify the movement in the trees.

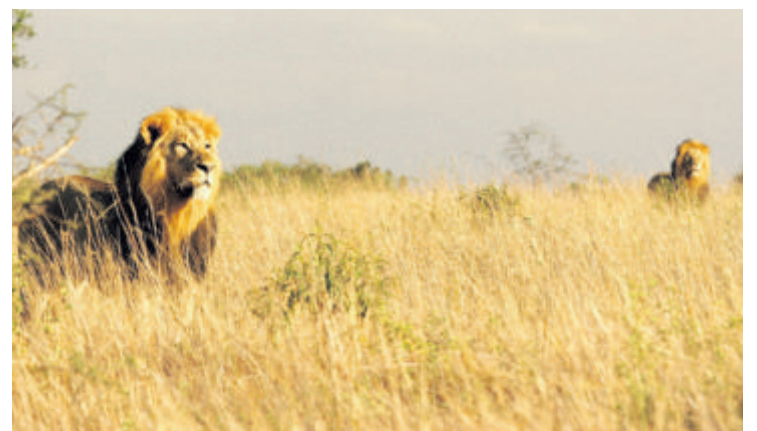
The bar is the social focal point of the lodge. It is a great communal gathering point for telling and hearing stories from the bush, laughter, challenges

and making memories.

For Kenyan residents, the Emakoko offers special rates and these can be obtained from them directly. Whether coming from near or far, it is time well spent and very well worth it.



Private house /COURTESY



Wild animals at the Nairobi National Park /COURTESY

★ WORD IS...

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SOCIALBYTE
WITH ELIZABETH NGIGI
@nyambis_liz



Laura Karwira / ELIZABETH NGIGI

Gospel singer Laura Karwira says she was reached out to by the Permanent Presidential Music Commission to work on 'Pambazuka'.

The song carries the message of hope to Kenyans at this time of the coronavirus pandemic.

Speaking to Word Is, Laura said she had an amazing time working on the song. "It's a song of hope that unites Kenyans to recognise and face in unity their present enemies, one major one being the corona pandemic at the moment," she said.

"The song reminds us of our fierce Kenyan spirit and encourages us even in the dark times, that eventually, through God, everything is going to get better."

The song features Bire, Chuchu, Isaac Mugunda and Ray Gee, the former street child who went viral online a few weeks ago, singing Justin Bieber's song. Karwira is famed for her song 'Ujulikane' featuring Alice Kimanzi.

TikTok to help Africa immunise



Tiktok logo / COURTESY

ELIZABETH NGIGI/ The leading short-form video platform, TikTok, announced it will be donating \$10 million (Sh1 billion) to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.

This will go towards supporting efforts for routine vaccinations against existing infectious diseases in Africa, as well as future deployment of corona vaccines.

The contribution will be matched by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation through its support to the Gavi Matching Fund, a public-private funding mechanism designed to incentivise private sector investments in immunisation, bringing the total to \$20 million (Sh2 billion).

TikTok has also continued to support front line medical workers, educators, and local communities affected by corona.

Gavi CEO Dr Seth Berkley said, "This important contribution will not only help us to deploy vaccines, once developed, against corona but also prevent a potentially catastrophic impact on immunisation programmes across the developing world."

WAHU SAID SOMETIMES, ONE NEEDS TO BE A PARENT TO CHILDREN AND NOT POPULAR

MY DAUGHTERS ARE UPSET ABOUT CHORES, SAYS WAHU

ELIZABETH NGIGI @nyambis_liz/ Gospel singer Wahu says her daughters do not like her during this corona pandemic.

Speaking to Word Is, the mother of two said her daughters are upset because she is the teacher and the house chores are the reasons they are not happy.

"My house help had to travel and so everyone has to do chores. So they are not happy with me, of course, because I'm the implementor of those chores," she said.

Wahu says as the mother, she has come up with a plan where everyone has to do chores after waking up.

"Then we have to do school together and now they don't like me, but it's life."

Speaking as a mother, Wahu said sometimes, one needs to be a parent to children and not popular.

"I am no longer popular in the house with them, which is fine as some things are God-given responsibilities so that by the time they are women, they will not blame me for not teaching them," she said.

Before the pandemic, Wahu says she would only come home in the evening, have a cool talk together, no chores, but right now it's real life.

"We are spending some good time, we do dance exercise together at 6pm, so there is also the fun side," she said.

"I am enjoying hanging around with my kids. We upset each other, we make up and then we come up with a review every day."

During this period, Wahu says she has realised that being away from home and coming at the end of the day, there are lessons she is now en-



joying teaching her daughters.

"I have more time with them in the kitchen and cooking more. I've told them it's like a normal school day, so no TV during the week, no phones, so they are being creative on what to do," she said.

Another thing she is teaching them is the games she used to play

Wahu and Nameless with their two daughters /COURTESY

as a child, trying new recipes and even just talking.

"Like I was telling my daughter, I could clean our whole house and even cook at her age, and so when I tell them to do one, two, three, I don't feel like I'm punishing them, they are up to the task," the artist said.



ELIZABETH NGIGI / Former Tahidi High actors Abel Mutua and Philip Karanja have recounted a near-death incident that happened while they were in college.

Speaking on Abel's new Instagram show, 'Young and Stupid',

Philip Karanja, Abel Mutua and Njugush /COURTESY

How actors Abel and Philip escaped death in college

Abel Mutua shared a video detailing the events of what transpired between him, Karanja and their crew from the Kenya Institute of Mass Communication back in 2008.

"At that time, celebrity status had already kicked since it was our second year in Tahidi High," Philip said.

"We participated in the drama festivals that took place at The Railway Training Institute, where I was crowned the best male actor, and as usual, Abel and OJ went out there and started throwing insults at RTI students because KIMC had won."

Mutua added that this display angered The Railway Training Institute students, and thus they decided to block the exit, starting a fight.

"We were surrounded by over 200 students from The Rail-

way Training Institute. That is when they started attacking us Tahidi High actors," he said.

"OJ approached them and boldly asked them what they wanted. The crowd pulled us and I was taken by one, and the other one took OJ," the duo said.

The situation got so bad that Philip peed on himself and as such, it was left to Mutua to come up with an escape plan.

"Things got worse. One of the students from our rival school got into the bus with paraffin and lit the props, bringing the bus down to ashes as we watched," added Mutua.

Luckily, a National Youth Service guy helped the girls to escape, and after that, Abel and his friends escaped unhurt.



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Nairobi City County,
P.O. Box 30075-00100
Nairobi

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I am a kenyan born in 1950 and would like to get in touch with any one whom has a king george one shilling of that very year.Call me on 0724405401 or 0736211045.

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 Tel: (254 020)6005522,6001945, Fax 9254 020) 6008997
 Email: dgnema@nema.go.ke website: www.nema.go.ke

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC TO SUBMIT COMMENTS ON AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY REPORT FOR PROPOSED INSTALLATION AND OPERATION OF INDUSTRIAL AND BIOMEDICAL INCINERATION PLANT LOCATED ON PLOT NO.MITABONI/NGELANI/5/98/99 IN LUKENYA AREA,MAVOKO SUB-

Pursuant to Regulation 21 of the Environmental Management and Coordination (Impact Assessment and Audit) Regulation 2003, the National Environment Management Authority(NEMA) has received an Environmental Impact Assessment Report for the above proposed project.

The proponent,Sureflame Incinerators Ltd is proposing to install and operate an industrial & biomedical waste incineration plant comprising storage area,destruction area,bioremediation,evaporationponds,ash containment,weigh bridge,offices,perimeter wall and associated amenities on a portion of Plot No.Mitaboni/Ngelani/5/98/99 in Lukenya area,Mavoko Sub-County,Machakos County.

The following are the anticipated impacts and proposed mitigation measures:

Negative Impacts.	Mitigation Measures
Possible damage of the soil structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper soil compaction measures Excavate construction areas only Use the excavated top soil for landscaping
Contamination of ground and surface water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contain any oil spills Put in place waste water collection, treatment and containment facility Put in place hard surfaces on working areas with proper connections to containment areas
Dust Emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of full protective gear for workers Sprinkling water on the dusty roads.
Exhaust Emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure proper servicing of machinery Appropriate pollution control measures should be applied/ adapted. Compliance to the Third Schedule of the Waste Management Regulations of 2006 Compliance to the Air Quality Regulations, 2014
Solid Waste Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Disposal of solid waste at approved dumpsites. Segregate waste, encourage recycling and reuse of waste materials
Soil Erosion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strict adherence to the construction design and recommendations Proper backfilling and landscaping so as to rehabilitate the land and improve its aesthetic value
Generation of Noise and Vibrations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insulate vibrators and heavy machineries to minimize ambient noise levels. Lubricate machineries to minimize noise generated in parts movement. Restrict use of heavy machineries practical hours during the day Compliance to Noise and Excessive Vibrations, 2009
Clearing of vegetation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Only remove vegetation from areas of excavation and construction.
Social tensions and conflicts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project awareness through public participation and media disclosures
Oil leaks & Spills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proper and regular maintenance of the machinery and equipment to reduce oil leaks
Safety and health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Put in place a safety and health policy Document an emergency and incident response plan Procure equipment's and materials that will enhance safety and health Compliance to Occupational health and safety
Traffic flow	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Erect warning signs of on-going works. Expedite construction works and communicate alternative access ways to the community.
Bad smell/odor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proper housekeeping techniques, installing proper waste storage/containment areas and pretreatment interventions such as fumigations
Utility relocation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify the relevant authorities on affected utilities and provide alternatives.- Relocation of utilities to be suctioned and done by relevant Authorities
Social issues and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create awareness on issues such as HIV & AIDS in collaboration with the community leaders, local authorities and other relevant interested actors such as CBOs and NGOs Put in place grievance and dispute resolution committee including the community leaders and area Government administrators Increase security interventions and surveillance around the construction area.

The full report of the proposed project is available for inspection during working hours at:

- Principal Secretary
Ministry of Environmental and Forestry,
NHIF Building, 12th Floor,
Ragati Road, Upper Hill
P.O BOX: 30126-00100,
NAIROBI
- Director General, NEMA Popo Road
off Mombasa Road,
P.O BOX 67839-00200,
NAIROBI
- County Director of Environment
MACHAKOS COUNTY


A copy of the EIA report can be downloaded at www.nema.go.ke

NEMA invites members of the public to submit oral or written comments within thirty (30) Days from the date of publication of this notice to the Director General, NEMA to assist the Authority in the decision-making process for this project. Kindly quote ref. no. **NEMA/EIA/5/2/1702**.

Comments can also be e-mailed to dgnema@nema.go.ke

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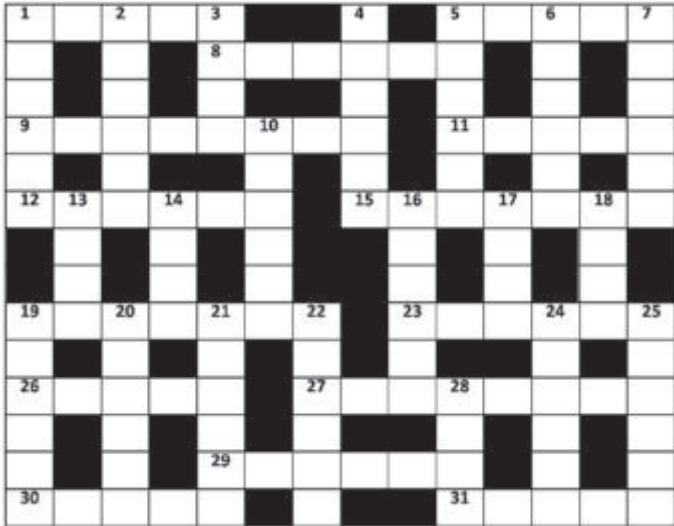
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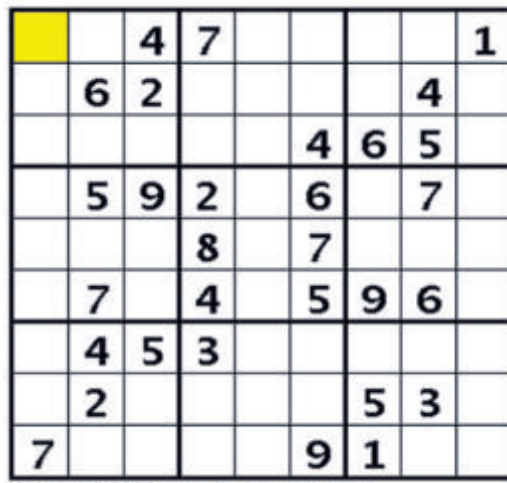
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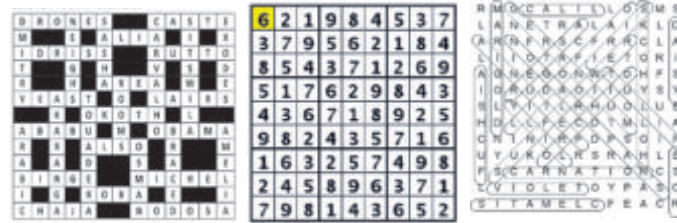
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- 1 Chemical element with symbol Ra (6)
 - 2 Member of Parliament for North Imenti Constituency (6)
 - 3 Ornamental brooch (4)
 - 4 Member of Parliament for Narok East Constituency (6)
 - 5 A line joining points of equal pressure (6)
 - 6 Member of Parliament for Nyaribari Masaba Constituency (6)
 - 7 Rarely (6)
 - 10 Member of Parliament for Turkana South Constituency (6)
 - 13 Notion (4)
 - 14 Former Member of Parliament for Killifi South Constituency (4)
 - 16 Chemical element with symbol Er (6)
 - 17 The lowest part in polyphonic music (4)
 - 18 Of persons; taken advantage of (4)
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 - 20 A mountain in the Andes in Argentina (6)
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 - 22 A group of cells of a particular type that are grouped together to perform the same function (6)
 - 24 Member of Parliament for Igembe Central Constituency (6)
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- 1 An enclosure for cattle that have been rounded up (5)
 - 5 conventional religious paintings in oil on small wooden panels (5)
 - 8 It is muscular for protection of developing embryo (6)
 - 9 A line joining points of equal temperature (8)
 - 11 A name given to a product or service (5)
 - 12 Former Member of Parliament for Gem Constituency (6)
 - 15 Chemical element with symbol Tb (7)
 - 19 A specific locality of a living organism with a set of factors in which it lives (7)
 - 23 Within a building (6)
 - 26 Female goat (5)
 - 27 Chemical element with symbol Sm (8)
 - 29 Member of Parliament for Kisumu West Constituency (6)
 - 30 The 8th letter of the Greek alphabet (5)
 - 31 Member of Parliament for Suba Constituency (5)
- DOWN**
- 25 Entangle (6)
 - 28 Member of Parliament for women of Mombasa County (4)

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Weekend's Solutions

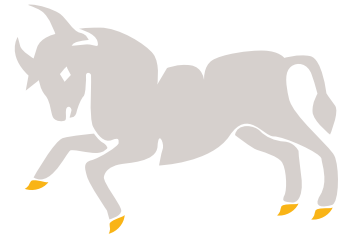


WORD SEARCH

Find and mark all the words hidden inside the box. The words may be placed horizontally, vertically, or diagonally.



ALL IN THE STARS



TAURUS

April 21 - May 21

Do not let them in on your plans if you want things to run smoothly. You will learn easily if you put forth an effort.

GEMINI

May 22 - June 21

Enjoy taking courses or lecturing others. Be careful how you handle friends and relatives, they may take things the wrong way.

CANCER

June 22 - July 22

Ask those in key positions to help you overcome the delays and to support your concerns in order to move on.

LEO

July 23 - August 22

Your mate may not have been honest with you. Go out with close friends who understand your situation and your needs.

VIRGO

August 23 - September 23

Expect sorrow to evolve from the information you discover. Read between the lines when signing contracts.

LIBRA

September 24 - October 23

Socializing will be more than just entertaining. Accomplishment is yours if you direct yourself accordingly.

SCORPIO

October 24 - November 22

Use your inventiveness to find solutions. You may find that someone at work hasn't been trustworthy.

SAGITTARIUS

November 23 - December 21

You may find that children are not as accepting as you have been. Do not expect others to do your work.

CAPRICORN

December 22 - January 20

You should take good care of your health; get lots of rest. Tempers will mount if you are too pushy at work.

AQUARIUS

January 21 - February 19

Be honest in your communication and don't lose your cool. You can make money but not through harebrained schemes.

PISCES

February 20 - March 20

Express your interest if you want the relationship to progress. Read some books on self awareness.

ARIES

March 21 - April 20

Look closely at motives and honesty in your personal encounters. Get down to basics with regard to yourself.

Kingo

By James Gayo



ODDLY ENOUGH

Belgians urged to eat more chips to help out farmers

REUTERS/ With potato farmers and processors struggling, Belgians are being urged to eat more fries to offset a slump in demand during the coronavirus pandemic.

Belgium is the world's largest exporter of fries and other frozen potato products, its processors converting 5.3 million tonnes of potatoes into fries, mash and crisps per year and sending them to customers in more than 160 countries.

