MOZAMBIQUE News reports & clippings

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Also in this issue:

Cabo Delgado, Covid-19

Members of parliament earn 42 to 77 times the minimum wage

High level salaries in Mozambique are obscure because of the various perks and extra payments. O *Pais - Economico* (17 Apr) actually worked out the salary details for members of parliament (AR, Assembleia da República), and their basic salary is less than half their actual earnings. Basic salary and various perks increase with responsibility, such as extra for being a commission member, with the highest salaries going to vice presidents and heads of party benches. Members of parliament earn a basic salary, plus a 75% bonus at the end of their five year term (even if they are re-elected), plus a payment for actually attending sessions, plus a housing allowance. They also receive money for expenses, particularly visiting their constituencies.

An ordinary member of parliament earns \$33,357 per year plus \$6,251 in constituency expenses; at the top the salary is \$52,690 plus \$9,313 expenses.

Salary and allowances for members of parliament (AR), per year	Ordinary member 000 MT		Vice President, party head 000 MT		Ordinary member of parliament USD - \$		Vice President, party head USD - \$	
Basic salary	979		1608		14,615		24,000	
Attending sessions*	175		175		2,612		2,612	
Deferred salary**	734		1206		10,961		18,000	
House rent	294		482		4,384		7,200	
Water & electricity	22		28		328		421	
House servants	31		31		457		457	
Total income		2235		3530		33,357		52,690
Expenses	59		264		878		3,940	
visits to constituency	360		360		5,373		5,373	
Total expenses		419		624		6,251		9,313
Total		2654		4154		39,608		62,003

^{* =} Attendance allowance is MT 1000 per day for ordinary sessions for 175 days (number above) plus MT 9000 per day for special sessions (not included above)

^{** =} at the end of each 5-year term, every member of parliament receives a deferred bonus of 75% of their basic salary for those five years

MT 67 = \$1

Is this a high salary? Senior people in local non-government organizations funded by donors earn much more than that. Minimum wages are set by sector, and an ordinary member of parliament earns 15 times the minimum wage of a bank worker and 42 times the minimum wage of a farm worker or civil servant (or 50 times if constituency expenses are included, which some will treat as part of income). For an AR vice president or party head it is 23 times the bank worker minimum, 67 times a farm worker, and 77 times a farm worker if expenses are included.

A full time farm worker earns \$786 per year, but most earn much less as they only work seasonally; and the informal day rate is half the official minimum wage. The median cash income for rural families (the majority of Mozambicans) is about \$100 per year. So a member of parliament earns 400 to 600 times as much as a peasant family, but less than some others in the Maputo middle class.

Minimum wage per year compared to income of member of parliament (MP)			Salary of member of parliament (MP) and vice president (VP) as multiple of minimum wage	
Minimum wage	000 MT	\$	MP	VP
Public sector	54	800	42	66
Agriculture	53	786	42	67
Banking	153	2285	15	23
Median rural family cash income	7	100	415	620

There appears to be a substantial increase in salaries, although it is hard to calculate as there has not been published a similar list of all the benefits. But members of parliament have agreed to give 3 days of their basic war to the anti-Covid-19 campaign - \$55 to \$90. By contrast, the mayor of Chimoio, Joao Ferreira, has taken a 50% wage cut.

Minimum wage negotiations have been halted by Labour Minister Margarida Talapa because of Covid-19 and the State of Emergency. Talks had started on 18 March and minimum wages are traditionally back-dated to 1 April, but this will apparently not happen this year. The chair of the Confederation of Mozambican Business Associations (CTA), Agostinho Vuma, said the impact of Covid-19 on businesses has been enormous, with costs to Mozambican businesses reaching \$375 mn. Talapa said the Labour Ministry has received notifications that 300 companies, employing 10,395 workers, have suspended or dismissed some workers. Minimum wages are set by sector, with 12 different minimums. On 13 April Minister of State Administration, Ana Comoana, called for a public sector wage freeze. The main union federation, the OTM, has calculated that the a basic basket of goods and services for an average family would cost \$3600 per year - more than four time the current public sector minimum wage.

Interest rates have been cut by 1.5% by the Bank of Mozambique. Thus the Interbank Money Market Rate (MIMO), used by the central bank for its interventions on the interbank money market to regulate liquidity, falls from 12.75% to 11.25%. The Standing Lending Facility (the interest rate paid by the commercial banks to the central bank for money borrowed on the Interbank Money Market) falls from 15.75% to 14.25%, while the Standing Deposit Facility (the rate paid by the central bank to the commercial banks on money they deposit with it) falls from 9.75% to 8.25%.

