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Home Affairs Minister Kazembe Kazembe addresses a press conference to dismiss "rumours of an impending coup" in Harare on June 10, with security chiefs in the background.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ZANU-PF's dangerous paranoia
- CZI: Some firms won't survive COVID-19
- ED's reform admission
- Report reveals quarantine horror
- Which sort of entrepreneur will survive COVID-19?

ZANU PF'S PARANOIA IS A DANGER TO US ALL

It was finger-pointing week. At ZANU PF headquarters on Wednesday, President Emmerson Mnangagwa had an explanation for the economic crisis; it was the detractors.

"On the economic front, we are witnessing a relentless attack on our currency and the economy in general through exorbitant pricing models," Mnangagwa told the Politburo. "We are fully cognisant that this is a battle being fuelled by our political detractors, elite opportunists and malcontents who are bent on pushing a nefarious agenda."

Later that day, Home Affairs Minister Kazembe Kazembe rustled up security chiefs for a rare press conference. There, he too had an explanation for the political crisis; again, the detractors.

"Some foreign diplomats accredited to Zimbabwe have quite often not shied from engaging in anti-government activism, which

ZIMBABWE COVID-19 STATISTICS FOR JUNE 12

PCR TESTS	RAPID TESTS	CONFIRMED CASES	DEATHS	RECOVERIES	NEW CASES
23 537	34 061	343	4	51	11

renders it difficult to differentiate them from card carrying members of the opposition," Kazembe said.

The list of Kazembe's detractors includes everyone from diplomats, former ZANU PF officials and, bizarrely, even two eccentric preachers. The latter two could barely believe their luck at being made so relevant.

The ruling party summoned Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube and RBZ governor John Mangudya to explain the economic crisis. After the meeting, Patrick Chinamasa, a former finance minister himself, said there was "an invisible hand at play fomenting regime change".

However, the truth is clear. The party is feeling the pressure. Last week, Ncube testified before Parliament's Budget and Finance Portfolio Committee, chaired by ZANU PF MP Felix Mhona. After listening to Ncube speak on the economy, a frustrated Mhona said: "You are lucky you don't have a constituency; you don't have to explain these things to people."

All this paranoia would be comical, if it wasn't so dangerous. This has always been how ZANU PF behaves when out of ideas. It starts to see enemies everywhere. And when that happens, it lashes out. On the political front, it goes after the 'detractors'. On the economic front, it goes into full control mode.

We have seen this before. When positions harden between ZANU PF and its foreign and local detractors, it is never the fighting elites that suffer. It is the economy, always.

President Emmerson Mnangagwa

REFORMS STUCK IN WHEELS OF BUREAUCRACY, ED ADMITS

President Emmerson Mnangagwa has admitted that reforms, including the privatisation of parastatals and freeing up of the economy, have been tied up in his administration's red tape.

Mnangagwa's Saturday remarks struck a markedly different tone to his Wednesday politburo address, when he sought to blame "detractors" for the country's worsening economic woes.

"Reforms, stuck in the wheels of bureaucracy, must be unleashed, catalysed and implemented. The time for action is now. As your President, I commit that we will work twice as hard, work with promise and purpose, to improve your lives, and to give your children a better future," Mnangagwa said on Saturday.

"It is time to accelerate our development. From the pains of the pandemic, we must now find new impetus in rebuilding. The liberalisation of our economy must continue in earnest. This includes the privatisation of bloated state industries which must now be expedited. Investment commitments must now be turned into tangible jobs. Our creative people must be allowed to grow and prosper."

The president's Saturday speech, framed as an update on the government's COVID-19 response, sounded like a call for a reset.

After months in which his government has been accused of regressing to Mugabe-era rights violations, Mnangagwa vowed to uphold freedoms he promised when he seized power in 2017.

Here are some highlights of Mnangagwa's June 12 COVID-19 update:

- People in the informal sector are allowed to operate, but only after they formally register. Once registered, they can resume operations and observe regulations such as wearing masks, washing or sanitising hands and social distancing.
- Churches can reopen, but only a maximum of 50 people are allowed to gather.
- The moratorium on rent payment has been lifted. Rent arrears can be paid in instalments spread over a period of six months (as directed by the existing Statutory Instrument).
- Economic reforms, such as privatisation, to be speeded up

Returning residents quarantined at the United College of Education in Bulawayo. Picture credit - CITE.ORG

NEW REPORT PAINTS QUARANTINE HORROR

Zimbabwe has seen a sharp spike in new infections at quarantine centres, and a new report could explain why.

A joint assessment of the country's 37 quarantine centres has been carried out by the World Health Organisation, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) and the Ministry of Health and Child Care.

The report shows how the centres are not observing good hygiene and social distancing, and that PPE is in short supply, and testing in a shambles.

Here are some of the key findings:

- The facilities have a total capacity of 5,790 beds. At the time of the assessment, there were a total of 1,889 occupants, which is 33% occupancy. Bulawayo had the highest occupancy at 74%, followed by Harare with 66%. Occupants were not gender mixed.

- The proportion of centres with running water at service delivery points ranged from 100% (Bulawayo, Mash Central, Mash West) to 25% (Manicaland). The national average for these was 62%. Only 60% of all the centres had soap available at the time of the assessment. Less than 50% had adequate supply of alcohol-based hand sanitiser.

- In terms of toilets, the ratio of people per facilities varies from two per toilet shank to as many as 20 per squat hole. Urinals are the most common available with even a higher ratio per urinal. "For the purposes of avoiding cross contamination especially in the advent of one being Coid-19 positive the facilities fall far short of recommended ratios", says the report.