Restrictions to halt the spread of the

coronavirus have forced the closure of cafes and restaurants, the industry's prime customers for fries, and processing firms have seen demand fall by as much as 80 per cent.

"We know Belgians like their fries, it's intangible heritage our frying culture, so we ask Belgians to consume an extra portion of fries to allow us to process more potatoes and to avoid food waste," Romain Cools, secretary-general of industry group Belgapom, told Reuters TV.

Belgapom says worldwide demand for frozen fries has dropped by more than 40 per cent. The potato sectors in neighbouring France, Germany and the Netherlands are also facing problems.



SPORTS LOCAL

RUGBY

Six-man team named to resolve season impasse

BY WILLIAM NJUGUNA / Kenya Rugby Union have named a six-man committee to come up with the way forward in as far as the 2019-2020 season is concerned.

The union will be represented by the director of fixtures, Hillary Itela alongside board members Moses Ndale and Peris Mukoko. On the other hand, caucus chairman Xavier Makuba will lead the Kenya Cup clubs alongside Kabras chairman Phillip Jalango and Mwamba RFC chairman George Mbaye.

KRU chairman Oduor Gangla yesterday said the committee will forward its report, detailing all scenarios on how the game will resume.

"Their job primarily is to consult and come up with a workable formula on whether the season should resume or not. There are several factors they have to look at because we are living in unprecedented times," said Gangla, adding that there is no time-line to hand over its report.

"I can't give you a date on when their report will be ready. We will have to wait for them to consult among themselves but as a board, we will be awaiting their report soonest."

However, sources hinted that the earliest the game can be played will probably be July with clubs needing a window of six to eight weeks for pre-season fitness and conditioning if the government lifts the ban on sporting activities this month.

Earlier this week, the union rescinded their decision to cancel the 2019-2020 season after mounting pressure from and a clubs with Kenya Cup sides threatening to go the Judicial Appeals Committee to have the move overturned.

Both Kenya Cup and KRU Championship were due for playoffs on March 14 with the semi-finals following on March 21. The finals had been planned for April 4. The Enterprise Cup semi-finals were due on March 28 with the final scheduled for April 18.



Mwamba's Edwin Machanje and George Omolla charge against and Duncan Ekasi of Impala during a past Kenya Cup clash / ERICK BARASA



FOOTBALL

Sigh of relief

Betika releases Sh5.2m to boost KPL and NSL players

MESHACK KISENGE
@kisengemeshack1



Players who ply their trade in the Kenyan Premier and National Super Leagues have something to smile about after gaming firm Betika dished a 5.2 million token to cushion them against the effects brought by coronavirus pandemic.

The boost comes barely a week after the government, through the Ministry of Sports, requested for players' information from five leagues with an intention of wiring financial support for the period sporting activities remain suspended.

The Sh5.2 million windfall will benefit 587 players, which translates to 30 players from each of the 17 clubs in the top flight and

19 NSL sides. Each player will pocket Sh5,000.

At hand to receive the token presented at Kandanda House was Gor Mahia captain and Harambee Stars midfielder Kenneth Muguna and experienced Nairobi City Stars midfielder Anthony Kimani, on behalf of the 36 clubs.

Muguna hailed Betika for their timely intervention. "Thank you Betika and FKF for this kind gesture towards us," said the former Western Stima man

Similarly, Kimani on the other hand, was full of praise for the NSL official sponsors for the financial boost, which he noted would assist them to navigate the current tough economic times.

"We feel appreciated. Never before has football been suspended to this extent and this token, though not enough, will go a long

way in cushioning us against the economic effects of the global pandemic," said the former Harambee Stars' midfielder.

While presenting the cheque to FKF President Nick Mwendwa and the two captains, Betika head of commercial John Mbatia reiterated their commitment in supporting Kenyan football.

"Football has been largely affected by this pandemic and it is for this reason that we opted to partner with FKF in supporting our players," said Mbatia.

Mwendwa thanked the firm for the gesture, saying: "I want to thank Betika for this kind gesture towards KPL and NSL clubs. As a federation, we remain committed to exploring measures that cushion our players, right from the grassroots to the top tier leagues, during this time when football has been largely affected."

FOOTBALL

It's not possible to finish NSL season, says Migori coach

BY ANGWENYI GICHANA/Migori Youth coach Robert Ojienda says the 2019/2020 National Super League season cannot resume in the prevailing circumstances even if coronavirus pandemic is to be contained by June.

Ojienda said even though most clubs including Migori Youth want the season finished, it is not possible.

"If the season is not concluded, my advise to the football governing body is to invoke article 2.6 of the FKF statutes to determine winners, promotion and relegation.

Ojienda called on the Football Kenya Federation to consult widely before coming up with the way forward, adding that cancellation of the season is not one of the options.

"It is not possible to finish the league now. Even if we resume in June, we still need one month to prepare teams. My proposal is that we should use first leg results in determining which team will be promoted and relegated because we have played more than 70 per cent of the games," said the tactician.

Ojienda opposed calls for the cancellation of the entire season. "Teams invest a lot in the league and cancelling the season would be very unfair to the sponsors. The efforts of those who invested in teams must be recognised," he noted.

He said even though clubs gave their players training programs to follow when working from home, it's not easy for coaches to monitor them.

Gor Mahia captain Kenneth Muguna receives a dummy cheque from Betika head of commercial John Mbatia / COURTESY

Migori Youth coach Robert Ojienda (C) with members of technical bench at Gusii Stadium / ANGWENYI GICHANA



SPORTS PROFILE

50 years on, Owino still no

Any player who wants to excel must have discipline, determination and focus, says Owino

OWINO'S LOVE FOR BASKETBALL STARTED IN 1975 AFTER BEING INTRODUCED TO THE GAME BY HIS UNCLE



DANN OWERRE /Ronnie Owino has been in and around basketball for nearly 50 years and there is no sign that he could leave the scene anytime soon. To many, it feels like Owino has been in this game forever.

Love him or hate him, "Olulu" as he is famously known in the basketball circles, has a lot to the game as a player, coach, instructor and administrator and he says he will still be around just a little longer and as always, will continue giving his all.

Owino was born in Kisumu in June 1964 to George Lazarus Owino and Esther "Mothe" Owino — both deceased. He is a third born in a family of 10 — six boys and four girls.

His love for basketball started in 1975 after being introduced to the game at a tender age by his uncle Elijah 'Niger' Aduke — a towering former national team captain.

"As a young student at Central Primary School, I used to carry the ball for my uncle while going for training. It was here that I developed the love for the game," Owino said.

His game improved when he joined Cardinal Otunga High School, Kisii in 1977. For the first two years, he was in the junior team before moving to the senior before exiting after sitting for his 'A' level examinations.

His most memorable achievement remains leading the school to two national championship finals in 1979 and 1981. In the two meetings, they crushed to the Philip Yugi led Mombasa Baptist.

While at Cardinal, Owino was already playing club basketball for Lakers—the only team in Kisumu. Then in 1980, they came home for half term but were denied a chance to travel with the team to Nakuru.

There was a feud and Jua Kali was formed.

"We left Lakers and formed our own team because we were told we could not travel with the rest to Nakuru for the Labour Day tournament. We picked Aduke as our coach," he revealed.

The split was a blessing in disguise as the talent was spread across, bringing to fore one of the fiercest rivalry ever witnessed in Kisumu. Jua Kali, the pride of the lakeside town, was top and produced some of the finest talents in the province.

That Jua Kali was a tougher kill than Lakers was never in doubt—always getting the best of their arch-rivals whenever they met. They enjoyed a good fan base during those packed confrontations.

His battle against his older brother Tom "Boom" Owino, a professor at Clemson University in the USA on the other side was the talk of the town. This was one game that was always in their mum's diary.

"She would always be there when we played Lakers. And at heart, I always thought she was Jua Kali fan," Owino said.

Later, the family fire was kept burning in town by his other brothers late Peter Owino, Collins Omondi, late Francis "Dumars" Oduor and Canada-based Michael Owino.

Of the four sisters, only Jacky Owino did sports at State House Girls excelling in both basketball and swimming. Others Jane, Millicent and Caroline did not.

On the Jua Kali-Lakers rivalry, Owino notes, "We never wanted to lose the derby. Our motto remained 'lose to any team but not Lakers'. This rivalry helped grow the game in Nyanza."

Owino also played football for Kisumu Blackstars/Allstars when his father, at that time the city's deputy mayor, was an official of a rival club, Kisumu Hotstars.

"In fact, the question that was always on the lips of Hotstars disgruntled fans was why my father allowed me to play at a rival club and not the one he supported," he said.

But the old man's answer was swift: "If everybody in town played for Hotstars, then who will they play against?"

In 1984, Owino joined the University of Nairobi, where he teamed up with former KBF chairman Morris Aluanga and Gerald Nyaoma and guided 'Terrorists' to a varsity title in Morogoro, Tanzania.

At 19 years, Owino reached a huge milestone

Not ready for exit door



1. Strathmore coach Ronny Owino during a KBF Premier League match at Nyayo Stadium **/ERICK BARASA**

2. Ronny Owino instructs his charges **/ERICK BARASA**

3. Ronny Owino instructs his charges during a past match **/COURTESY**

4. Ronny Owino with the men's national team, Morans, during the AfroBasket championships **/COURTESY**

5. Strathmore Swords' Damaris Riana in action with Lucy Machuma of Eagle wings during a KBF Premier League clash at Nyayo Stadium **/ERICK BARASA**

when he and Philip Omany were called to the national team. Sadly they missed the trip to Egypt because they had no passports.

"I and Omany would have actually made our debut with the team in Cairo but we missed the trip because we were unable to get our passports in time to travel," he said.

But this came to pass in 1985 when Owino and his childhood friend Omany were named in late coach Obel Ochino's squad to Fiba Afro-Basket event in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. The team finished last.

Omany observes: "In my view, Owino is the best point guard the country has ever produced. This guy is very competitive and hates losing with a passion. His famous catchphrase during games was; 'we are never losing this game' even when we are 20 points down. He never gives up."

He sums it all up, "He has been a great servant to Kenyan basketball both as coach, player and official. Long may this continue. He is a great and selfless man."

In 1987, Kenya hosted the 4th All Africa Games and Owino was in the squad handled by American coach Bill Trumbo. They finished fourth.

After graduating, Owino had a brief stint with Kenya Airways before joining Posta. They

won their first national title in 1989 under George Ogolla.

Late that year, Ogolla named Owino and his Posta team-mates Jos Openda (Blazers hockey team coach) and Aggrey "Kaliech" Ofula (South Africa) to Fiba Afro-Basket event in Luanda, Angola.

Kenya wanted to make a strong presence in the 5th All Africa Games in Egypt and KBF chairman Joseph Kimani organised a two-week intensive training for the team in Kentucky, USA.

They flew to Cairo directly from the USA and produced one of their best performance ever against the Central Africa Republic and Mozambique. They lost 95-91 to the host in an explosive tie.

"The USA trip gave us confidence as we prepared well. We got exposed to different coaches and this trip was key for our good performance," Owino said.

In 1992, Ogolla moved to newly formed StanChart team and Owino took over the mantle at Posta as player-cum-coach. He led the "Athletic Mailmen" to three straight national titles—the first team to achieve that feat.

Owino next task was to bag the Kenya Communication Sports Organisation (Kecoso) title and went on to retain it for four years in a row (Machakos in 1992, Kisii 93, Nairobi 94 and Nakuru in 95).

"Posta wanted a basketball success in Kecoso and winning this trophy brought us promotions. Posta's top management invested a lot in sports and wanted the returns," he said.

When Kenya hosted the Fiba Afro-Basket

show at Kasarani in 1993, there were expectations that the team would make an impression at home.

But few days before the championship tipped off, coaches Osman Ali (coaching Co-operative Bank) and Idris Suleiman (Postbank), who were charged with the team locked out Posta guard Peter "Lulu" Otieno, insisting that he had no role in the team.

When KBF chairman Joseph Kimani insisted that Otieno must make the final 12, the two coaches quit in a huff. Unperturbed, Kimani handed the task to Yugi assisted by Owino.

And as if to prove something, Otieno was unstoppable in the tournament's opener against Algeria. His jaw-dropping performance earned him 28 points in that win.

Yugi and Owino would guide Kenya to the fourth position—their best ever in this competition won by Angola, who beat Egypt for the gold. To date, Kenya has never qualified for another championship.

Otieno, now a coach at Daystar University recalls, "It was Ronny who ensured that I played for the national team in that championship. I came in as a substitute against Algeria and did not disappoint."

"This was simply proof that Ronny never made a mistake by insisting that I be included. He is an experienced coach, trainer, mentor and good motivator," he added.

In 1995, Posta and KCB Lioness represented the country in the inaugural East, Central and Southern Africa Championships in Harare, Zimbabwe. The Kenyans dominated the tournament.

After that, Owino moved to KCB Lionesses in 1996, guiding the bankers to league titles in 1997 and 1998. They also won the regional championships in Kampala in 2000.

His next move was Post Bank in 2003. In that year, he guided them to third place in the league. They played in Africa Club Championship qualifier and won the Fiba Zone title in Kampala in 2004.

They set a premier league record that is unbroken to date by holding Co-operative Bank score-less in an entire quarter with a 32-0 margin.

In 1997, Owino was tasked with handling the Kenya team in the Fiba Afro-Basket women's Championship in Nairobi. They also finished fourth in the event won by Senegal.

Owino also guided the women side to All Africa Games in Algeria in 2007, where they finished fifth before moving back to Posta between 2008-2010.

The team played in the Nairobi Basketball Association (NBA) provincial league, winning the title unbeaten to return to the top tier.

His last national team assignment was in the Fiba AfroBasket women championships in Dakar, Senegal last year, where demand for unpaid allowances by players overshadowed their performance.

"The fact that we went with 10 players was a problem. Fatigue set in and rotating nine players took its toll. Issues of allowances were also destruction," he admitted.

He went on, "Our preparations were inadequate in terms of duration compared to other teams. Moving forward, we need to get the players from the diaspora."

His captain Hilda Indasi, one of the finest female players in the country, says she has respect for Owino. "He is a good mentor. As a coach, he has thorough basketball knowledge and this is evident from the fact that he has many titles under his belt and that regional countries always come to him for advice," said Indasi.

"Players under Owino have improved over time and his sense of humour is clear. There is a lot that can be said about coach Ronny but what stands out is the fact that he is one of the greatest assets for the Kenya basketball."

Owino went for his first coaching course in Budapest, Hungary in 1984, where he was awarded a higher diploma certificate after a three-year course.

He proceeded to Madrid, Spain in the same year for two weeks for a top coaches workshop sponsored by Pedro Fernandez Foundation.

In 2004, Fiba Africa realised the continent would be well off training its coaches as instructors and Owino was a beneficiary when he landed an invite for a course in Kinshasa, DR Congo.

This was a new beginning for Owino who has traversed the continent from Uganda, Tanzania, Seychelles, Swaziland, Botswana, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Eritrea and Nigeria among other places.

Owino is the chairman of the NBA, where he has been for over 20 years, starting off as a fixture secretary. His tenure has seen the number of teams swell steadily from five to 45.

Currently, Owino is head coach of the Premier League side Strathmore University "Swords" women side.

"The reason I played for long and excelled is due to personal discipline, determination and focus," Owino summed it up. "Any player who wants to excel must have the three virtues."

SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

FOOTBALL GOSSIP

BY DAVID BILLINGTON ✉ david@billingtondesign.com



Premier League clubs to release statement about return to full-time action on May 18

HOW REST OF THE SEASON WILL UNFOLD



Manchester United's Anthony Martial in a past action /REUTERS

Having spent two hours on the telephone yesterday, I can reveal the Premier League's latest plans to deal with the disruption to the current season. The league's shareholders met this week to discuss extending player contracts which expire on June 30.

On May 18, Premier League clubs will release a statement about a return to full-time football action. June 13 is the probable date when matches could resume with the 92 outstanding games played over the following eight weeks. Only UK government intervention will affect this.

The seven outstanding FA Cup ties will also be completed during this period. By July 27 all Premier League and FA Cup matches will have been completed. August 3 will see players return for pre-season training but there will be no foreign tours.

On August 9, Champions League resumes and matches completed in three weeks while the 2020/21 season is set to start on August 22.

ARSENAL RETURN TO TRAINING

On Monday, Arsenal returned to training with players traveling alone to their ten-pitch London Colney base. Players arrived in groups of five and were already wearing their training kit. Only the training pitches were open with no other club facilities available.

Individual workouts kept players distanced from each other with no physical contact. Each player has his own set of footballs so they do not come into contact with anyone else. Coach Mikel Arteta is very particular about the training regime as he suffered from the coronavirus a few weeks ago. When the group of five players have finished training, they leave and another five arrive and this goes on all day.

MOURINHO HOPING TO OPEN LEVY'S CHEQUE BOOK

Tottenham Hotspur's chairman Daniel Levy is a tough man to do with business with. Most clubs shy away from dealing with him as he rarely comes out second best.