'Renamo Junta' attacks 'Chinese' timber camp

In Mozambique's second small war, 'Renamo Military Junta' leader Mariano Nhongo claimed responsibility for a 6 April attack on the camp of a timber company in Dombe, Manica, about 10 km from the N1 north-south road. A Vietnamese worker at the camp had his head cut off. Seven lorries used to carry timber and two bulldozers were burned. Workers in the camp said the attack was

carried out by seven armed men, two with *catanas* (machetes); no shots were fired. The attackers said the wanted money and food. (*Savana* 10 Apr)

The workers said the attackers blamed Renamo head: "We are suffering here in the bush because of Ossufo Momade. We also want a big belly." In a statement to the press on 7 April, Nhongo said he was trying to stop the exploitation of Mozambique forests and mines without benefit to local people. "All the timber is going to China. To do what?", he asked. "This country does not belong to the Chinese". Nhongo does not accept Momade as president of Renamo, and says his attacks will continue until the government negotiates with him and not Momade. (AIM 8 Apr)

Nhongo said on 2 April that Renamo and the government have agreed that Renamo will send some of its armed militia to Cabo Delgado to fight insurgents - this appears not to be true.

Three Junta attacks on buses on 2 and 3 April on the N1 near the bridge over the Pungue river killed one person and injured nine others. (Lusa 2, 3 Apr)

Meanwhile, President Filipe Nyusi and Renamo head Ossufo Momade, both wearing masks, met in Maputo on Thursday (16 April) and expressed their willingness to resume the demobilisation and disarming of the Renamo militia and the reintegration into the military, police and civilian society of Renamo fighters. But they did not mention any date for the resumption of the disarming and demobilisation of the Renamo forces, or how many other Renamo members will be recruited into the defence and security forces. Under the peace agreement, all Renamo military bases should have been dismantled by 21 August, but government declined to train more than 10 potential police. The widespread misconduct of the election also blocked the small amount of power sharing that had been the basis for the agreement.

Trying not to blame police for Matavel murder

The trial of the two arrested members of the police death squad who killed Anastácio Matavel on 7 October 2019 will take place in the second week of May, but concern is being raised about judicial decisions already taken which seem aimed at shielding the police from responsibility. Matavel was head of Fórum das Organizações Não-Governamentais de Gaza (FONGA) and coordinator for Gaza civil society election observation. A week before the election his car was fired on in a drive-by shooting, but the assailants were then involved in a crash which killed two of them and injured two others, which made it impossible to conceal their identity, The fifth member of the team escaped and is believed to be hiding in South Africa.

Lawyers for Matavel's family have asked the judge to order the mobile telephone companies to provide records of the calls on 5-7 October by those involved, which they believe will show direct linvolvement to the police. But the judge has refused. Matavel's family demanded compensation from the state of about \$600,000, but this has been rejected by the public prosecutor's office on the grounds that the police who killed Matavel were not acting for the state. (AFP, CDD, Moz24h)

Fuminho sent to Brazil

At 1.30 am this morning, cocaine baron Fuminho was put on a Brazilian air force plane and sent back to Brazil, reports *Carta de Moçambique*. His rapid expulsion from Mozambique will make it much easier to keep secret the identities of his protectors in Mozambique.

New man to deal with donors

Omar Mithá, chair of the National Hydrocarbon Company (ENH) for five years until he was dismissed in January, has been named as economic advisor to president Filipe Nyusi. But it his swearing in on 15 April President Nyusi gave him a more fraught role: "help to improve relations between the government and multi-lateral agencies and bilateral agencies with projects in specific

programmes." And he was also given the task of "constructing a vision of developing adequate macro-economic policies and producing recommendations about their implementation." Finally he was given the job "increasing dialog with the Prime Minister and Minister of Economy and Finance". Mithá rose through the Millennium BIM bank before taking office in 2015 as Deputy Minister of Industry and Commerce, a post he held for a few months before being appointed ENH chairman. (O Pais 16 Apr)

Lúcia do Amaral has been named the new head of the audit court (Administrative Tribunal, Tribunal Administrativo, TA). At her swearing him, President Nyusi said "we take this opportunity to once again warn of the urgent need for due procedural speed" in approving appointments, promotions, credits and state contracts, which can only proceed after TA approval is granted.

Architect Marla Cristina Paulo Dava is named Director of the Office of the Wife of the President. The priority of the office should be social programmes, but with "priorities aligned with the principal instruments of government which will improve the performance of your team and give more credibility to your actions and your institution."

Meanwhile Maria Isaltina Lucas, the finance ministry national budget director who signed the illegal government guarantees on some of the \$2bn secret loans in 2013-4, has been appointed as an adviser to Prime Minister Carlos Agostinho do Rosário. In March 2016, Isaltina was promoted to deputy finance minister, a month before the true extent of the 'hidden debts' was revealed. As the person who knew the most about the details of the secret loans, she played a role in negotiations with the IMF. She was finally dismissed as vice-minister by Nyusi on 7 February 2019. Lucas earned \$95,000 a year as a non-executive director of Ematum, paid out of the proceeds of a loan arranged by Credit Suisse that she helped secure by approving the sovereign guarantee. She was also accused in a New York court last year of having personally received \$2.5 mn from Privinvest for her work on the deals. In the correspondence she is identified by the code name "three kisses". In January 2019, she was named on a list of 17 Mozambicans whom the Tribunal Administrativo wanted to prosecute for their role in the hidden debts, but has never been charged. (*Savana* 10 Apr; Zitamar, CDD 6 Apr)

Comment: Do Nyusi's comments point to him finally recognising serious problems within his own administration, including a general lack of vision, poor relations within his own government, notorious slowness in the TA, and agencies such as the First Lady's Office lacking credibility?

