



**GOVERNMENT OF MALAWI
PRESS STATEMENT**

COVID-19 SITUATION UPDATE AS OF 13TH JANUARY 2021

In the past 24 hours, Malawi has registered 591 new COVID-19 cases, 12 new recoveries, and 21 new deaths. Of the new cases, 579 of the new cases are locally transmitted infections: 152 from Lilongwe, 149 from Blantyre, 88 from Mzimba North, 58 from Zomba, 13 from Mangochi, 12 each from Dowa and Nkhatakota, 11 from Mwanza, eight each Karonga, Mchinji, Mulanje and Neno, six from Dedza, five from Rumphi, four each from Nsanje, Chitipa, Kasungu, Machinga, Nkhata Bay, and Phalombe, three each from Chikwawa, Ntcheu, Thyolo and Salima, two each from Balaka, and Ntchisi, and one from Chiradzulu districts while 12 cases are imported infections: eight from Blantyre, and one each from Zomba, Nkhatakota, Nsanje, and Thyolo districts. In yesterday's report, six new cases from Mchinji were erroneously not included in the narrative of the press statement but were already included in the cumulative number of cases registered. Seven of the new deaths are from Blantyre, four from Lilongwe, three from Chikwawa, two from Mulanje, and one each from Mzimba North, Karonga, Thyolo, Rumphi, and Zomba districts. Our hearts go out to families that have lost loved ones due to COVID-19. May you find peace, hope and love during this difficult times. May the departed souls rest in peace.

Cumulatively, Malawi has recorded 9,991 cases including 275 deaths (Case Fatality Rate is at 2.75%). Of these cases, 1,844 are imported infections and 8,147 are locally transmitted. Cumulatively, 5,852 cases have now recovered, 134 were lost to follow-up, and 76 are still being investigated to ascertain their outcome. This brings the total number of active cases to 3,642. **Of the active cases 138 are admitted:** 60 in Blantyre at Queen Elizabeth Central Hospital, 37 in Lilongwe, seven in Mzimba North, four each in Zomba, Karonga and Mzimba South, three each in Rumphi, Kasungu, Dedza, and Nkhatakota, two each in Mulanje, Mchinji, and Chikwawa, and one each in Dowa, Chitipa, Balaka, and Thyolo districts. The average age of the cases is 35 years, the youngest case being aged two weeks, the oldest being 98 years old and 67.3% are male. On testing, in the past 24 hours, 1,940 COVID-19 tests were conducted, 620 of the new tests were through SARS-COV-2 Antigen Rapid Diagnostic test while the rest were through RT-PCR bring a positivity rate of 30.4% and cumulatively, 100,801 tests, have been conducted in the country so far.

Today is another sad day for our country as we have recorded a highest numbers of confirmed cases, admissions and deaths within 24 hours at 591, 138 and 21 respectively. These are the highest numbers ever recorded in each of these categories in our country

since the first COVID-19 cases was recorded on 2nd April 2020. Once again this reminds us that we are at war, the COVID-19 war. Everyone is at risk of getting infected and everyone is affected with this disease. During this war we have observed that our frontline soldiers, our health workers and other frontline staff are also getting infected and sadly we are losing some to the pandemic. It is a war that needs everyone in our country to be involved, we need a collective fight in order save our frontliners, to save ourselves, our loved ones, families and friends. It is a time for all of us to join this fight and stop the spread of COVID-19 disease in our country and save more lives. The time to act is now.

As we are observing an increased local transmission in our country, there is need to focus our attention on stopping the community transmission by limiting the human to human transmission of COVID-19. I would like to ask each one of us to do self - reflection as more people are getting infected daily. Our lives have been disrupted greatly due to this disease and the faster will deal with COVID-19 the better. This is the time for us to seriously consider to re-strategize our day to day lives and only make decisions that help to reduce the spread of the virus in our midst. We all need to treat everyone that you meet as a potential carrier of the virus and we need to strictly follow all the preventive measures wholesomely. We should follow preventive measure even in our homes. It is also my appeal to those that been confirmed COVID-19 positive and contacts of these confirmed cases should strictly follow isolation and quarantine rules to stop the further spread of the virus to the family members, work mates and the community at large.

Lastly, there are disturbing reports in some schools where it is alleged that pupils are running away from COVID-19 vaccinators. Let me inform the public that, as a country we currently do have don't have COVID-19 vaccine and plans are under way to have the vaccine in the next few months. We will share more details on the COVID-19 vaccine to the public in due course. In the meantime, I would like to urge the public to desist from sharing fake news and misinformation as this is creating unnecessary tension and anxiety among the public hence this may put lives of health workers, responders and students at risk of injuries and death.

Watch your distance! Wash your hands! Wear your mask! Seek for care early upon development of symptoms of COVID-19.



Dr John Phuka
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