Levy's aim at Spurs is to do what Chelsea and Manchester United have done in promoting younger players. However, manager Jose Mourinho is hoping to persuade Levy to sign Paris St-Germain's 28-year-old right-back

Thomas Meunier on a free transfer in the summer.

His wages will be high which is why Levy will be hard to convince. The Belgian has indicated that he will leave PSG on the expiry of his contract. Mourinho says he wants a right-back and central defender to strengthen Spurs. The other alternative is for Barcelona's midfielder Arthur and defender Samuel Umtiti to join Spurs with Tanguy Ndombele moving to Spain.

HUDSON-ODOI LURES CLOSE FRIEND SANCHE

Chelsea's Callum Hudson-Odoi is very close friends with Borussia Dortmund's Jadon Sancho and is doing everything he can to persuade him to come to Stamford Bridge.

The two text or talk with each other every three or four days and Callum said: "I would love it if he came to Chelsea. We had a great partnership throughout our younger academy training days and the way we play with each other is amazing."

Dortmund still hope to convince Sancho to stay in Germany but it is looking more likely that he will return to the UK. Hudson-Odoi also revealed why the Chelsea approach to promoting and using younger players is working so well.

He said that he, along with academy graduates Fikayo Tomori and Mason Mount always knew that manager Frank Lampard would be a successful coach at Chelsea. He says one of the reasons is that the younger players, who have done so remarkably well, look up to Frank and admire him for the way in which he lead the Blues as their captain. Stepping up to the manager has been a great motivation for the younger players.

SON JOINS KOREAN NAVY

Tottenham forward Son Heung-min joined up with the 9th Marine Brigade last week on the volcanic Jeju Island. He begins his compulsory military service with the navy for up to four weeks in his native South Korea.

It will be a tough four weeks as the Koreans are known to have a very challenging course for recruits. Son, who is 27 years old, was given permission by Tottenham to travel back to his homeland. Originally, he was due to serve a full 21 months which is usual for all able-bodied men. However, winning a gold medal at the Asia Games exempted him from that. Son attracts huge numbers of fans wherever he appears in South Korea and for that reason, the location of his training base is being kept secret.

MAKING MONEY IN TOUGH TIMES

Some Premier League clubs are

struggling financially because of the lockdown and halt to the season. Cashflow is difficult at the moment. However, a lifeline is coming their way with an advance on prize money which would normally be received at the end of the season. Prize money is broken down into several parts.

Payments will be made based on the current league positions and how many times clubs are due to appear on television. Merit payments will also be awarded but will not be as high as usual because some TV companies are demanding a return of fees paid for matches which have not been played or televised.

One way for the TV companies to salvage something financially from this disastrous situation is for the clubs to allow greater access to their players for interviews and football-related programmes. Consequently, there have been more football shows than usual which feature interviews, short films on players and their lives, quiz contests and archive footage. All this brings in money for the clubs and players.

LAMPARD WANTS GIROUD TO STAY

Despite all the speculation that Olivier Giroud would leave Chelsea at the end of this season and head back home to France, it looks like he will extend his career at Stamford Bridge.

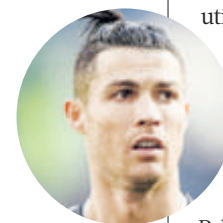
Giroud is 33 and doesn't fit the Frank Lampard team profile of promoting youngsters. However, he has proven his worth this season by stepping up when Eden Hazard left and no one recognises that more than Lampard. Just before the coronavirus break, Giroud entered the arena and scored two goals in five matches. With the Frenchman activating his option clause to stay, it means that any club wishing to acquire his services would have to pay a fee.

PEDRO COURTED BY ROMA

I broke the news to you in March that Chelsea winger Pedro will not be renewing his contract which runs out in June. The Spaniard turns 33 in July and he has once again confirmed that he will leave the UK as a free agent. Pedro played in just nine games last season under Frank Lampard and a player of his world-class ability needs to be one of the first names on the team sheet every week.

I have learned that Italian giants Roma offered him £2.7million in wages plus bonuses. However, I gather from Pedro's agents that the American MLS is also showing interest.

In a star-studded career, Pedro has lifted the World Cup and won the European Championship whilst also being capped 65 times for Spain. He was an important part of Pep Guardiola's all-conquering Barcelona team a few years ago.



EVERGREEN RONALDO

Taking a slight deviation from the Premier League, I could not help but comment on 35-year-old Cristiano Ronaldo and Lionel Messi this week. Cristiano scored his 700th goal during the current season and that included hitting the net in 11 consecutive games...even Harry Kane and Jamie Vardy would be proud of that record. He also made his 1,000th appearance in a top-flight football match. Lionel Messi, on the other hand, will be 33 in June and he needs to score another 17 goals to beat

Pele's record of 643 for one single club (Pele played for Brazil's Santos).

MCTOMINAY FOLLOWING RONALDO

Cristiano Ronaldo says that, usually, he does not get much time for anything other than football. Training, playing and keeping fit takes up most of his time. However, things are a little different during the coronavirus lockdown and Ronaldo has been learning to do different things at home. He is spending a lot of time reading and learning. This has inspired Manchester United's Scott McTominay to do the same and he too has taken to book-reading during the long hours spent at home.

HOW ROONEY SEES HIS FUTURE

As I speak with players and clubs on a daily basis, it is inevitable that we discuss not only their particular club but also football in general. This week, I have had five conversations about Wayne Rooney. Many players and journalist friends of mine are convinced that Wayne is lining himself up for club management when he finally hangs up his playing boots.

Long gone are his wild days when many headlines were about his bad-lad ways. Now he is leading the player coronavirus wage adjustment at Derby and as an assistant player-coach is a student of manager Phillip Cocu.

Wayne's motivation is no longer money and he carries himself with the assured confidence and style he has always shown as a player. He is currently also working towards earning his coaching badges which indicates how he sees his future now that he is 34.

HOW ANCELOTTI FACES LOCKDOWN

Everton manager Carlo Ancelotti has revealed the secrets of how he spends time during the coronavirus lockdown. Being forced to stay at home has helped him improve his culinary skills and he admits his best dish is cooking pasta (he is Italian!).

He makes his own bolognese sauce and especially likes mushrooms or carbonara sauce.



GIROUD IS 33 AND DOESN'T FIT THE FRANK LAMPARD TEAM PROFILE OF PROMOTING YOUNGSTERS

SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

FORMULA ONE

Formula One has 50/50 chance of racing, says Agag

REUTERS / Formula E founder Alejandro Agag reckons both his electric series and Formula One have a 50-50 chance of getting races run due to the COVID-19 pandemic that has stalled both championships.

The Spaniard, whose city-based series started last November and completed five races before the virus forced it off the streets, said it was unclear how much was going to be possible as restrictions eased.

He said Formula One bosses, who have plans to start their season without spectators at Austria's Red Bull Ring in July before racing behind closed doors at Silverstone in Britain, were doing "the right thing trying".

"We are going to try the same thing. We are going to try to put some races behind closed doors," the Spaniard told Reuters in an interview via Zoom. "I guess it's a 50-50 chance. The same for us," he added when

asked whether he felt Formula One would manage to get races held.

Formula E has a logistical advantage in that it has far smaller teams and controls all the cars, which are currently stored in Valencia in Spain, after the most recent race in Morocco at the end of February.

It also needs only a few more races to have a valid championship, with the normal season due to end in July but expandable into August and September.

"We will try and make at least two or three more races in a closed circuit. I think that should be possible in the month of August. But again, who knows?" said Agag.

"I'm thinking 90% they will be in Europe. We still have an option outside of Europe that we're looking at, that is still alive, but we will decide later on."

Mercedes' Lewis Hamilton during a past Brazilian Grand Prix
/ REUTERS



Japan's Naomi Osaka in action during the 2019 Australia Open
/ REUTERS

TENNIS

Reset and relax

Osaka making the most of isolation, remains focused on Olympics

REUTERS / Following a whirlwind few years, Japanese tennis star Naomi Osaka can be forgiven for taking time to reset and relax as the sporting world goes on an indefinite pause due to the coronavirus crisis.

Osaka, a two-time Grand Slam winner who also became the first Japanese player to reach world number one, had been preparing for another action-packed summer including her Olympics debut on home soil at Tokyo 2020.

Instead, with the Olympics postponed until 2021, the 22-year-old finds herself in quarantine at her home in Los Angeles where she is making the most of her newfound downtime.

"I know that the quarantine initiatives are so important so I am using this time to really be a homebody, something a tennis player on tour can never be," Osaka told Reuters via email.

"I've been playing tennis almost every day for as long as I can remember, so it has been an opportunity to take stock and reset. I have been cooking a lot, working

out to stay fit, reading and keeping in touch with my sister and family."

Although unable to get on the court with her coach Wim Fissette, Osaka has been finding novel ways to stay fit.

"I haven't been able to play tennis, however, I have been speaking to my coach and fitness trainer daily and finding ways to keep my body fit and ready for when the tour resumes," she said. "It's a new normal but I am adjusting."

Osaka has kept her competitive juices flowing by preparing for Sunday's Mario Tennis Aces tournament, where she will compete with the likes of real-life rivals Serena and Venus Williams and compatriot Kei Nishikori in the virtual competition. Osaka admits she is a bit of a gamer and fancies her chances alongside doubles partner, model Hailey Bieber.

"My sister and I played a lot growing up and yes I still play and even more so now during the quarantine. I can say yes, I am a gamer," said Osaka. "I had actually started playing much less in recent months as I was getting into new hobbies,

like fashion, photography and spending more time outdoors with friends ... But since quarantine I'm back into my old habits. Gaming is awesome but it is nice to have a balance."

NFL stars DeAndre Hopkins and Ryan Tannehill will also be involved, alongside singer Seal and DJ Steve Aoki.

"I mean Hailey and I are going to be hard to beat! I think she plays a lot with (husband) Justin (Bieber) so I know she's got game," Osaka said. "I heard we have Steve Aoki and Kei in the first round which is kind of an all-Japan clash so let's see what those guys bring."

Whilst Sunday's virtual tournament, which will be streamed live on Facebook, will be fun, Osaka is itching to get back on the court and preparing for the rear-ranged Olympics Games next year. Osaka, who was born to a Haitian father and Japanese mother, was set to be the face of Tokyo 2020 and starred in the video to launch the official motto for the Games. Osaka understands that the postponement was a necessary decision.

ATHLETICS

UK Athletics gives UKAD full report on Salazar case

REUTERS / UK Athletics (UKA) has submitted to UK Anti-Doping (UKAD) the complete report into the way it handled matters surrounding its relationship with banned running coach Alberto Salazar, the governing body said.

UKAD Chief Executive Nicole Sapstead last month criticised UKA for providing an edited summary of the original independent review that was conducted in 2015 by a Performance Oversight Committee.

That 130-page report into how UKA handled its relationship with Salazar, who ran the Nike Oregon Project which was home to British four-time Olympic champion Mo Farah between 2011 and 2017, found the board had changed its stance.

"UKA can confirm that the 2015 report has been provided to UKAD," the governing body said in a statement released to the British media.

"UKA remains fully committed to protecting the integrity of the sport and the pursuit of clean athletics and we will continue to assist UKAD with any further queries."

Salazar was banned from athletics for four years in October after being found guilty of doping violations following an investigation by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency. He has denied any wrongdoing and appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport against his ban.

The American had worked as a consultant to UKA's endurance programme in 2013 after helping Farah to win the 5,000m and 10,000m at the London 2012 Olympics.

Farah, who returned home to England in late 2017, has never failed a drugs test and has not been accused of any wrongdoing.

Alberto Salazar with Galen Rupp during a past championship
/ REUTERS



SPORTS INTERNATIONAL



Uefa President Aleksander Ceferin during a press conference /REUTERS

FOOTBALL

Olson worried

Coronavirus can affect calendar for years, says Uefa official

REUTERS/The COVID-19 crisis could hit soccer's international calendar for 'two to three years' and potentially affect the 2022 World Cup in Qatar, Lars-Christer Olsson, an executive committee member of European soccer's governing body Uefa has said.

The novel coronavirus, which has infected over 3.13 million people globally causing more than 218,000 deaths, has wreaked havoc on the soccer schedule with Euro 2020 postponed to 2021 and national leagues and continental club competitions on hold.

The Qatar World Cup is set to take place from November 21 to December 18, 2022 and Olsson said

it was a case of 'wait and see' if the quadrennial event would be hit.

Asked during a Soccerex webinar how long he thought the international calendar could be affected, Olsson said: "Probably two or three years I think. If the virus is developing in an even more serious way as it's been for the time being, there will definitely be a problem with the international calendar."

"When some of the competitions are moved from one year to another...and then the Qatar World Cup is coming in the middle of the European season and you have to squeeze in domestic and international competitions. But I think

we have to wait and see how that is going to affect the business."

Olsson, who is also the president of European Leagues, said Uefa was planning to complete the Champions League and Europa League in August.

"If that would be possible, then I think it would be fine because that would also mean that we can safeguard the integrity of the final phase of the current season of international football," he added.

"But of course we have to take decisions about that at the end of May at least, because otherwise it will probably not be possible to squeeze it in and also to qualify the clubs for the new season."



A member of Iran's women's national team warms up during a practice session in Tehran /REUTERS

FOOTBALL

Lack of basic rights holds back women's game, says FIFPro

REUTERS/Women's soccer around the world is being held back due to a continuing lack of basic employment rights and standards at international competitions, a report from global players' union FIFPro has said.

The document, published on Wednesday, says that being a professional soccer player is still not a viable career option for women in many parts of the world, despite record attendances at matches over the past year.

"The professional women's game is subject to adverse labour conditions which negatively impact the sporting performance of players, pose direct

FOOTBALL

I'm sure our paths will cross again, says ex-Spurs coach

REUTERS /Former Tottenham Hotspur manager Mauricio Pochettino has said he would like another shot at managing the team within the next decade so he can try again to lead them to a trophy.

The Argentine took Spurs to the Champions League final last year but his side were beaten 2-0 by Liverpool and he was sacked in November, ending a successful but silverware-free four-year spell in charge.

"It was an amazing journey that finished in a way that no-one wanted it to finish, but deep in my chest, my soul and heart I'm sure our paths will cross again," said Pochettino.

"From the day I left the club my dream is one day to be back and try to finish the work we didn't finish. It

was an amazing journey, we were so close to winning the right trophies like the Premier League and Champions League, we were very close."

Pochettino, who also led Tottenham to four consecutive top-four finishes and the 2015 League Cup final, is currently without a club.

"Now I'm looking forward to moving on, I'm so motivated for the next project but of course deep inside one day I'd like to be back," he added.

"Maybe in five years maybe in 10 years..before I die I want to manage Tottenham again and try to win one trophy because I want to feel what it means to win one trophy with Tottenham, that would be a good opportunity to pay back all the love they showed us."



Former Tottenham manager Mauricio Pochettino /REUTERS

PREMIER LEAGUE

Police want power to call off season if fans break rules

REUTERS / British police want to be able to cancel the football season if fans do not respect social-distancing guidelines once matches return after a halt due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Britain's highest-ranking football police officer has said.

Mark Roberts, the national lead for football policing, told newspaper The Daily Telegraph on Wednesday that supporters would not be allowed to congregate outside stadiums before or after matches while the virus was still a threat.

"What we don't want is to do things that breach the lockdown and all the hard work that people have put in through social isolation by then having fans congregate at stadiums, training grounds," he said.

"What you could do if we start fixtures again is to be very clear that if fans don't abide by the restrictions then the league can be curtailed. I'd be very keen to put it in the gift of the supporters themselves that, the more you abide by the restrictions, the easier it makes it to fulfil the season."

The Premier League has been on hold since March 13 due to the pandemic although the British minister responsible for sport said he has been in talks with the organisers with the aim of getting football back as quickly as possible.

obstacles to the development of their potential or force them to leave the game early," the report said.

"As such these conditions not only infringe on the basic rights of players but also block the growth of the industry."

Players had a significant input into the research, as FIFPro surveyed 186 players from 18 different countries who had qualified for last year's World Cup in France.

While FIFPro's research did show that average player salaries had risen from 2016 to 2018, a minority were still not receiving any financial reward. "3.6% of players taking part in our

2019 FIFPro Female Player Survey reported not receiving any money to play; this is unacceptable. These are women competing in FIFA Women's World Cups and playing at the top of the game," the report said.

To combat this, FIFPro recommended written contracts to be agreed under the auspices of the clubs, leagues and federations in order to fulfil the minimum labour standards.

They also called for facilities suitable for a high-performance standard at international competitions. FIFA came in for criticism in 2015 when they allowed astroturf pitches to be used at the Women's World Cup in Canada.

SPORTS INTERNATIONAL

PREMIER LEAGUE

Has 'Project Restart' suffered false start?

Tension surrounds plan to resume the football behind closed doors

BY DAN ROAN / When Premier League club executives link up for a crucial video conference call today, they will do so amid unprecedented pressure, and mounting unease.

