



# PRESIDENTIAL (COVID-19) TASK FORCE BULLETIN

COVID-19 | LOCKDOWN

Issue 21 | Thursday, 30 April 2020

# 28/28

# The Last Day Of The Initial Lockdown

**T**oday marks the end of the initial 28 Days of Extreme Social Distancing. On the 31st of March 2020, His Excellency the President of Botswana Dr Mokgweetsi Masisi exercised section 17 of the Constitution and declared a state of Public Emergency.

The President also stated that while the public emergency was in place there will also be Extreme Social Distancing which commenced on the 3rd of April 2020. Batswana were advised to adhere to the gazetted guidelines which required one to have a permit in order to travel. This was all intended to take appropriate and stringent measures to address the risks posed by the virus.

### The Extension

On Monday the 27th April 2020, His Excellency President Masisi informed Batswana that Presidential Task Force advised on the national lockdown period to be extended by one week starting from 1st to 7th

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# 3,173,036

COVID-19 confirmed cases surpass the 3 Million Mark worldwide

@ Johns Hopkins University & Medicine 29/04/20

## CURRENT SITUATION IN NUMBERS

29/04/2020

Lab Tests Performed & resulted	7079
Negative Cases	7056
Positive Cases	23
Total Deaths	1
Recoveries	5
New Confirmed Cases	0

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May 2020 and a further two weeks during which the lockdown would be sequentially eased.

He said the extension of the current lockdown was to be implemented in phases. President Masisi indicated that the exit plan would be based on the success anticipated to be achieved as a country. He said the success was dependent on the cooperation and

adherence to the current lockdown rules. President Masisi further said it was important to note that a faster relaxation of rules will occur if the threat of COVID-19 becomes very low.

Although there were a few reported cases of people who violated the restrictions during lockdown, generally Botswana behaved well and followed the guidelines to the core.

To date, out of the total 23 COVID-19 positive cases reported in Botswana, there have been 5 recoveries and 1 death.

During this time a total of 7079 people were tested for COVID-19 and 7056 tested negative.

**COVID-19 Tollfree Lines**

**16649**

**0800 600 111 | 0800 600 740**

# Sub-Saharan African (SSA) economy plunges into Recession

**W**orld Bank projects that COVID-19 pandemic has set off the first recession in the Sub-Saharan Africa region in 25 years, with growth forecast at -5.1% in 2020.

The analysis estimates the pandemic could cost the region between \$37 billion and \$79 billion in terms of output losses for 2020.

This sharp economic decline is largely attributable to a sharp fall in real economic output in Angola, Nigeria and South Africa which are three of the largest economies in SSA.

While many SSA countries swiftly implemented measures to curb the spread of the outbreak, several challenges remain including fragile

health systems, high external debts and lack of fiscal policy space in which to reallocate already under pressure Government budgets.

Amid recession, Botswana economic growth is forecast at -2% owing to impact of COVID-19 pandemic. There is contraction in the mining industry due to weak global demand arising from crushed diamond trade, significant fall in tourism receipts and subdued public investment on infrastructure. DeBeers has already cut on its production locally by 21% forecast and this will weigh down heavily on mining contribution to GDP in 2020. Tourism sector is projected to decline by over 20% according to BTO. The impact of recession is expected to be felt beyond 2020 into 2021 where

the economy is projected to grow by 3.8% which is below the 2010 to 2019 average. It is also projected that public investment on infrastructure will continue to feel the choke and will have negative effect of the construction sector: the 2020/2021 budget will experience significant cuts with shifts towards immediate responses and increased spending in the health and social welfare programmes.

While Government's policy responses and economic stimuli will not prevent a recession, it will serve as cushion in form of tax concessions, wage subsidies and improved social safety nets and serve to lessen the dire effects.