- Residents do their own laundry, save for bed linen. Used blankets are wrapped in plastic bags awaiting off site laundry services. However, none of the laundry has been collected to date, with staff unsure as to how to deal with laundry. At some facilities, cleaners were seen doing laundry without PPE.

- Only 43% of the centres reported that they routinely clean and disinfect surfaces.

- Just 30% of the centres had provision for PPE for staff. Except for Bulawayo and Matabeleland South, which had 100% PPE provision for the staff, all other provinces had inadequate PPE.

- Temperature screening and testing of staff who developed COVID-19 symptoms was being done in only 16% of centres.

- Only 41% of QCs assessed were implementing physical distancing recommendations

- In all centres, test results come late, "if they come at all". The report says "this results in the occupants staying without knowing their Covid-19 status and prolongs their stay in the facility"

Table 1 Handwashing Facilities at Quarantine Centres Assessed

Province	No of Quarantine Centres (QC) assessed	Prop of QC with running water at all service delivery points	Prop QC with soap available	Prop QC with adequate hand sanitizers
Bulawayo	2	100%	100%	50%
Harare	4	75%	75%	50%
Manicaland	4	25%	0%	25%
Mash. Central	1	100%	100%	100%
Mash. East	8	50%	50%	38%
Mash. West	2	100%	100%	100%
Masvingo	4	75%	75%	25%
Mat. North	3	100%	100%	67%
Mat. South	2	100%	100%	100%
Midlands	7	29%	29%	29%
National	**37**	**62%**	**60%**	**46%**

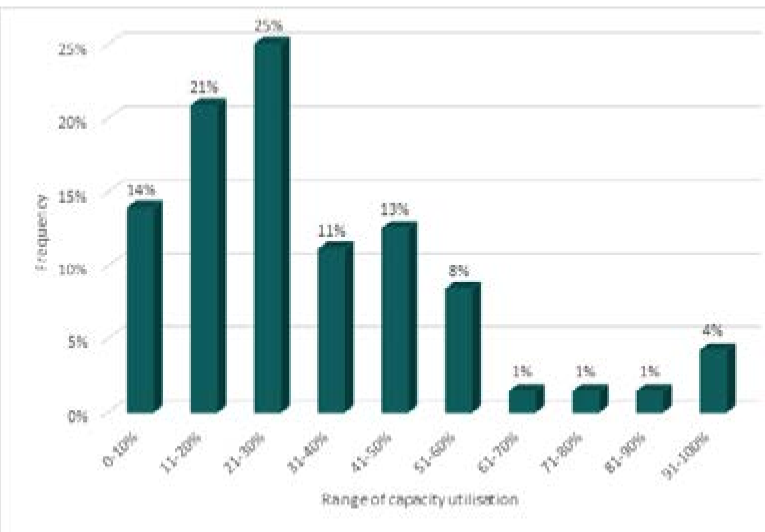
CZI: SOME FIRMS MAY NOT SURVIVE COVID-19

Some companies may not return to business after the lockdown, according to a new survey by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI). The companies that survive will lay off staff or cut pay.

The CZI surveyed 480 companies from around Zimbabwe on how they are dealing with the COVID-19 lockdown. The companies surveyed employ just over 32 000. The companies were asked how they plan to stay in business. A total of 43% said they plan "staff rationalisation"; which could include retrenchments and salary cuts.

"This will negatively affect the economy through knock-on effects on aggregate demand," the new CZI survey says.

Those workers still employed are hit by low morale and anxiety, says the survey. Apart from inflation and forex shortages, the survey says, the lockdown period has seen local companies failing to source raw materials from abroad, due to the turmoil all around the world.



"The economy has to face the reality that some companies have permanently lost some capacity while others may completely fail to resume operations."

What do the companies want from the Government? Here are some of their recommendations:

- Tax holidays for a year to release funds into operations
- Reduce the 2% tax, VAT, Corporate Tax and PAYE
- Low interest loans for working capital, guaranteed by the government
- Export incentives
- Government must support businesses in their campaign for landlords to defer rentals
- Protect industry from cheap imports
- Clothing retailers want government protection from traders selling imported wares outside their shops and factories
- A stable exchange rate regime

COVID-19 has brought a lesson, CZI says; companies need to be self-reliant on raw materials.

"Some firms have indicated that the pandemic has taught all economic agents to be self-sufficient and owing to that they want to be able to source their raw materials from the local market."

STRIVE MASIYIWA: WHICH SORT OF ENTREPRENEUR WILL SURVIVE COVID-19?

The COVID-19 pandemic will put many start-ups out of business, but there's opportunity for those that can quickly adapt to the new normal, says Strive Masiyiwa.

The African Union has recently appointed the Econet founder a special envoy to rally private sector support for Africa's COVID-19 response. He says while the environment will be tough, the task of rebuilding African healthcare itself presents opportunity for agile players.

"There are some industries now in the reshaping of this that are going to be absolute winners. Anybody who is developing digital platforms, who understands the digital environment irrespective of what industry you come from, they're going to be big winners," Masiyiwa says in an interview with IFC.

"Those who can also pivot their businesses toward a new environment, they're going to be winners. In other words, your ability to be adaptable, to understand the new environment is what makes you a winner. No matter what industry you're in."

In his new AU role, Masiyiwa has partnered Richard Branson's Virgin Orbit for the manufacture of "a very revolutionary ventilator", he says.

"Currently, we are buying ventilators at about US$15,000. This ventilator will be sold for about US$1,200. And we are going to start manufacturing 10,000 of these ventilators in South Africa."

His advice to African start-ups? It's going to get ugly, but they must push on.

"Most of them will go out of business because Africa has no ability to give them a safety net, or to strengthen their businesses. It's going to be tough for the young entrepreneurs, but we need them to be able to get up, dust off and run again."