The tension surrounds not only how the plan to resume the football season behind closed doors at a small number of sealed and approved venues should develop, but whether it is realistic, responsible or indeed appropriate to pursue it at all.

The sense is that hopes of a return to action by early June now hang by a thread.

Confidence has undoubtedly been shaken by the French government's decision to put elite sport on hold until September, along with the warnings of medical experts and player representatives about the health risks of rushing back into action.

Some clubs are worried the sporting integrity of the competition could be compromised if only certain venues are used and they play fewer games at their home ground than their rivals. Others say they feel pressured into agreeing to play by politicians and league bosses when they would prefer the season to be abandoned. Privately, the mood within both the Premier League and in Whitehall suggests cautious optimism remains.

And there are some reasons for positivity too. Political leaders in Switzerland, for instance, have announced that the country's Super League will "probably" resume on June 8 if there's no worsening of the outbreak. Uefa's medical chief Professor Tim Meyer, meanwhile, has said it is 'definitely possible' to plan for the suspended 2019-20 season to restart. Read into that what you will.

But by the time today's Premier League meeting takes place, is there a real danger that Project Restart could have suffered a false start?

The clubs know that, ultimately, they will take their lead from government, and their medical and scientific experts.

That was proved by what happened across the Channel, where the French league's modelling and scenario planning was suddenly rendered meaningless when Prime Minister Edouard Philippe made his shock announcement, and the season was abruptly cancelled, as it has been in the Netherlands and Belgium.

Government approval in the UK relies on key criteria such as improved testing capacity, and a relaxation of social distancing rules being met.

But ministers and their advisers will also be hanging on Angela Merkel's every word on Thursday when the German chancellor addresses regional leaders, and no doubt discusses the Bundesliga's plans to resume matches in mid-May



Arsenal's Mesut Ozil in action with Manchester City's John Stones
/REUTERS

— plans that have acted as a source of inspiration to other countries around Europe.

But with a recent spike in cases in Germany raising fears that their lockdown may be tightened again, if Merkel follows the French in ruling sport out for several months, some believe the game could be up for the Premier League too.

How realistic would it be, after all, that Germany, which has suffered far fewer cases and deaths from coronavirus than the UK, and has conducted many more tests, could deem sport too dangerous, but that conclusion not be reached here?

Let us not forget that Wednesday's government briefing brought the news of another 765 deaths in the UK.

And with so much scrutiny of whether the British government was too slow to shut sport down last month, and whether events like the Cheltenham Festival and Liverpool's Champions League fixture against Atletico Madrid at Anfield are linked to the numbers of local cases, the UK would surely not want to be an outlier.

This time last week, amid growing anxiety over the apparent financial crisis that abandoning the season would trigger, the Premier League's hopes of a return to action were beginning to fade. But then, with frustration growing among some executives at what they saw as a lack of guidance from government, suddenly came encouragement.

With Prime Minister Boris Johnson preparing to return to work after recuperating from his own brush with coronavirus, the league was told Downing Street wanted top-flight football back as soon as possible,

to help boost people's morale after months in lockdown, and to support the game commercially, with many jobs on the line and the wider football industry desperate for a restart.

Premier League bosses had let it be known just how important it was that the season be completed, pointing to the three-quarters of a billion pounds that contractually would have to be paid back to live TV rights-holders Sky and BT.

Whether the two broadcasters actually intend to demand all of the refund they are entitled to if the season cannot resume remains unclear. I understand they are considering asking to show more matches next year, or requesting a year's free extension to their current deal to mitigate the damage their businesses have suffered. But some kind of compensation will almost certainly have to be paid.

Last weekend BBC Sport revealed that football's senior medical experts, along with their counterparts in rugby, racing and cricket, were to be invited to a series of virtual meetings, in what was described to me as a "quicken of the pace" in preparations for a resumption.

Ministers continued to make supportive statements to the media and in parliament. A number of clubs reopened their training grounds for restricted use by their players.

Premier League club doctors held a meeting of their own to discuss hygiene standards and proposed twice-weekly testing of players. Clubs were asked to consider the concept of playing in sealed, neutral venues. Broadcasters have been told to work out the minimum numbers of staff they would need at matches.

FOOTBALL

Francis concerned by risk of players spreading virus

REUTERS /Bournemouth captain Simon Francis said he is concerned by the Premier League's plans to resume its 2019-20 season due to the risk of players spreading the coronavirus amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Soccer in England was suspended indefinitely last month due to the novel coronavirus, which has caused more than 26,000 deaths in Britain, and matches are likely to be held without supporters once the season resumes.

England's top-flight clubs, who are faced with the prospect of losing money from broadcasters if the campaign is cancelled, will meet today to discuss ways to finish the season.

"My head's saying that I would love to see football restart, to play the remaining games and finish the season; my heart is saying we shouldn't be putting football, or economics, before anyone's health and safety," Francis told The Times newspaper.

Several Premier League clubs, including Bournemouth, have reopened their training grounds for individual sessions.

"I understand how much of a boost the return of football would provide: I'm still a fan myself — to be able to watch a game on TV again would be amazing. But there's no doubt about the risks involved," the 35-year-old said. "A friend's wife contracted the virus recently. She had no underlying health issues but was in a really bad way, bedridden for over a week."

"And that has really made me think. Footballers are healthy athletes, and the risks to us, statistically, are low, but the prospect of bringing the virus home to my family isn't something I want to think about."

Francis said that there were several players at Bournemouth who had major concerns.

"We have three or four players who have family members with underlying health issues. One player is back in his home country with his partner, who just had a baby," he said. "Diego Rico is back in Spain with his family. Would they have to be quarantined when they returned? When would it be safe to see their families again?"

Bournemouth captain Simon Francis
/REUTERS





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BASKETBALL

**50 YEARS IN
BASKETBALL
BUT OWINO
VOWS TO
CARRY ON**

PAGES 34-35



SPORTS

FOOTBALL FKF CANCEL SEASON TO HAND GOR THE TITLE AS KPL OPPOSES MOVE

Daggers drawn

FKF, KPL renew supremacy battle over status of top-flight league



the federation's stand on the fate the two competitions implies; a selective application of the rules; the selective interpretation of Caf's letter and disregard of the hard work put in by KPL teams to reach where they are in the current 2019/20 league standings. This amounts to a breach of the KPL mandate in the running of the league through interfering with the management of its affairs," said Oguda in a letter to the federation.

Separately in a telephone interview, Oguda added: "If Mwendwa has decided the fate of the league that is not our position. We were never consulted before that decision was reached,"

Meanwhile, with the decision already condemning Chemelil to the second tier, their chairman Moses Adagala criticised Mwendwa for failing to consult relevant stakeholders.

He accused him of running a one-man show despite Caf giving his office (all federations) May 5 as the deadline to submit the status of the local competitions on how they had been affected by the coronavirus.

"We will wait to hear from Fifa on the fate of our leagues. Mwendwa is playing politics as he did not consult before making such an announcement," he said.

Gor chief executive officer, Lordvick Aduda called upon both parties to follow the law in solving the puzzle.

"Our club chairman is better placed to comment on the matter as he chairs the KPL's Executive Committee. All we call for is fairness and the laws to be followed," he said.

KPL CEO Jack Oguda and Football Kenya Federation president Nick Mwendwa
/FILE



MESHACK KISENGE
@kisengemeshack1

Gor Mahia players celebrate after winning the 2019 KPL title
/FILE

A new battlefield has been opened in the seemingly unending supremacy wars between Football Kenya Federation and the Kenyan Premier League.

This is after FKF President Nick Mwendwa took to his official Twitter account yesterday to declare that Gor Mahia as the 2019-2020 KPL champions and Nairobi City Stars as the National Super League champions.

"Congratulations Gor Mahia! You are champions once again and you will represent Kenya in the Champions League next season. Let's do this," tweeted Mwendwa.

"Nairobi City stars!! Welcome

to the Premier League. "Sasa changamkeni na ma signing moto moto (Meaning now get ready by signing quality players),' he added in another tweet.

The federation boss seemingly invoked article 2.6.1.2 where the mid-season standings were used to determine the champions in either league and demoted teams.

This also meant that Bidco United joined City Stars in booking places in the elite league by virtue of finishing second in the NSL.

However, it was not clear on the number of teams to be demoted from the 18-team league considering that Sony Sugar had been expunged earlier for failing to honour three matches.

At the mid-way mark (16 matches), Gor had gathered 38 points while Tusker were second

with 34. Chemelil Sugar sat at the tail-end with four points, trailing Kisumu All-Stars who were above them by four points.

Mwendwa's sentiments did not sit well with KPL, who in a rejoinder insisted that they had not been consulted before the decision was made yet they are mandated by law to run the top flight on behalf of the federation.

KPL's chief executive officer Jack Oguda heavily criticised FKF for interfering with the running of the top flight. Reports suggest that the Betway Shield Cup may go as scheduled to determine which club will represent the country in the Caf Confederations Cup. Efforts to reach FKF's secretary-general, Barry Otieno for clarifications were futile.

"The lack of consistency in



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BETRAYAL?

RUTO CAMP WARNS OF
DYNASTIES' PLOT TO
BLOCK HIS 2022 BID



COVER STORY **BIG FAMILIES THREATENED**

Ruto camp warns of dynas

The DP's close confidants told the Star there is a plan by the country's powerful and elite families to thwart his ambitions

**JAMES MBAKA**

@OnchiriMbaka
Senior political reporter

Deputy President William Ruto's allies believe the unity government push is a scheme by dynasties to gang up and derail his 2022 State House bid.

A coalition between President Uhuru Kenyatta and ODM leader Raila Odinga has been mooted as a way to further unite the country and revive the economy struck by the coronavirus.

The DP's close political confidants told the Star there is a huge plot by the country's powerful and elite families to thwart his ambitions.

Ruto's presidency, his allies claim, poses a danger to the dynasties who believe the DP will not play ball to protect their interests and immense wealth acquired over many years.

The DP's allies argue that if a unity government is actualised and Raila given a formal role in government, that would herald a formidable coalition against Ruto's bid.

Uhuru is the son of Kenya's founding president Jomo Kenyatta while Raila is the scion to the country's first vice president and multi-party democracy champion Jaramogi Oginga Odinga, Raila's father.

President Kenyatta and Raila are reportedly working on a unity government likely to be unveiled after the coronavirus crisis passes. Ruto allies say that would anchor the Uhuru-Raila 2022 coalition.

The architecture of the deal would vanquish Ruto's ambition — once endorsed by Uhuru — to succeed President Kenyatta.

It would also consolidate the stranglehold of dynasties on national politics.

"The government of national unity is being used as a means to actualising the game plan that has been in the works for a while now," Kimilili MP Didmus Barasa said.

Barasa, a Ruto confidant, warned that Kenyans were tired of dynasties and will deal them a death blow at the ballot by electing the William Ruto as President.

Ruto and his allies cast the contest as one between a hardworking, successful 'upstart' and the dynasties remote from the people.

Barasa said the president "is free" to go into any arrangement with the ODM leader "if this will end the rumours, conmanship and underhand dealings that undermine the Deputy President".

The Constitution gives the President the powers to reorganise government, including creating a unity government. However, political an-



alysts warn such a move could roll back the country's democratic gains.

"Real power is sought democratically through the ballot. Kenya's democracy has grown in the two decades and unless there are compelling reasons and a national crisis, a unity government is not tenable," political analysts Felix Odhiambo

said.

According to Odhiambo, it would be unfortunate if such a unity government fosters exclusion and builds forces against certain political players.

UHURU-RAILA ALLIANCE IN OFFING

The Deputy President himself has warned a Uhuru-Raila alliance in the offing as cracks widen between him and his boss.

Branding such a partnership an "ethnic coalition", Ruto has warned Jubilee members to be vigilant and wary as talk of pre-2022 coalitions rages on.

"The Jubilee fraternity should ignore propaganda peddled by desperados seeking ragtag ethnic coalitions," Ruto tweeted, adding, "Our progressive Constitution vests power in party organs, not personalities."

The ruling Jubilee Party, Ruto continued on Twitter last Friday, has no room for "selfish evil experiments meant to benefit brokers and their ilk".

The DP in recent days has been on a collision course with senior Jubilee

Deputy President William Ruto during the launch of the Building Bridges Initiative report at the Bomas of Kenya on November 27, 2019 / PSCU

officials, including secretary general Raphael Tuju and vice chairman David Murathe. He accused them of trying to wrest the party from him.

A move by Uhuru's allies to change the membership of Jubilee's National Management Committee threw a spanner in the works. Ruto protested the move to the Registrar of Political Parties.

While the Jubilee wars have been swirling for some time, it is now the claims by Ruto's allies that Uhuru and Raila are plotting a dynasty alliance against him that could break the camel's back.

"Kenyans will speak loudly against attempts to balkanise the country along with either tribal or family lines," fired Jubilee deputy secretary general Caleb Kositany.

Saying the attempted change of officials of the party's key organ was part of the plot to drive the expected alliance agenda, Kositany said, "Only an army can wrest Jubilee from Ruto."

The DP's allies now say seizing control of the Jubilee Party could scuttle Uhuru's allies' bid to forge a

“

MP DIDMUS BARASA

The government of national unity is being used as a means to actualising the game plan that has been in the works for a while now

'ties' plot to block 2022 bid



partnership with Raila ahead of the 2022 polls using Jubilee.

"There are several parties in Kenya, but there is no way someone is going to take Jubilee unless they are coming with an army," Kositany said.

The fresh claims by Ruto's allies could further muddy the political waters in Jubilee already riven by internal wars and widening cracks at the top of the executive.

REORGANISING GOVERNMENT

But National Assembly Majority leader Aden Duale has warned that unlike in 2008 when the grand coalition government was established under the National Accord, the current Constitution does not provide for a unity government.

"The Constitution does not allow the formation of a Government of National Unity. The only time we had a GNU was when we had the National Accord in 2008. These guys must see the reality," Duale said.

The key Jubilee leader warned of a "secret card" between President Kenyatta and DP Ruto that could

see Raila face the "harshest betrayal of his life".

"If you think you have fixed William Ruto, you will be shocked. 'Baba' (Raila) will be shocked. There is that secret card between Uhuru and Ruto," Duale said in a warning to Raila.

Political analyst Herman Manyora said a reorganisation of government appeared inevitable, "partly because of the coronavirus pandemic, but mostly arising out of the irreconcilable differences between President Kenyatta and his deputy".

"Because of the pandemic, the country needs to pull together, and the absence of the Ruto team means the President has to turn to Raila's side for support. The form the cooperation takes and the timing will be determined by the developments on the health front and the attendant social and economic challenges," Manyora said.

Ruto's allies believe that the proposed unity government would be that special purpose vehicle to seal the DP's fate.

Nyali MP Mohamed Ali, a key Ruto

ally, warned that the country was tired and ready for change, adding, "No amount of intimidation" would stop Ruto's campaign.

"Whether they create a government of national unity or any other coalition, the clouds over Ruto's presidency are gathering," the vocal independent MP said.

The government of national unity would hand Raila a formal role in Jubilee, while a couple of his allies would also be appointed to the government in what could completely alter the terrain.

Ruto's 'poor background' is a threat to powerful families, his allies say. A Ruto presidency would deal a staggering blow to the families that control the country's political and economic power and all manner of schemes must be exploited to block him, they say.

HUSTLER NATION VS DYNASTIES

Ruto himself on Wednesday appeared to confirm his fears about the dynasties when he posted Bible verses aimed at his opponents, even as his absence in executive remains conspicuous.

"Those who have no godfathers let's proudly speak in tongues to our God the Father," the DP tweeted.

He went on, "With this pandemic let's pray for God's healing, work together to feed the hungry and plan to repair our hustles."

Ruto, who has branded himself as the 'hustler' has previously accused power brokers and elite players of scheming against him because they feel threatened by his rise.

A unity government would whittle down Ruto's influence and strengthen the bond between the President and Raila.

Nandi Senator Samson Chergei a key Ruto ally, told the Star that they were aware of all manner of schemes.

He said the country's problems stem from the politics "of deception and conmanship" that he said were



Jubilee vice chairman David Murathe



Nandi Senator Samson Chergei



Kimillili MP Didmus Barasa



CALEB KOSITANY

Kenyans will speak loudly against attempts to balkanise the country along with either tribal or family lines. Only an army can wrest Jubilee from Ruto

ushered in by the 'handshake'.

The senator termed Raila a desperate politician seeking power by any means.

"I didn't know Raila is so desperate that he is now pushing to have a GNU," he said.

The President's allies, including Murathe, Kirinyaga Governor Anne Waiguru, MPs Wambugu Ngunjiri (Nyeri Town) and Joshua Kutuny (Cherangany), have said the President was at liberty to reorganise his government at any given time and nothing would bar him from forming a unity government.

"Once the President entered into the Handshake deal with Odinga, it was just a matter of time before this was actualised for the benefit of the nation," Waiguru said.