Sources: BTO, World Bank, IMF and Fitch Solutions

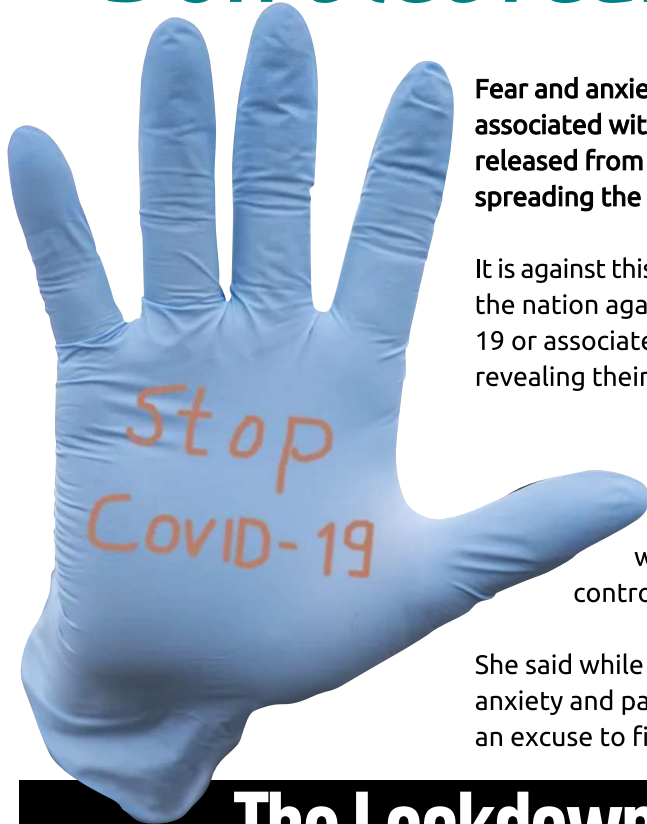
*The impact of recession is expected to be felt beyond 2020 into 2021 where the economy is projected to grow by 3.8%*

**THE NATIONAL EMERGENCY OPERATION CENTRE**

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The NEOC is located on the 4th floor at the Ministry of Defence Justice and Security.

# 'Don't let fear turn into stigma'



Fear and anxiety about COVID-19 can lead to social stigma towards those associated with the disease. Stigma can also occur after a person has been released from quarantine even though they are not considered a risk for spreading the virus to others.

It is against this backdrop that the Presidential (COVID-19) Task Force cautions the nation against stigmatising people who have been infected with COVID-19 or associated with as this might instil fear and discourage them from revealing their contacts, resulting in increased risk of the spread of the virus.

As the contact tracing exercise intensifies, National coordinator-Communications Ms Pearl Ramokoka noted an interview that if critical information is concealed, the virus will be transmitted without being detected, making it difficult the government to control and contain the spread of the virus.

She said while it was understandable for the public to experience confusion, anxiety and panic since COVID-19 is a new disease, this must not be used as an excuse to find fault or victimise those infected.

## The Lockdown Extended in Phases

### Phase I

The current lockdown conditions period will be extend by one week, from **May 1st to May 7th, 2020**. During this period, The Government will also develop and finalize regulations for a phased lifting of lockdown rules in low risk sectors.

### Phase II

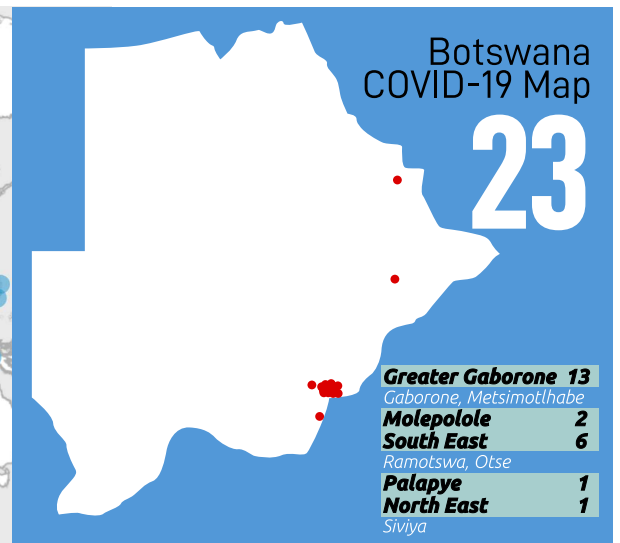
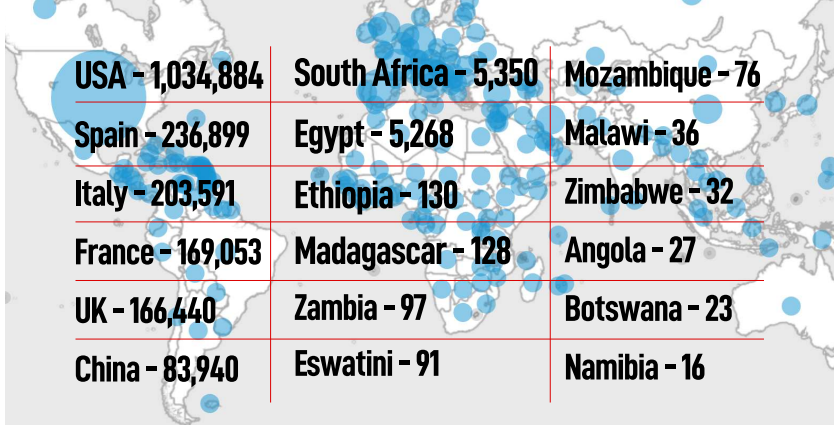
Starting from **May 8th to May 14th**, Government, will lift in a phased manner, some lockdown rules while at the same time introducing additional plans for further lifting of the remaining lockdown rules.