POLITICS CONVENIENT FRIENDSHIP

How the handshake has fuelled Uhuru, Governor Joho bromance

So strong is the new friendship that last Saturday, the President even broke protocol when he allowed Joho to speak from the presidential podium, reserved for visiting heads of state only

LUKE AWICH AND
ALLAN KISIA

@TheStarKenya
Political reporters

They were sworn enemies but three years down the line, President Uhuru Kenyatta and Mombasa Governor Hassan Joho are the best of friends.

The two could not see eye to eye and were bitter critics of each other but slowly, they found friendship - mutual political interests - and put the past behind them.

Fighting did not advance their interests.

Now Uhuru can demonstrate that he is not only friends with ODM leader Raila Odinga, but also has other powerful friends around the country

And through his friendship with the President, Joho is even overshadowing National Assembly Majority leader Adan Duale, some analysts say. The Coast kingpin is now positioning himself as leader of the Muslim voting bloc countrywide.

So strong is the new bromance that on Saturday, April 26, Uhuru even broke protocol when he allowed Joho to speak from the presidential podium, which is only used by the President and visiting heads of state.

State House handlers rushed to hand over a microphone to Joho but the President directed that he addresses the nation from the presidential podium.

Governors Amason Kingi (Kilifi) and Salim Mvurya (Kwale), who were also present at the State House, also were allowed to speak from the same sacrosanct podium.

Ordinarily, after the President addresses the nation, his podium is removed and no other Kenyan can use it.

The friendship was demonstrated further when ODM deputy party leader and the other two governors travelled back to the Coast in the military aircraft usually reserved for the President, Deputy President and high-profile generals.

Political analyst Danstan Omari described the relationship between the two as mutual as they both realised that fighting each other was hurting their interests.

"Joho's businesses were being destroyed when he was fighting the President. The President also has a lot of business interests at the Coast region where Joho is a governor," he explained.

There were reports that Joho's family, soon after the governor and the President put aside their differences, was offered space to establish businesses near the Inland Container Depots in Nairobi and Naivasha.

The spaces were for the establishment of CFSs (Container Freight Stations) for cargo transported on the standard gauge railway.



Joho is a former critic of the SGR, claiming it would kill businesses at the Coast.

When they were enemies, Joho opposed plans to develop the Naivasha dry port in Nakuru county, arguing that it did not make economic sense.

On March 13, 2017, the President told Joho to stop following him around since he (Uhuru) is not his "wife".

"He should not play with us or else we will teach him a lesson," he warned Joho.

The President was presiding over the launch of the Mtongwe Ferry Channel when he made some of the disparaging comments about Joho.

The Mombasa governor was even placed under virtual house arrest so he could not attend and disrupt the event.

GSU officers raided his Nyali home before setting up police checkpoints at every outlet to confine Joho to his residential area.

The governor, however, managed to get out.

Uhuru had a day earlier at a rally at the Tononoka Grounds accused him of underperformance, saying Mombasa is among the worst developed, despite having received over Sh40 billion from the national government.

Joho labelled Uhuru a tourist to the Coast region and claimed the President was keen to steal victory from him in the August 8, 2017, polls.

2022 PRESIDENTIAL AMBITIONS

He blasted President Kenyatta for allegedly launching projects at the Coast that were never funded by the Jubilee government.

Joho, a Raila ally, is also on record saying his friendship with Uhuru will lift his own 2022 political ambitions.

Joho said being close with Uhuru has increased his chances of winning the presidency.

Omari said Joho is pushing to have a direct link with the President without passing through ODM leader Raila.

"He is also keen on becoming the kingpin of the Muslim voting bloc. It is the largest voting bloc apart from Mt Kenya, and even in Central there are Muslims," he explained.

He added that through the friendship with the President, Joho has overshadowed Duale as the kingpin of the Muslim vote.

"He is taking over the Muslim constituency and that will jolt a number of ODM leaders," he added.

Omari added that Uhuru wants Joho to be seen with him more often

President Uhuru Kenyatta and Mombasa Governor Hassan Joho during the launch of Bandari Maritime College in Mombasa on July 19 last year /ANDREW KASUKU

because it will create the impression that he has balanced his relationship with leaders from the various regions.

"The President does not want to be seen to be friends with Raila only but also with leaders from other regions," he added.

Political analyst Joseph Mutua said the March 9, 2018, handshake between Uhuru and Raila killed the rivalry between the President and Joho.

"The handshake changed Joho's earlier position. Joho is a close friend to Raila and since the ODM leader had made peace with the President, he had to follow suit," he said.

Mutua added that Joho was calling the President names on behalf of Raila before the historic handshake.

"He (Joho) had to change position. Without the handshake, the rivalry between the President and Joho would probably still be there," Mutua added.

He said after Joho changed tack, his business problems at the Coast slowly began to disappear.

"He killed two birds with one stone. His businesses are now thriving and his political ambitions rekindled," Mutua said. "That is why he is singing Uhuru's praises."



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COLUMN USED AND DISCARDED



Devolution CS Eugene Wamalwa exchanges the transfer of deed with Nairobi Governor Mike Sonko at State House, Nairobi / PSCU

Sonko, you were duped, the palace coup is now complete

The Nairobi Governor has told all and sundry that he was hoodwinked to sign the transfer of functions deed, and admitted he did not read the contents of the document



SUSAN MUGWE
@mugwe_s

Mugwe is a political economist and writes here on her own behalf

“Your absolute, unquestioning loyalty. Do not misunderstand what I mean by loyalty.”

This was the one demand that was required of Peter Russo by Francis Underwood. Earlier on, Peter had been arrested for a DUI and soliciting a prostitute.

Frank took care of both charges by bribing the chief of police. From then on, Peter became beholden to Francis. Peter plays the role of Pennsylvania Congressman; and Frank the House Majority Whip, and later America's president respectively, in the television series, House of Cards.

As loyalty repayment to Francis, Peter's first test came when he was forced to betray his constituents after failing to testify against the closure of a shipyard, which resulted in the job loss of 12,000 employees who had voted for him en masse.

Later on, despite being a less than ideal gubernatorial candidate, Peter was tapped by Frank to run for governor because he knew all the sins in his books and his weakness for alcohol and drugs.

Frank selected Peter because he wanted a marionette in the game. His ultimate goal was to get the job of a Vice President, who was also from Pennsylvania. Frank's bigger plan was to prop up Peter for the governor position, then scheme a way to take him down.

The VP would then be compelled to quit and vie for the governor position to save his home state from being won by a Republican. That would leave the VP slot open for Frank and then the chance to run for President. And he executed this

to the end just as he had planned it.

On more than one occasion, Nairobi Governor Mike Sonko, like Peter Russo, has been characterised as less than ideal and unfit for the gubernatorial position. His management style has come into question; his decisions have been queried and his motives impugned.

Unsurprisingly, it all came to a head with threats of his impeachment. Shortly afterwards, Nairobi MCAs were summoned to State House and after deliberations with President Uhuru Kenyatta, the determination to impeach him was dropped. Soon after, Sonko handed over critical county functions to the national government through a Deed of Transfer, in the guise of better service delivery to Nairobians. It was widely hypothesised that this was a quid pro quo.

But in recent revelations, Sonko has told all and sundry that he was hoodwinked. He has admitted that he did not read the contents of the transfer deed. And for that, he has sought forgiveness from his electorate and is now pursuing legal measures to reinstate all powers back to the county government.

If you think Sonko owes you an apology or an explanation on why he did not consult you before signing the Deed of Transfer simply because you voted for him, it says more about you than it says about him. Let me tell you why. But first a few questions.

Do you ever see problems in Kenya and have an idea of how to fix them? And have you ever wished that you had the power to fix them?

Have you also ever wondered why political rulers do not see things as clearly as you do? Instead, they act in seemingly selfish, destructive and shortsighted ways. Have you ever wondered if they are just plain stupid, or is something else going on?

Well, you are not alone.

THE SELECTORATE

Education misinforms us that democracy is a rule of the people for the people by the people. They call it the majority rule. This is a classic hoax.

But Bruce Bueno and Alastair Smith re-educate us that in the real world, the political landscape is organised in a nested circle called the selectorate. Every leader's power and longevity in office are dependent on the balance of power among three key groups of selectorates.

The outer circle is called the nominal selectorate. This includes everyone in the nation who has a legal right to elect their political leader and is eligible to vote. They are also called the interchangeable because they can be swayed to vote for the most persuasive side. The interchangeables are made to feel

THE NEXT TIME BEFORE YOU SPEW UNPALATABLE EPITHETS ON BEHALF OF YOUR 'MTU WETU', REMEMBER YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE ILLUSION OF CHOICE TO DUPE YOU THAT YOU ARE FREE TO CHOOSE

very important in political rallies. Sadly, this is a lie. All they have is a tiny toehold in the nation's political course.

The middle circle is called the real selectorate. This is the group of people that actually selects the leader. They are also known as the influentials. For example in China, the president is selected by the voting members of the Communist Party. Likewise, in Saudi Arabia, the prince succeeding to the throne is selected by the ruling royal family, also known as House of Saud.

The inner circle is called the winning coalition. This is the most important group that ultimately decides who rules the country. The decisions are made in boardrooms. They are a subset of the influentials and are also known as the essentials. They have no permanent loyalty to any political faction.

Their support is imperative if a leader is to acquire, and more importantly, survive in any political office. Survival is contingent upon continuous doling out of private goods to them, with little concern about providing public goods to the interchangeable. Their support translates into an assured victory because they give the required edge of one candidate over another.

They have the power to install and depose those in office and direct policy. And the scariest part is that they, the office aspirants and the officeholders, all know it. Often times, the essentials are business oligarchs and security forces.

Do you then continue to wonder the unequivocal audacity with which it has been affirmed that ODM leader Raila Odinga will be in government before the end of this year? Or the raw brazen takeover of the Nairobi county? Or the orchestrated scheme to portray the Deputy President as being sidelined in the presidency?

In the series House of Cards, the selection of Peter Russo as a gubernatorial candidate was a means to an end by one key essential member of the innermost selectorate. He was later deposed when his usefulness was over. Begs the question, is Sonko's utility over? Unlike Peter Russo, did he misunderstand the meaning of absolute, unquestioning loyalty? Did he arrogate to himself the hallowed position of an essential without requisite approbation? You be the judge.

For a long time, we have been deluded to think that there is a world of difference between dictators and democratically elected leaders. However, this is simply a convenient fiction. The difference is the same in their acquisition of political power.

I submit that the next time before you spew unpalatable epithets on behalf of your 'mtu wetu', remember that you have been given the illusion of choice to dupe you that you are free to choose. But all you are an ignoramus interchangeable because alliances last as long as is expedient. And the essentials know it.

Finally, my unsolicited advice is to Sonko. If someone takes your first offer, it is because you either asked for too little, or you offered too much. Tafakari.

If your vote could make a difference, they would make it illegal for you to vote – Mark Twain

KATIBA CORNER

Covid-19 and rule of law – Exam paper

For inspiration, for problem questions, it is sometimes helpful to turn to the news. Corona crisis offers a good deal of material. So this week's article is an extract from an imaginary exam paper



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Covid-19 and the rules of law – Examination paper
Examinations for law students typically consist of a mixture of essay questions and hypotheticals or problem questions – to which the students are supposed to apply the law they have learned.

For inspiration, for problem questions, it is sometimes helpful to turn to the news. Covid-19 offers a good deal of material. So this week's article is an extract from an imaginary exam paper. In real life, law exams are often three hours long and students do four or five questions out of a choice of eight or nine. So, they have about 40 minutes for a question. For each question here there is an abbreviated possible answer – questions are in italics and responses not.

Question 1

Wanjiku is quarantined – because she is the wife of a person who has been confirmed to have the virus. She resigns herself to spending two weeks in uncomfortable circumstances. But after two weeks the quarantine is extended because one person has tested positive. The quarantine facilities (where she is supposed to pay Sh2,000 a night) are dirty, especially the toilets; sheets and towels are not changed. And she is running out of money. The hotel now refuses to let her go until she pays the bill. Discuss whether that detention is in violation of her human rights, and if so whether it is justified.

Even if Wanjiku's detention is valid according to the law, does this infringe on her human rights? Clearly Yes. She is deprived of her freedom of movement under Article 39. But her rights to associate with others, and perhaps family life, have been affected.

Article 51 says Parliament must pass a law to provide for humane treatment for anyone detained. Seriously, dirty conditions would not be humane, and are prohibited by the Persons Deprived of Liberty Act. But this Act covers only detention for “for reasons of humanitarian assistance, treatment, guardianship or for protection”. She could argue it was for protection – though the protection is mainly for others not for herself. Maybe Parliament has not fulfilled its duty on this law.

The relevant regulations say nothing about paying for one's own detention. Involuntary payments are either taxes or penalties. This is neither. And Parliament does not seem to have approved this payment. A recent case held that tax takes away property, so is against the right to property in Article 40. So to be permitted, it must be justifiable (under Article 24), and passed by Parliament. Maybe not all courts



A nurse inside an isolation centre at Machakos Stadium on April 22 /REUTERS

would agree that tax is deprivation of property, but it could be argued.

The renewal of Wanjiku's quarantine may have breached another right: To fair administrative action (Article 47). This includes being given notice of a possible decision to anyone affected, with a chance to argue that the decision should not be taken. One is entitled to written reasons for the action. Was even the original quarantine order fair?

Finally, holding Wanjiku for not paying her bill is clearly a violation of her rights under Article 39. Various Kenyan courts have held that hospitals must not detain people for this reason. The same must be true of hotels. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (which is part of Kenyan law) says “No one shall be imprisoned merely on the ground of inability to fulfill a contractual obligation”. Still less should they be held for failing to pay something without legal justification?

But all these rights can be limited (Article 24). First, any limitation must be for a purpose justifiable in a democratic society. Protecting Kenyans' life and health and the viability of the health services must be good reasons. However, limits on rights must be by law – and the law must be clear. But the relevant rules are not clear; for example, they use expressions like handling, treatment,

HOLDING WANJIKU FOR NOT PAYING HER BILL IS CLEARLY A VIOLATION OF HER RIGHTS UNDER ARTICLE 39. VARIOUS KENYAN COURTS HAVE HELD THAT HOSPITALS MUST NOT DETAIN PEOPLE FOR THIS REASON.

isolation, observation, surveillance and quarantine, in a very confusing way. Certainly, Wanjiku's detention by the hotel is not justified by any law. And even the rules on quarantine.

Any limitation on rights must be “proportional”: Justified by the seriousness of the object – again a court would surely hold this important purpose is justification for a short quarantine detention. But the limits on rights must not be more than necessary to achieve the objective. Here there are doubts. Is renewing the quarantine because of a risk caused by incompetent management of the facility necessary? How long could this go on? Are people being held in quarantine unnecessarily? Surely not only the law that provides for limits on rights must be reasonable, but the way the law is administered must be also.

Finally, the Constitution says any law that limits rights, made after the Constitution, must make it clear that rights are limited and that limitation was intended. This was designed to force lawmakers to recognise when rights are being affected. Though the Act under which these regulations were made is an old one, the regulations are new. They are “law”, even though not an Act of Parliament. Yet they do not have any such statement about limiting rights. Wanjiku may argue that this invalidates the limit on her rights.

She may bring a petition for habeas corpus – an old remedy for release from wrongful detention, and for compensation for violation of her rights (under Article 23).

Question 2

In the light of experience, and with reference to the law and good

practice, please develop a Code of Conduct for the Police in dealing with issues facing them during the COVID-19 pandemic, including the fact that the Chief Justice has said that the Inspector-General of Police would issue guidelines on dealing with persons arrested, in view of the reduction in court sittings.

1. The coronavirus spreads easily from person to person; therefore the Officer in charge of a station must avoid crowding the police cells.

2. The Constitution is still in force, including the provision about taking people arrested before the courts within 24 hours, unless a weekend intervenes (Article 49(1)(f)).

3. Bail is a right to be denied only for compelling reasons (Article 49(1)(h)). All efforts should be made to release anyone arrested on reasonable conditions – as the Constitution also requires. Free bail should always be considered as a possibility for minor offences. And officers should bear in mind that a court may not remand a person in custody if the offence carries a possible sentence of six months or less. Offences under the Public Health (Prevention, Control and Suppression of Covid-19) Rules normally carry a maximum of 6 months.

4. Rather than arresting a person for not wearing a mask or not wearing it properly, consider the option of advising the person. Many people do not understand the purpose of masks. At this difficult time it is much better if we can get public cooperation in fighting Covid-19. Familiarise yourself with the guidance on masks from the Ministry of Health. If possible, advise a person where they can get a mask free.

5. Your position will carry much more credibility if you are wearing a mask – and wearing it properly.

6. Be sure that you know your powers under these new laws. You are not prevented from advising people about sensible behaviour. But your powers of arrest are limited to those who have committed – or are reasonably suspected of having committed – an offence. So be sure what the offences are.

7. Quarantine is designed to prevent persons who may have been infected with the virus passing it on to others. It is not a punishment for not wearing a mask, or attending a social function.

8. Physical force is to be used no more than is necessary to achieve the object of effecting an arrest, stopping an offence, preventing violence etc. This you have been trained on. It should not be necessary to remind officers that it is completely improper – and both a crime and a disciplinary offence – for an officer to beat, kick or otherwise assault any person by way of punishment, or to vent your anger, or even your fear.



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the week

SHOT OF THE WEEK



Residents push a Kenya Red Cross vehicle that got stuck at Dukanotu area along the Garissa-Hola Road on Tuesday/**ALPHONCE GARI**

SNAPSHOTS / FROM AROUND THE WORLD



Trump says China wants him to lose reelection bid

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – President Donald Trump said on Wednesday he believes China’s handling of the coronavirus is proof that Beijing “will do anything they can” to make him lose his re-election bid in November. In an interview with Reuters in the Oval Office, Trump talked tough on China and said he was looking at different options in terms of consequences for Beijing over the virus. “I can do a lot,” he said. Trump has been heaping blame on China for a global pandemic that has killed at least 60,000 people in the United States according to a Reuters tally, and thrown the US economy into a deep recession.



Guinea-Bissau PM and three ministers test Covid positive

BISSAU (Reuters) – Guinea-Bissau’s Prime Minister Nuno Gomes Nabiam has tested positive for the novel coronavirus alongside three members of his cabinet, the health ministry said on Wednesday. Nabiam, Interior Minister Botche Cande and two other ministers were diagnosed on Tuesday and have been quarantined at a hotel in the capital Bissau, Health Minister Antonio Deuna told journalists. He did not provide details of the officials’ condition or treatment, but warned the country’s rate of infection could rise.



Pompeo says no sight of Kim Jong, real risk of famine

WASHINGTON (Reuters) – The United States has caught no sight of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and is watching reports about his health, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said on Wednesday, adding there was a real risk of famine in the country amid the coronavirus outbreak. North Korean media has not reported on Kim’s whereabouts since he presided over a meeting on April 11, provoking speculation about his health and raising concerns about instability in the nuclear-armed country that could affect other North Asian countries and the United States.



FROM THE COURTS



Milimani law courts/FILE

★ **THREE SUSPECTS ENGAGED**

a Kibera magistrate in a cash bail bargain, which almost turned into a chorus. "I have Sh3,500 and that is what I can afford," one suspect said. "I have Sh2,500, sir, and please release me," another said. The third one caused laughter when he said he didn't anything with him, and the little he had to his name can only be sent by M-Pesa by his guardian. "Wacheni hiyo mchezo, mko kotini (stop that game, you are in court," the magistrate said. The magistrate released two of them on a Sh5,000 fine each, while the one who said he only had Sh3,500 was fined Sh10,000 for having an extra offence.

★ **IMAGINE SOMEONE COLLAPSING**

next to you now? What will first come to your mind? Corona! most likely! It was a tense moment in a Nairobi court when a woman charged with felony 'collapsed' in court as soon her charge was read. Everyone held their breath. She later woke up when she was ordered by the police and left the podium. But the magistrate still slapped her with a Sh100,000 bond term.

★ **A WHISPERING SUSPECT**

— facing robbery with violence charges, — caused his colleague to break into laughter in court, drawing the attention of a magistrate. "Prosecutor, what is happening in that last seat? Please confirm and let me know. We need calmness in court," the magistrate said. He pleaded not guilty.

FROM PARLIAMENT

★ **KIKUYU MP KIMANI** Ichung'wa has a way of leaving MPs in stitches, especially in his customary wordplay with Majority leader Aden Duale. So emphatic he can move an agenda but not on this day when he moved the motion on the Supplementary Appropriations Bill, 2020. Instead of delving on the details of the legislation, the lawmaker went into a conversation of how he warded off a scammer who had threatened to leak a video recording of him.

Duale, when he rose on his feet to second the motion, drew the attention of his colleagues to listen to the hilarious experience the Budget chair just said.

Hours later in the afternoon sitting, the Kikuyu lawmaker staged a 'battle of seats' prompting Kitui South MP Rachel Nyamai to report him to Speaker Justin Muturi. The Kitui South MP lamented that she couldn't withstand the bullish approach she got from Ichung'wa, who was adamant that she had to move. But even in the midst of her woes, Nyamai still had room for a light touch with her reference to a 'good looking' sergeant-at-arms whom she complained of beckoning her to leave the seat.

This was in the face of Ichung'wa warning that she'd have to leave the spot for him to move his business of the day.

★ **AWAY FROM THE** seat debacle, National Assembly sittings are never a boring affair regardless of the weight of business the members are engaging in. Any small matter or incident can spark a round of endless teases among members. This time round, it was Kesses MP Swarup Mishra who was to take the punches. Deputy Speaker Moses Cheboi kept taunting him that his face mask was soundproof hence could not hear what the legislator was saying. Well, this went on for some time before Majority leader Aden Duale came with a spoiler that probably it was the lawmaker's heavy accent that the deputy speaker couldn't fathom his point of order.

FACT CHECKER

PESACHECK

Pregnancy does not increase Covid-19 risk

A Facebook post claiming that pregnant mothers are more likely to contract Covid-19 is FALSE.

Responding to comments on his own post, the author says he got the information from KTN News, a television news bulletin broadcast by Standard Media Group. He makes no mention of the research it is based on or the organisation that conducted it.

Pesacheck got in touch with KTN News, who confirmed that they published a story by Reuters, on their print publication, The Standard. The story, however, shines a spotlight on the plight of expectant women in malaria-prone areas during the Covid-19 pandemic given that pesticide spraying to kill mosquitoes has been suspended due to lockdowns.

According to the article, a combination of these factors is what puts them at a higher risk of contracting both malaria, Covid-19 or even vulnerable to misdiagnoses as the two diseases carry similar symptoms, rather than the mere fact that they are pregnant as claimed.

Although pregnancy does cause changes in the body and immune system, making expectant mothers more susceptible to some respiratory infections, the World Health Organization says there is currently no evidence that they are more prone to Covid-19 than the general population.

WHO adds that research is still underway to understand the full impact of Covid-19 infection on pregnant women, but in the meantime, urges them to take the same precautions to avoid the virus as other people.

These include washing hands with soap or sanitising with an alcohol-based rub, maintaining social distancing, avoiding touching eyes, nose and mouth, and seeking medical attention early if one has a fever, cough or difficulty in breathing. There is also no evidence that Covid-19 can be passed from an expectant mother to her child either during pregnancy, at the time of delivery, or through breastfeeding.

PesaCheck has looked into the claim that pregnant mothers are prone to Covid-19 and finds it to be FALSE.

This post is part of an ongoing series of PesaCheck fact-checks examining content marked as potential misinformation on Facebook and other social media platforms.

This fact-check was written by PesaCheck Fact-Checker Simon Muli and edited by PesaCheck Deputy Editor Rose Lukalo. The article was approved for publication by PesaCheck Managing Editor Eric Mugendi.

THE WEEK/ IN PICTURES



1. MOMBASA: Traders are plunged in the filth of the stagnant rainwater following heavy downpour in Mombasa and its environs at their new Tononoka market space. Mombasa county government left them with no choice but to display their products in the same deplorable environment oblivious of the health risks they pose to the consumers //JOHN CHESOLI

TOP 4 STORIES

MONDAY, APRIL 27

Kinoti takes on DPP Haji in new supremacy war

The DCI headed by George Kinoti has accused the Director of Public Prosecutions Noordin Haji's office of interference and inordinate delays in their criminal probes. In an internal communication to his team, Director of Investigations Bureau John Kariuki said they will not send any progress report to Haji's office from now on. Instead, they will only send complete investigation files. Although the law gives prosecutorial powers to the DPP, Kinoti is understood to be planning to prosecute cases himself.

TUESDAY, APRIL 28

Kenyan scientist unveils ARV drug to be used once a year

A US-based Kenyan scientist has unveiled the world's first antiretroviral (ARV) drug to be taken once-a-year. Prof Benson Edagwa and his colleagues at the University of Nebraska Medical Center modified an existing ARV drug - cabotegravir - to enable the body to absorb and release it slowly from tissues over 12 months. "This occurs for extended time periods, and in laboratory and animal testing, up to a year," said Prof Edagwa, who designed and produced the required modifications of the new product.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29

30,000 deaths projected as Kemri out of testing kits

The country has run out of essential screening and testing equipment even as the government projects a worst-case scenario of as many as 30,000 Covid-19 deaths. At least Sh790 million is needed to restock the Kenya Medical Research Institute (Kemri), edica Kemri- the crucial agency at the centre of screening, testing and research for a vaccine - says essential supplies have been depleted. "The institute has exhausted most of the reagents and materials being utilised in screening".

THURSDAY, APRIL 30

Uhuru has betrayed Ruto, Kikuyu and Kalenjin elders say

A section of Kalenjin and Kikuyu elders in the Rift Valley now claim President Uhuru Kenyatta is frustrating his deputy William Ruto through elaborate state machinery. The elders spoke as Ruto's allies began to take the war to Kenyatta's doorstep and to undo changes in at least two county assemblies that had the blessings of the President. The tension in Jubilee is likely to explode, with reports the President is planning a grand house cleaning that may see some of Ruto's men kicked out from Jubilee leadership.

REGIONAL POLITICS INFILTRATION

Al Shabaab's close ties to Somalia government and threat to security

STAR
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A recent media report revealing a relationship between al Shabaab and the National Intelligence and Security Agency of Somalia (NISA) was met with praise and criticism – praise for unearthing what some critics have called an open secret about the financial and material support, and criticism by the Somali government that the report was an attempt to dent its image.

However, it appears the report has opened a Pandora's box as more incriminating information has emerged about links between al Shabaab, NISA and the Federal Government of Somalia (FGS). Security sources say the influence al Shabaab exerts over the government is unprecedented.

The terrorist group has allegedly infiltrated the FGS and the Federal Member States (FMS). Its members occupy key positions, enabling Shabaab to receive financial support and influence decision-making. It is why the terrorist group has upscaled attacks in Somalia and the region, particularly in Kenya.

Clan elders determine political representation in Somalia. Al Shabaab has been coercing them to select candidates who are friendly to their ideology. Through this, the group has links with MPs at all levels and uses them to lobby for the appointment of its sympathisers and financiers into the Cabinet.

Analysts say al Shabaab's inroads in government point to its long-term plan to ascend to power and create an Islamic caliphate in Eastern Africa. Within Somalia, the group has set up a quasi-government that collects taxes, runs schools and adjudicates disputes. Experts say it has established parallel administrative structures in five of the seven federal states, including the capital, Mogadishu.

Within the states, Shabaab militants collect taxes, especially in south-central Somalia and Benadir, where the FGS has little control. Its spies scare away FGS tax collectors, denying the government millions in revenue.

They have erected roadblocks in major supply routes and penetrated the management of major seaports to impose their taxes.

Mohamud Abdi (name changed to protect his identity), a former seafarer in Mogadishu, is now based in Mombasa after fleeing.

"We could not take our boats out to the sea without the permission of the militants. And when we went, you paid a specific amount of money for them to let you out. And when you came back, you would still find them at the port waiting for you to give them a share of your earnings before they let you disembark," he said.

When asked why they did not report this to the government, Abdi simply quipped, "There is nothing



that they can do. Al Shabaab has now become [like] the government."

No industry has been spared al Shabaab's appetite for money. NGOs, land and real estate dealers, construction, farmers and even herders pay tax to be allowed to operate.

Security experts believe the rise to power of al Shabaab was facilitated by someone close to power in Somalia. For some, the middleman is Fahad Haji Dahir Yassin, current director general of NISA. Yassin is one of the most influential figures in Somalia and a close confidant of President Mohammed Farmajo. It is even intimated that he had a hand in Farmajo's election.

Yassin rose to power from a trainee militant in the early 1990s, and an obscure spy in the 2000s, to become among the most influential people in Somalia. He trained as a combatant in Afghanistan and Pakistan alongside prominent al Shabaab leaders Hassan Dahir Aweys and Ahmed Abdi Godane, now deceased.

He later became a member of Al-Itihad Al-Islamiya (AIAI) – also known as the Islamic Union – a militant Somali organisation with ties to al Qaeda – until 1997, when he enrolled for a degree in religious studies at Al-Iman University in Sanaa, Yemen.

Years after his studies, Yassin was hired by Qatar state-funded Al Jazeera. In 2006, he was appointed head of the Somalia bureau, where he worked until he joined the country's security.

However, Yassin never abandoned

his militant tendencies. From this period to 2012, it is alleged he was an undercover operative for Qatar and Ethiopia.

In 2012, he supported the candidature of Hassan Sheikh Mohamud by channeling to him campaign funds from Qatar. When Mohamud became the eighth president of Somalia, he rewarded Yassin with the appointment as Minister for Port and Marine Transport. However, this was short-lived as Yassin resigned over suspected connections to al Shabaab.

Yassin and Mohamud disagreed in 2016 and he shifted Qatar's political sponsorship to Mohamed Farmajo, who won the presidency in 2017. For his reward, he was appointed in 2018 the director general of NISA.

He reorganised the institution that had previously investigated him and declared him unfit for public office. Yassin recruited politically inclined security and intelligence personnel from extremist groups and established NISA as a conduit for funding, mainly from Qatar.

It is believed Qatar has been channeling millions of dollars to Somalia to create a loyalist administration to counter growing Turkish and UAE influence.

Yassin uses Qatar's funds to weaken the Somali government.

CONTROL OVER AL SHABAAB

On the other hand, he has been able to somewhat control the terror group. In May 2018, it was reported he offered \$1.8 million to Abdirahman Mohamed Warsame alias Mahat Karate, deputy Shabaab leader, to halt attacks during Ramadhan.

Other briefs to al Shabaab are said to include carrying out attacks targeted at Turkish expatriates in Somalia. Such attacks have slowed down Turkey's projects in the country as well as those by other coun-

Al Shabaab
militants at a
camp in Somalia
/ FILE

tries, including the stalled modern port at Berbera by the UAE.

Aside from financial support, Yassin has been denigrating the Amisom forces to push for their withdrawal from Somalia.

NISA and FGS have allegedly been issuing misleading coordinates for precision attacks to both the Amisom and the US-led Africa Command Forces to ensure they miss their targets to increase negative publicity.

Following the recent maritime dispute between Kenya and Somalia, the tussle over Jubaland and the stalemate over the border wall Kenya is building Kenya has been branded an enemy of Somalia, a narrative Yassin, NISA and al Shabaab are keen to exploit.

Other Amisom contributing countries have also been disparaged via negative propaganda from some Somali citizens and diaspora communities, which share Yassin's view.

Owing to this antagonistic view of Kenya, NISA has been actively sponsoring al Shabaab leadership to attack and frustrate KDF and Amisom operations to pile pressure on Kenya to withdraw from Somalia.

It is reliably reported that Yassin is not the only high-ranking Somali leader connected to Shabaab. His deputy, Abdullahi Kulane alias Jiis Marihan, is also an ardent al Shabaab supporter.

Security experts warn that with Yassin exercising undue influence over the president and prime minister of Somalia, and with help from countries such as Qatar, it is only a matter of time before he attains his goal of establishing an Islamic caliphate in Somalia – especially if he manages to frustrate countries like Kenya and Amisom partners trying to get Somalia back on its feet.



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SECURITY EXPERTS BELIEVE THE RISE TO POWER OF AL SHABAAB WAS FACILITATED BY SOMEONE CLOSE TO POWER IN SOMALIA

COLUMN **HARD QUESTIONS**

The making of a scandal: Is Covid-19 response cash already being stolen?



ISAAC MWAURA

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Senator for persons with disabilities and chairman of the Albinism Society of Kenya

The US with its over a million coronavirus cases has given Kenya Sh705 million, while Russia has donated Sh300 million to FAO to help us combat the locust invasion.

Such donations are suspect and there is more than meets the eye in terms of the quest for natural resources or military tenders such countries are eyeing in Kenya.

On the other hand, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund are singing lullabies to the National Treasury by providing soft loans of up to Sh175 billion to cushion the country from Covid-19 effects, especially the shortfalls arising from reduced revenue.

Good as this may look, this encourages lethargy and fiscal indiscipline on the part of Kenya, and is akin to hooking us to the drug of perpetual borrowing by institutions largely controlled by Americans and Europeans.

I am highlighting this because disruptions such as the current pandemic have the potential of creating a new world order, especially tilting the balance of trade and global supply chains to Kenya's advantage.

So far, only Sh300 million has been sourced from our own revenue to combat this crisis. This reveals our unpreparedness and dependency on others, even when they are sicker than us. Is this not how we continue to mortgage and therefore devalue ourselves as a country?

Further, competition for control of such funds creates a new cadre of the super-rich going by the iron law of oligarchy, especially when



they are misused. This sad state of affairs is exemplified by the way governors are outdoing themselves for publicity, in the pretext of serving wananchi. We saw Machakos Governor Alfred Mutua put up an A-frame tent complete with normal hospital beds on top of a green tuft in a stadium. He said it is an emergency hospital in Covid-19 response.

The cinematographer wants to borrow over Sh900 million to "bridge a cash flow gap that has affected the County Treasury's ability to pay March salaries" and giving 'allowances' to Covid-19 frontline workers. The Salaries and Remuneration Commission hasn't approved such allowances.