### Phase III

From **May 15th to May 22nd**, which will be the final week of the lockdown extension, Government will lift the remaining rules from the original lockdown rules implemented on March 30th, 2020.

@ Johns Hopkins University & Medicine 29/04/20

## COVID-19 Confirmed Cases



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## Supermarkets adapt during COVID-19

**H**ome delivery businesses have gained momentum in Botswana as supermarkets adapt to changing patterns brought by COVID-19. This came after Government encouraged social distancing to avoid the spread of the COVID-19.

Supermarkets like Choppies, Spar and Sefalana are now encouraging customers to order their groceries from the comfort of their home through provision of home deliveries.

As the public embraced home deliveries, they also created an opportunity for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to look into the digital world in provision of related services.

Among them is MyFoodness, a mobile commerce food & grocery ordering and delivery app, founded by a female Motswana in 2018. The CEO and founder of MyFoodness Ms Boi Kgathi Rasmussen said her company was servicing hundreds of users daily.

Users simply order food/groceries online, pay digitally and have their goods delivered through contactless service.

Despite having been serving residents of Gaborone long before COVID-19 pandemic, she said the digital platform and service has taken off and become even essential.

MyFoodness has trained all their staff to do 'contactless delivery', where they leave food/groceries at the doorstep and step back 1.5 meters while the customers retrieve their order. Users can order from SPAR G-West, as well as from various restaurants on the app.

## SEVERE SHORTAGE OF BLOOD IN NORTHERN BOTSWANA



The public is encouraged to donate blood to assist patients whose life depends on blood and blood by-products.

Nyangabgwe Referral Hospital Senior Public Relations Officer Ms Boikobo Hengari told the bulletin in an interview that there was a severe shortage of blood and blood by-products in northern Botswana.

She said patients especially those who have cancer, trauma injuries and other life threatening conditions depend on blood availability.

Ms Hengari observed that the Blood Bank was experiencing low blood donations ever since the movement restrictions due to COVID-19 came into effect. She noted that this was also worsened by closure of schools which are the main donors at the National

Blood Transfusion Services (NBTS). The NBTS currently have a one-day supply for all blood groups, therefore the general public is highly encouraged to call 2412707 for possible arrangement of blood donation.

### Community Use Of Face Masks - Africa CDC

#### Background

There is increasing evidence that persons with asymptomatic, pre-symptomatic or early stages of infection can contribute to the community transmission of COVID-19. A face mask will help reduce the spread of infection in the community by minimizing the shedding of respiratory droplets from infected persons who may not even know they are infected and before they become symptomatic.

#### Types of masks



**Medical masks<sup>2</sup>** should be reserved for health care workers and those providing care to COVID-19 patients at home. The use of medical masks can also prevent the spread of respiratory droplets from an infected person to other people and limits potential contamination of the environment by droplets.



**Non-medical masks** (cloth masks) are various forms of self-made masks or face covers made of cloth or other textiles. They are not standardized and are not intended for use in healthcare settings, by healthcare professionals or for home care of cases of COVID-19.

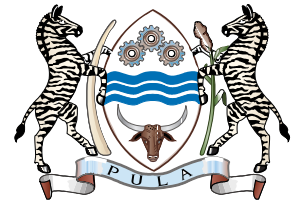


**A respirator<sup>3</sup>** is designed to protect healthcare workers from exposure to infectious agents during aerosol-generating procedures. Respirators with valves do not prevent the release of exhaled infectious particles from the wearer into the environment, hence cannot be used for source control (e.g. asking COVID-19 patients or suspects to wear facemasks).

#### EDITORIAL TEAM

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Republic of Botswana

# APPLY ONLINE

[www.gov.bw](http://www.gov.bw)

## COVID-19 E-PERMIT APPLICATION SYSTEM

### Applying for Permits for Exceptional Movement of Persons during the State of Public Emergency

#### Stage 1 | Registration

- I. Log on to [www.gov.bw](http://www.gov.bw)
- II. Applicant's Details A (Personal details)
- III. Contact details of 2 household members  
(Fill out your contact details)

#### Stage 2

- I. Click on Category of Permit (Fill appropriate Part)
- II. Essential Services (State)
- III. Transport of Essential Goods
- IV. Special Permit (Select reason )

#### Stage 3

- I. Notification by sms if Approved
- II. Notification by sms if pending
- III. Notification by sms if not approved

**-NB APPLY THE NEXT DAY IF NOT APPROVED**

#### Please Note

**I. The best Permit is to stay home and save lives**

#### Contact

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