This is a prototype of a devolved government scandal and similar scenarios are being replicated across many counties. Soon, you will hear of governors having spent hundreds of millions on face masks, even when Kenyans have either bought or made them at home.

HARD QUESTIONS

What is more worrying is the fact

that the government has spent Sh2.3 billion on Covid-19 related expenses in a month, with the Ministry of Health spending Sh14.4 million to maintain 30 vehicles. That's Sh480,000 each.

Some Sh10 million has been allocated is for tea and snacks and Sh2 million already spent on airtime. In addition, Sh42 million has been spent on leasing 15 ambulances, translating to Sh2.8 million each per month!

That's not all. Some Sh12 million has been used for quarantine services for medical staff, while Kenyans have to foot their own bills in government facilities. What kind of stationary can cost Sh6.5 million in a month, while printing travel forms cost another Sh9 million? And how comes Sh70 million has been spent on communication, yet major radio and TV stations have already given Sh150 million worth of free airtime? Does it also mean that the toll-free 719 call centre has already cost the taxpayer Sh11.8 million?

How many PPEs have been used and what happened to Jack Ma's

Diamond Trust Bank Group chief executive and managing director Nasim Devji hands over Sh50 million dummy cheque to Covid-19 Emergency Response Fund Board chairperson Jane Karuku / COURTESY

donations since Kenya Medical Supplies Authority has a budget of Sh593 million for this, having spent Sh277 million already? Kemsu has also spent Sh330 million on lab equipment, and Sh196 million on test kits, yet counties are complaining they are not getting their orders.

Another Sh10 million has been spent on Kenyan Students in Wuhan, yet other Kenyans are expected to meet their flight costs from China. I have already received distress texts from some of them asking for help in meeting their travel costs. How much would it have cost for the government to cater for two or three flights from Guangzhou, yet KQ planes are lying idle?

Further, what has the military done to warrant the spending of Sh75 million, yet they haven't been involved in providing public services? Don't we need soap and water, not bullets and combat gear to fight Covid-19? Also, what media tours has KBC conducted in the era of curfew and travel restrictions to warrant the spending of Sh5 million? Imagine another Sh573 million has been spent on case management and a whopping Sh190 million for rapid response!

This is a mega scam in the making because if government has spent Sh2.3 billion so far out of the targeted Sh40.3bn in a month, it means it has been spending averagely Sh76.6 million per day.

We can't use a health pandemic to steal from Kenyans.

A commission of inquiry can as well be gazetted since we already have a scandal in the making.

Ruto can't beat system, he needs a new strategy



SAM OMWENGA

@TheStarKenya

US-based legal analyst and political commentator

Deputy President William Ruto's rise to the position he currently occupies has been nothing but admirable, even enviable among some of his harshest critics.

DP Ruto did not accomplish this in a vacuum: There were prevailing circumstances that made it possible. Without them, we will not even be talking about Ruto as a politician worthy of note, let alone the political force he once was few years ago.

You will have to be in absolute and total denial not to see or recognise that Ruto has fallen from the sky he reached just before the 2017 elections and is now wobbling to survive politically.

A key prevailing circumstance that allowed him to brilliantly

strategise and execute his succession game was President Uhuru Kenyatta having completely been aloof as to his machinations. The President and his minders failed to see the potency with which Ruto was scheming and executing his quest for the presidency.

The other circumstance was the belief among many, including Ruto, that the then Kenya's opposition leader Raila Odinga had outlived his own political might and relevance.

This was particularly the case following the 2017 elections and after Raila was sworn as the "people's president". Many, including his longest and staunchest supporters, thought that with the unprecedented move, the enigma had reached a dead end politically.

But President Uhuru Kenyatta and Raila saw it fit to heal the nation's wounds by stepping outside Harambee House and shocking everyone with the now famous handshake.

With that handshake, Ruto's brilliant strategy to succeed Uhuru was dealt a fatal blow from which he cannot recover.

To be sure, Ruto only had two choices: One, to embrace the handshake and try to see what crumbles of the food from the high table he could get, and two, to oppose it and take the system head-on.

The second option would have required that he resigns from the government — as well as from Jubilee—and say goodbye to his political ambitions. Those were the only two, viable and realistic options.

Ruto, however, chose a third option that has equally negated his previously brilliant strategy. He did not outrightly reject the handshake, but he has continued his two-pronged strategy to (a) appear publicly in support of the President while coy with the handshake and (b) fuelling his foot soldiers to undermine the President and the handshake.

This was not wise. The very foot

soldiers are now Ruto's own undoing, going by what they are doing.

One of them recently went on social media to "toboa" (reveal) ostensibly Uhuru and his advisers' strategy to contain Ruto, or in the minions' words, to stop the DP from succeeding Uhuru.

They are also promising to reveal more of these internal deliberations at State House.

Someone tell them to stop for this simple reason: If the objective is to make Ruto a victim of machinations to finish him politically, that has not stopped those in power from targeting and politically neutering those they did not want in power, if not altogether having them breathe their last breaths as used to be the case.

Indeed, the boldness with which some of these foot soldiers are going about fighting Ruto's battles would have easily found the latter meted against them with abandon.

While dead bodies being found in places such as Lake Magadi is largely a thing of the past, those in power faced with the bare-knuckle challenge are not without lesser deadly means to inflict pain and suffering to those who dare them.

GLOBAL POLITICS HEALTHCARE

Coronavirus pandemic provides ideas for a better global order

The coronavirus has hugely increased, at least in the short term, the costs of global inequality and exploitation. The question is whether “civilization” will win out as it eventually did in London



PATRICK GATHARA

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November of 1871, the then Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII, contracted typhoid fever, a deadly disease which at the time was blamed on sewer gas, a noxious vapor that arose out of the modern conveniences that were a feature of middle- and upper-class homes.

Water closets had been heralded by sanitary science as the safest and most efficient means for disposal and, despite the foul smell they were associated with, having one was still considered a privilege. “The pestilence that walketh in darkness” the Times called it, declaring that “our worst foe is Civilization”.

Today the world is stalked by another pestilence, one that does not spare the wealthy and has already afflicted the current Prince of Wales. In the words of the Times 150 years ago, “it is a more terrible, more constant, and far more insidious danger which now occupies the foreground in public anxiety”.

Much of the concern is driven by the fact that Covid-19 is not just a disease of the poor. As Prof Alex Broadbent of the University of Johannesburg asks, “Would we care about the increased risk of fatal pneumonia that Covid-19 might cause in Africa, if it did not also greatly increase the risk of fatal pneumonia for prime ministers, business people and university professors, including those in countries where infectious disease and its terrors are supposed to be of historical interest only”?

As sewer gas did, coronavirus has “shifted the focus away from the fever dens of the poor to the bedchambers of princes and, more frequently, “ordinary middle-class houses” as sites of disease and death”.

The pandemic is devastating more than just health systems. It is also shattering the illusion of safety engendered by systems which for centuries have concentrated global resources in a few societies, families and individuals, while leaving many across the globe without access to basic life-sustaining necessities.

And once again, the blame is being laid at the door of “Civilization”, this time in the form of globalisation.

“It’s globalization that has allowed Covid-19 to spread around the world at such incredible speed” declares Deutsche Welle, decrying how reliant the West has become on cheap medicines and products from China and India. This further illustrates just how dependent the world has become on just one economy, China, declares John Gray.

The coronavirus has hugely increased, at least in the short term, the costs of global inequality and ex-



ploitation. The question is whether “civilization” will win out as it eventually did in London, where following the Prince’s recovery, sanitary reform became a national priority. Will the pandemic pave the way for reform of the global system to make it more equitable, or is John Gray right when he declares in the New Statesman that “the era of peak globalisation is over”?

Undoubtedly, continuing along the same path would entail the powerful accepting vulnerability as the price of inequality. After all, while the poor are paying a steep price for a disease that the wealthy are primarily responsible for spreading, Max Fisher and Emma Bubola note in their piece for the New York Times, that “in an epidemic, poverty and inequality can exacerbate rates of transmission and mortality for everyone”.

ABSENCE OF A VACCINE

Therefore in the absence of a vaccine (and a viable one is reckoned to be 12-18 months away), as long as the poor continue to get sick, so will the rich and powerful. How those at the top of the global food chain, be they the citizens of the global North or elites in the global South, act to reduce that vulnerability will

depend on the extent to which they are willing to share the wealth along with the diseases.

On the other hand, while it is true that economic globalisation has been taking a pummeling of late, a significant retreat as Gray prophesies seems unlikely. Already, there is talk of reopening economies and resuming normal life. Yet without globalisation and the accompanying “worldwide production and long supply chains”, the new normal would be an expensive one.

It is questionable whether countries such as the US and Germany could afford to produce goods and medicines at the cost that they import them from countries like China and India. Or whether their citizens would be willing to forgo access to cheap iPhones to protect the one-percenters.

The other option open to the rich and powerful to reduce their vulnerability is to reform the global systems rather than retreat from them. That will require recognition that their privileged lifestyles are underwritten, as Umair Haque, the London-based consultant and author, notes, by “centuries ... of colonialism, capitalism, supremacy, patriarchy”. That has created a world where Europe, which grows no coffee, can

A woman washes hands in Kisii as a measure of preventing Covid-19
/BENSON NYANGESIBA

make five times more from coffee exports than sub-Saharan Africa which does. The global vulnerability to diseases such as Covid 19 rests on such distortions and inequalities.

Changing this will be impossible if the mold is not broken. And building a world that works for everyone will require more than just tinkering at the edges. As Haque puts it, “without building global systems, nothing much will change”.

At the close of the 19th Century, the scourge of sewer gas was not resolved by reducing the number of flush toilets within individual homes and retreating back into a world of cesspools and outhouses.

It was ended through improvements in the unseen plumbing and infrastructure that ensured the sewer system worked for everyone. Not only did London get a new sewer system but in the 1870s and 1880s hundreds of patents for sewer trap designs as well as water closets and flushing devices.

Similarly, the coronavirus pandemic can provide an impetus for a flood of ideas on how to construct a better global order, rather than for retreating from it. Doing so will not be easy or cheap. But it can be done if the West is willing to invest the resources that it has taken from the rest of the world.



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ANALYSIS GLOBAL HEALTH DIPLOMACY

Despite Trump's attack on WHO, Covid-19 demands multilateralism



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tional relations

At a time the world needs unity in the war on Covid-19, President Donald Trump launched an attack on the UN global health agency.

Trump suspended funding to the World Health Organization on April 14, accusing it of poor handling of the coronavirus pandemic. He also said it helped China cover up the origin and extent of the outbreak.

"The WHO really blew it. For some reason, funded largely by the United States, yet it is very China-centric. We will be giving that a good look," he tweeted. He threatened a permanent end to funding.

This was widely interpreted by many as an attack not only on WHO but also on multilateralism.

The WHO has also been widely criticised by others for bureaucracy and inaction, and also in the West Africa Ebola outbreak. However, it sends funds to dozens of countries, many of them poor. In Kenya, for instance, it helped with the establishment of Mbagathi Isolation Centre and training of health workers. WHO says it is supporting countries to increase their readiness by ensuring early detection and control measures are in place.

US BUDGET CUTS

The Trump administration was, however, already eyeing cuts to global health funds in its 2021 budget proposal, slashing more than \$3 billion in overall programmes as early as February.

The cuts included half of its annual funding to the WHO. For 20-21, the US was to pay \$236 million, China's amounting to \$129 million.

In a report by Foreign Policy magazine on February 10, US lawmakers pressed the State Department and USAID to explain why it made sense to scale back spending amidst a global pandemic.

In the last three years, it has slashed part of its overall annual multilateral aid to the UN, which fell from \$10 billion in 2016 to a requested \$1 billion for the Department of State's Contributions to International Organization's budget, the Pacific Standard reported in March 2019.

In April 2017, the State Department announced it was ending funding for the UN Population Fund over the issue of abortion services.

So far, Trump has pulled the US out of the Paris Agreement on climate change, abandoned the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty and repeatedly threatened to leave the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (Nato). In September 2019, Trump attacked globalism in his address

to UN General Assembly, saying, "The future belongs to patriots, not globalists." Responses to Trump's recent move were fast and furious, and all negative.

UN boss Antonio Guterres said this was "not the time" to suspend funding to the WHO or any other organisation fighting the pandemic. "Now is the time for unity and for the international community to work together in solidarity to stop this virus and its shattering consequences," Guterres said.

WHO director general Tedros Ghebreyesus said he regretted Trump's decision saying, "This is a time for all of us to be united in our common struggle against a common threat."

"This virus is dangerous. When we are divided, the coronavirus exploits the cracks between us," he told a press conference in Geneva.

China's Foreign Affairs spokesperson Zhao Lijian said under Tedros, WHO has played a key role in "international cooperation" to curb the spread of the virus and that it has Beijing's support.

The country's director of the Foreign Ministry Information Department Hua Chunying announced they will give WHO an additional \$30 million to support its anti-coronavirus efforts, a week after Trump announcement.

"At this crucial moment, supporting WHO is supporting multilateralism and global solidarity," Hua said.

The UK says it has no plans to stop funding the WHO, as it has an important role to play in leading the global health response.

The African Union weighed in, reaffirming its support for WHO.

"The AU calls upon the international community to join hands to support the efforts of the DG and the entire WHO family as they lead global efforts to fight this pandemic."

"If there was a time for global unity, solidarity and cooperation, this is that time. Working together, we will be able to overcome this challenge," the AU said on April 8.

But while the AU has a joint strategy against Covid-19, little is seen in state cooperation, other than at the sub-regional level, for instance, Igad.

President Uhuru Kenyatta said WHO has a leading role in the consolidation of multilateral efforts against Covid-19.

Two important issues emerge here: The place of global health diplomacy and the divide on multilateralism. With globalisation, health issues have become increasingly pre-eminent in international relations, even drawing non-state actors and individuals such as Bill and Melinda Gates and their foundation.

British diplomat Robert Cooper in his book *The Breaking of Nations. Order and Chaos in the 21st Century* notes, "In the past, it was enough for a nation to look after itself. Today it is no longer sufficient."



GLOBAL HEALTH DIPLOMACY

WHO's Global health diplomacy brings together the disciplines of public health, international affairs, management, law and economics and focuses on negotiations that shape and manage the global policy on health.

WHO, established in April 1948, is itself a product of negotiations. Its primary role is to direct international health within the UN system and to lead partners in global responses.

Global Health Diplomacy (GHD) through WHO thus seeks to build capacity among states to support collective action to reduce health risks that transcend boundaries.

So, timely and effective cooperation among states is imperative, diplomats and experts say. So, global actors doing this and how?

Norwegian Ambassador to Kenya Elin Rognlie said, "No country can unilaterally solve this crisis. We need global solidarity and multilateral cooperation with a coordinated and effective response."

"Norway supports WHO and the Covid-19 Global Humanitarian Response Plan with NOK 100 million (Sh1 billion) and other key UN humanitarian partners WFP, UN-HCR and UN Humanitarian," she tweeted.

Siddharth Chatterjee, UN Resident Coordinator in Kenya, says multilateralism and public-private partnerships must be the bulwark to defeat global pandemics and accelerate socioeconomic progress.

But in a co-authored article for CNBC Africa, Chatterjee writes that so far, the pandemic has not been the finest hour for international cooperation.

They note history will judge the efficacy of Covid-19 response by the degree to which it is coordinated globally, not individual state actions in isolation.

"The fight to flatten the coronavirus curve is an acid test for stakeholder capitalism and especially for multilateralism," the article by Paul Polman, Chatterjee and Myri-

US President Donald Trump during the signing of the Paycheck Protection Program and Health Care Enhancement Act in the Oval Office at the White House in Washington, on April 24 / REUTERS

am Sidibe and published on April 17 notes.

International Relations lecturer Dr Kigen Morumbasi says, however, Trump's attack on WHO may not be directed against multilateralism but its failure in dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak, "specifically on the suppression of information at the initial stage".

"What we learn from this pandemic is that we cannot do away with multilateralism, although its nature and actors change over time based on the prevailing circumstances," Dr Morumbasi told this writer on Monday. He teaches at Strathmore University.

He notes that the world is more interconnected in all aspects and that developing countries cannot rely on external health assistance but have to upscale their own medical research and development.

"States remain the main actors, even under multilateral arrangements, and GHD has to be strengthened, especially in Africa which has often been a recipient," he said.

Another lesson to draw, he said, is that African states can also engage in GHD at the continental and regional levels due to the realities of the breakdown of global supplies.

EU Commissioner for International Partnerships Jutta Urpilainen says the current crisis highlights the need for multilateralism.

"...we can see the importance of international partnerships and cooperation. I think that there is definitely a need for a geopolitical commission, for the commission that defends the multilateral international rule-based order," Urpilainen told Deutsche Welle public broadcasters on April 21.

The EU is joining forces with global partners to kick-start a pledging effort - the Coronavirus Global Response - starting on May 4.

Despite calls for social isolation to curb the spread of the virus and recent nationalism wave, states still need cooperation, as Covid-19 is proving.



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**WITH GLOBALISATION,
HEALTH ISSUES HAVE BECOME
INCREASINGLY PREEMINENT IN
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

Government should spend Covid-19 cash on priorities

The government has been put on the spot over the expenditure of billions allocated for the fight against Covid-19.

According to the breakdown of the Sh1.3 billion spent so far, it is evident the government has some allocations on nondescript expenses such as snacks. While there are justifiable allocations/expenditures, the government should be extra careful not to be seen to be using the money on non-priority areas.

Doing so will undermine the commendable efforts by Kenyans, corporates and donor countries and institutions, who have united to raise funds to assist in containing the spread of coronavirus.

State agencies must also not fight over the control of the money. Already, there are reports that the Kenya Medical Research Institute and the National Influenza Centre are embroiled in a tug of war over who has the right to lead the war against coronavirus.

This has led to a delay in the utilisation of about Sh6 billion received by the government from the World Bank. Such disagreements should be addressed urgently as they will easily undermine the fight against the virus and can lead to rapid spread across the country.

What Kenyans are demanding is unity of purpose, transparency and accountability on the use of every coin received. As part of ensuring transparency, the government should constantly update Kenyans on what it has received and how it has been used.

LABOUR DAY QUOTE

"Labour Day is a time to recognize and reflect on that work, and for elected officials to recommit to the too-often ignored task of fighting to improve the lives of working families."

Elissa Slotkin
US Representative from Michigan

COMMENT RIGHT OF WORSHIP



A man disinfects the inside of Jamia Mosque as part of measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 /REUTERS

Closure of places of worship creates radicalisation risk

Despite the pandemic, we must remember freedom has not been taken away completely



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Haki-Africa

It's about seven weeks now since the first coronavirus case was announced in Kenya.

Since then, the infections have been on the rise, standing at 384 as of Wednesday. Mombasa and Nairobi counties had the highest cases at 106 and 242 respectively.

Fortunately, recoveries have also increased, been increasing, with almost 30 per cent of those infected being discharged. Deaths remain minimal, at 15 on Wednesday.

To flatten the curve, the government has put in place stringent measures to reduce gatherings and ensure social distancing. One of the measures was to close down places of worship, including mosques and churches, across the country.

While the majority of the religious leaders have supported and fully abided by the government's decision to close down places of worship, there are also those that vehemently opposed the move.

Social media is rife with videos of religious leaders arrested for defying the order. In their defence, the clerics argue that if a person is to catch the disease, whether at home or in public, it will happen. One cannot stop that which is ordained. They, therefore, see no need for closing down. If anything, they say, this is the time when the flock needs the shepherd more to guide them on prayers and bring hope.

In places such as Mombasa, the closure of places of worship brought

tension, with some hardcore religious leaders blaming the authorities for the move. When the government cracked the whip and said no to religious gatherings, they were angered and condemned the move.

Their reactions stirred religious tensions among some community members who agreed with their line of thinking. While the tension was effectively managed by public awareness of the disease, with the month of Ramadhan now with us, some Muslim leaders are again calling on the authorities to reconsider the directive and allow some room for faithful to meet for prayers.

As more and more are now being asked to go online for prayers, we must ask ourselves what they might encounter out there. For years now, we have come to learn how radicalisation was done through the internet. Whether it's the September 11 or Christchurch attacks, online content was used at some point.

Presently, under the Covid-19 pandemic, religious adherents are scouting the internet for religious knowledge and ideologies. But what religious content lies out there? Are extremists taking advantage of online worshiping to radicalise? We must ensure the young people are not exposed to the wrong teachings.

In the confines of our homes, religion is becoming a rarity. In all faiths, mainstream and cults, religion is a social practise that brings

together many to worship. When the social aspect is removed, religion is not the same.

Even in the wake of Covid-19, religion is practiced less in the homes and many are using the time they would have used to worship to do other things around the home. Unlike pre-coronavirus days when Fridays and Sundays were worship days in Kenya, all days are now the same. For religious leaders, including madrasa and Sunday school teachers, their influence has been reduced to nothing over this period.

This week, President Uhuru Kenyatta extended the curfew across the country and cessation of movement in and out of Kwale, Kilifi, Mombasa and Nairobi counties. This means that places of worship will remain closed. As communities, we must find ways of mitigating any effects that may be brought about by the restrictions on religious activities.

Article 32 (2) of the Constitution provides that "Every person has the right, either individually or in community with others, in public or in private, to manifest any religion or belief through worship, practice, teaching or observance, including observance of a day of worship".

While we understand that the Covid-19 situation has led to the limitation on the freedom of religion and belief, we must remember that freedom has not been taken away completely.



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COMMENTARY CONSERVATION

Politics of pollution: Covid-19 proves the need for environment protection

JOHN CHUMO AND
GEORGE TARUS

@TheStarKenya

Chumo is the Committee secretary, National Environmental Complaints Committee, while Tarus is the chairman, Scientific Committee, Forestry Society of Kenya

Towards the end of December last year, Wuhan city reported the first case of a novel virus now known as coronavirus, which causes Covid-19 disease.

Over the last four months, the virus has spread exponentially to all parts of the world with over 3.3 million people testing positive and more than 228,000 dead as of April 30.

In Kenya, 384 people have tested positive, while 15 have succumbed. The above statistics are a testament to the impact of the virus, which is pushing the world into a possible recession as economies face a potential meltdown.

On the same breath, the environment has not been spared.

Negatively, the coronavirus has occasioned an increased pressure on forestry and wildlife resources by adjacent communities that rely on them for their livelihood in terms of food, fuelwood, economic benefits and recreation as it was recently noted in Karura and Ngong Hill forests. On the positive front, it has contributed immensely to cleaner air through the reduction of air pollution due to lockdowns and other safety measures being deployed by governments towards its management.

In fact, there are reports that certain mountain peaks such as the Himalayas can now be seen from a town in India and Mt Kenya from Nairobi. This could not be the case under the business as usual scenario.

Even as we continue to stare at the devastating impacts of this global pandemic, environmentalist believes there is a paucity of evidence that

link pandemics and environmental degradation.

For instance, influenza, cholera and Asian flu pandemics that were witnessed in the 20th Century to the current cases of Ebola and Covid-19 demonstrate the strong linkage between infectious diseases and the destruction of nature.

The above sentiments are further bolstered by David Quammen in his book, *Spillover: Animal Infections and the Next Human Pandemic*. He opines that there is a clear interlink between a pandemic virus and the diverse ecosystems. These ecosystems form unique habitats to many species of wild animals, plants, fungi and bacteria, all of which contain unique viruses within their biological diversities.

SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Therefore, any form of environmental disturbance increasingly contributes to the destabilisation of ecological and ecosystem balances leading to flip off and the deleterious effects of that are sporadic outbreaks and pandemics associated with possible cross over of pathogens from nature to human systems.

Over the years, numerous researches have documented how outbreaks of animal-borne and other infectious diseases such as Ebola, SARS, bird flu and now coronavirus are caused by pathogens crossing from animals to humans. The US Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that three-quarters of new or emerging diseases that infect humans originate from animals.

Historically, several diseases have



been transmitted from animals to human beings eg lassa fever, nipah, SARS, zika and West Nile virus, rabies and plague.

Others such as, marburg, which is thought to be transmitted by bats and MERS, which is linked to camels are still rare though it can spread globally.

According to WHO, more than 17 per cent of all infectious diseases that cause more than 700,000 deaths each year could be linked to vector-borne diseases caused by infectious pathogens being transmitted between humans, or from animals to humans.

The above scenario pinpoints the need to have natural barriers to pathogen flight from their natural habitats, hosts, or even drastic species shifts from their ecological ranges. The need to have functional landscapes and

An open air food joint in Mathare on April 28 most residents in the area show less concern to adhering to Government directives of maintaining social distance, proper hygiene and wearing of face masks/

ecosystems that provides for the need of every organism cannot be overemphasised, more so in the era of increasing human population coupled with climate change.

We fully understand population growth depends on the exploitation of a natural ecosystem for their livelihood and socio-economic development. We are cognizant of the fact that the Kenyan economy is dependent on natural resources and climate-sensitive sectors such as rainfed agriculture, tourism. Therefore, the need for sustainable natural resource management and restoration actions cannot be overemphasised as espoused in the number of strategies, policies and legislative frameworks.

There is every need and urgency to fast track the achievement of sustainable development globally and locally.

Coronavirus pandemic offers key action areas



ALEX GIKIMA
@GikimaAlex

Researcher and communication analyst

On March 11, the World Health Organisation declared Covid-19 outbreak as a global pandemic. This pandemic is not only a public health emergency; it also poses a major threat to the global economy raising fears of a recession. Not long ago, the International Monetary Fund declared a global economic recession given that the pandemic has shut down many economic activities across the world.

This pandemic must thus teach us valuable lessons and opportunities that our leaders and citizens should tap into post-Covid 19.

One, the government must invest in healthcare infrastructure – both hardware and software. It's unfortunate that we have more MPs and

MCAs than ICU beds in this country.

Medics are poorly paid and taken for granted and this has led to brain drain to look for greener pastures.

Covid-19 has taught us that in today's world, the real soldiers are not the military, but our healthcare professionals. Their salaries and allowances must be enhanced. The government should also establish mental health programmes in all counties to provide moral and psychosocial support to many who will suffer psychological distress due to job losses and loss of family members and their loved ones. There is need for our government to therefore invest a significant amount of its budget in health.

Two, there is need to invest in the manufacturing sector. In recent

weeks, we have seen many enterprising Kenyans rush to meet the growing demand for crucial supplies meant to mitigate the spread of the virus.

Examples include the Kitui County Textile Center, Dedan Kimathi University and Kenyatta University students, as well as polytechnics and individuals making face masks.

These examples demonstrate what Kenya could achieve if there is political goodwill to support this sector. If we succeed in this, we will to a great extent reduce the over-reliance on imports of medical supplies and consumable products.

Parliament must also come with laws to regulate the quantity of m-tumba clothing imported and laws to empower institutions such Export Processing Zones (EPZ) to ensure their products are of global standards and most importantly, cost effective.

Three, Covid-19 offers the government an opportunity to invest in research and development. It needs to inspire a culture of innovation by providing more funding to institutions of higher learning and institutions such as the Kenya Medical

Research Institute which has played an important role in the fight against malaria, polio, HIV-Aids and other diseases. Investing more in research will allow scientists to develop new knowledge, techniques and technologies.

Fourthly is food security. Already, one of the key intervention so far is distribution of food. Experts had also warned that in case of a lockdown, food would have been the biggest challenge among the people.

There is thus need for the government to adopt mechanised and modern farming, such as was envisaged in the Galana Kulalu project.

Companies can apply the same model taken by Kakuzi, Del monte and Delamare farms and grow crops throughout the year. This will ensure the country can feed itself and export the surplus.

Lastly, we need to embrace servant leadership. The above four points can only be achieved if there is proper leadership. As we head towards the 2022 General Election, I beseech fellow Kenyans to elect visionary leaders.

Covid-19 should be an eye opener to us and the country's leadership.

BACK TO BUSINESS AS USUAL?



Customers at the Mama Colo restaurant in Kisumu town after the government eased restrictions and allowed eateries to reopen but observe directives on social distancing / DANIEL OGENDO

LETTERS OF THE WEEK

Write to us letters@the-star.co.ke

CS Munya must review new tea regulations

Last week, Agriculture CS Peter Munya announced a raft of new policies and regulations to reform and streamline the tea industry.

Some of the recommendations in the Tea Regulations, 2020 will cushion vulnerable tea farmers, but some threaten to split the tea industry right down the middle. For years, the tea industry has made remarkable gains, stretching itself to become the second foreign exchange earner for the country, after diaspora remittances.

Last year, for example, tea earned Sh117 billion in foreign exchange earnings. This is no mean feat, considering that other competing cash crops such as coffee, pyrethrum and others have collapsed or are on their deathbed. The big question we need to ask is whether the newly proposed regulations spur or stifle the tea industry. On one side, some of the regulations are welcome such as registration of a commercial tea nurseries, a tea grower, commercial green leaf transporter, double registration and construction of green leaf collection at least 250 metres away from collection centres, among others. These are intended to raise stakes for active competition in the industry which is good to the customers for better quality and to the tea farmers for increased returns.

However, on the flip side, some of the proposed regulations will cause problems in the sector. If implemented as they are, we will go

WHY DESTROY WHAT FARMERS HAVE SUCCESSFULLY BUILT FOR YEARS?

to the red, losing millions of shillings. For instance, the idea of compelling KTDA-managed tea factories to individually participate at the auction will fizzle away the factories' economies of scale. They will compel each factory to cease using KTDA brand that is globally associated with high-quality tea. Factory aggregate costs will also escalate, draining the tea farmers, even more.

It is unrealistic for CS Munya and his team to propose that all tea buyers/exporters should value add at least 40 per cent of their annual tea exports.

The other issue is the exclusion of the Company Secretary Service offered by a management agent to a tea company.

Finally, forcing management services agents to charge a remuneration of two per cent of the net tea sales is to micromanage businesses.

KURUMBA WECHÉ
Nyaribari Chache, Kisii

Order to partially open restaurants welcome

The government had imposed restrictions affecting social gatherings in churches, hotels and prison visits were imposed. All these were attempts to curb the spread of the highly contagious coronavirus. But due to the hit on the economy, the government has decided to consider reopening restaurants but still under strict social distancing measures. This is welcome as we all need food and finances to run our businesses and to boost the growth of our country at large.

AVRIL DICKSON
Kericho county

Allow candidates to temporary learn in the nearest schools

President Uhuru Kenyatta, in an interview with four local radio stations, said the government was not planning to extend national examination dates.

This is emerging as he announced the closure of schools on March 15 to arrest the spread of Covid-19. But given the infections are still rising, students are not likely to resume classes soon. Education CS George Magoga has already announced a one-month extension. But if the national exams will not be put off, then there is need to look for alternatives so that students can prepare. What I propose is for candidates to be allowed to resume studies in their nearest schools. Those from Mombasa should look for a school near their area, those from Nairobi the same. And just as the restaurants have opened, students should be allowed to go to any school near them and continue learning, at least for continuity.

More space can be created in buildings that are not in use, and learning hours reduced to maybe 3-4hrs per day. Notably also, with the high number of Covid-19 cases, students from the Coast, Nairobi and affected counties might face stigma. How do schools deal with this upon reopening of schools?

Even as the pandemic continues to spread, the government has no choice but to recall students to adapt to the new normal.

The online learning is facing challenges as children in remote areas cannot access the internet while parents in towns are busy looking for the daily bread for their children

VERONICA ONJORO
Social commentator

STAR POINTS



Response against Covid-19

WHO and partners continue to work with suppliers to secure the medical equipment needed for the Covid-19 response in countries with limited access to personal protective equipment, diagnostic testing supplies and clinical care equipment

Tedros Adhanom
Director General, WHO



National Exams

One of the most critical sectors is education. The fate of 1.2M KCPE and 700k KCSE candidates hangs in the balance. Not all have access to radio, TV or internet. What the country needs from the ministry are definitive messages on the way forward.

Musalia Mudavadi
ANC leader

COMMENT

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Labour Day: Protect workers amidst Covid-19

May 1 is synonymous with the celebration of workers worldwide.

However, most governments have cancelled the celebrations this year due to the coronavirus pandemic and the International Labour Organization conference that was to take place in June and the first of its kind has also been cancelled.

In a recent press briefing, Cotu secretary general Francis Atwoli said following the government's directives recommending people to stay at home and social distancing, the event had been cancelled. Nevertheless, most Kenyans still have many expectations from the government in the wake of this pandemic.

Due to the high cost of living and economic constraints as a result of Covid-19, Kenyans will expect more stimulus packages to stimulate the economy.

South Africa, for instance, has introduced several measures to assist the economy. These include provision of emergency water supply, increased sanitisation of public transport and facilities, and provision of food and shelter for the homeless.

A special Covid-19 social relief of distress grant to be paid to individuals who are currently unemployed has been provided, as well as a budget for the protection of jobs and to create opportunities amidst this pandemic.

They have also provided income support payments for workers whose employers are not able to pay their wages and a loan guarantee scheme to help businesses pay salaries, rent and suppliers. We can borrow a leaf from them to cushion Kenyans and support businesses, thus mitigating the economic hit impact.

Workers also expect Cotu to address the issue of their health and safety. Every employer in Kenya should ensure their employees work in a conducive environment that meet the health standards as outlined in Article 41 of the Constitution, the ILO code of practice on the protection of a worker, the Workers, Benefits and Injuries Act (WIBA) and the Occupational, safety and health Act (OSHA).

The health and safety of workers more so, health workers who are on the frontline is indispensable.

Finally, yet importantly, workers will expect an asseveration on their constitutional rights and remedies as stipulated in the Employment Act and the ILO declaration on fundamental principles and rights at work.

We've seen many workers being laid off, contracts terminated and in some cases unfairly and unprocedurally dismissed in contravention with labour laws, conventions and treaties which Kenya is a signatory.

The government should also recognise all workers offering essential services during this period.

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