Isaltina is another matter; clearly she could not stay as a vice minister when the Finance Ministry was reopening negotiations with the IMF. But her appointment as an "advisor" shows the need to keep her and her detailed knowledge inside the Nyusi camp, where her knowledge about the role of former President Armando Guebuza and his sons is a key weapon in checking the Guebuza faction in Frelimo, and having her inside reduces the likelihood of leaks about any Nyusi family role in the secret loans. *jh*

---- Cabo Delgado ----

Palma journalist still missing

Palma community radio journalist Ibraimo Mbaruco is still missing after he was kidnapped, apparently by military, on 7 April. Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and other organisations and Mozambican journalists have issued statements.

Also on 14 April, police in Pemba detained Hizidine Acha, a reporter for O País newspaper and the STV television station, forcing him to delete images of police beating and whipping people in the Paquetiquete neighbourhood of the city. Spokesperson Guta told Zitamar that the situation had been a misunderstanding and that the police were not beating or whipping people. (Zitamar 15 Apr) But the police did not realise that others were also filming the incident. The photo shows Acha

in the white shorts on the left, and a soldier with his arms raised beating the man on the ground. If is much clearer in the video: https://bit.ly/Paquitequete



There is a climate of tension in both Palma and Pemba, which both have unofficial 19h00 curfews. After the occupation by insurgents of Mocimboa da Praia, Palma fears it may be next, and after the occupation of Quissanga, Pemba fears it may be next.

The fear is contagious. In Palma on Wednesday (15 April) a bus rushing to take workers to the Total camp at Afungi overtook another vehicle just as it passed a military armoured car. The soldiers shot at the bus, shooting out all the windows, but not injuring any of the occupants. (*Carta de Moçambique* 17 Apr)

'Lessons from Africa: Military Intervention Fails to Counter Terrorism'

"Evidence from Africa makes it clear that military solutions do not work, and prescriptions imposed from above and outside often fail. ... There will be no peace if underlying grievances aren't addressed, militaries victimize local populations, and states fail to provide basic services," writes Elizabeth Schmidt in the Institute for Policy Studies journal *Foreign Policy in Focus* (26 March). The article looks at US policy and actions in West Africa; the implications for Mozambique are distilled in the title: "Lessons from Africa: Military Intervention Fails to Counter Terrorism".

"Contrary to common misconceptions, religion and ethnicity are not the root causes of African conflicts. Rather, the sources are deep structural inequalities - poverty, underdevelopment, and political repression," Schmidt continues. "Local governments backed by the United States and its allies rarely address the structural problems that triggered the conflicts. As a result, local populations, neglected by their governments, have turned to extremist groups for income, basic services, and protection. ... What have we learned? There will be no peace if underlying

grievances are not addressed." https://fpif.org/lessons-from-africa-military-intervention-fails-to-counter-terrorism/

Russian mercenaries 'totally underestimated' insurgents

The Russian Wagner group mercenaries "totally underestimated the ability of a ragged bunch of bush fighters to counter its every move. The jihadi force was better mobilised and a lot better focused than the opposition. Also, it is clear that the jihadis' intelligence was superior, as every thrust made by the mercenaries and their government allies was met with the kind of hard-line bush tactics that cost lives. Additionally, the region is largely Muslim, with the insurgents enjoying the support – most of it clandestine – of the local population." This is the view of an article in *AirForces Monthly* (May 2020), by South African military journalist Al J Venter. https://bit.ly/Venter-Wagner

He argues that Wagner was not prepared for Mozambique's harsh environment with bad weather and communication and dense jungle, and terrain very different from Syria and Libya where they had been fighting before. "The main problem facing the mercenary force was that it was totally unfamiliar with what became a series of tough encounters against an enemy thoroughly familiar with conditions 'in its own backyard'." The insurgents were able to lay ambushes on roads in culverts and water crossings, and the mercenaries were not ready to deal with lions and crocodiles. Venter cites a former Rhodesian special forces operative John Gartner, whose company OAM International had also tendered for the contract, to say "the Russians were totally 'our of their depth' in fighting jihadis, 'despite being completely air dominant'."

Venter is author of *Guerrilla Wars in Africa – Lisbon's Campaigns in Angola, Mozambique and Portuguese Guinea*, and is a bit gung ho, writing of the insurgents "Somali roots". He claims that when Wagner arrived, "IS quickly reinforced its units in Mozambique by rushing in 'volunteers' from other East African countries, notably Somali." There is no evidence for either claim of a serious Somali role, but it is a good look at the Russian failure. Will South African Lionel Dyke and his helicopters do any better?

---- Covid-19 -----

35 Covid-19 cases so far

The number of Covid-19 cases detected in Mozambique has risen to 35, the Ministry of Health said Friday 17 April; there have been no deaths. All are related to two hot spots, the Afungi peninsula construction camp of the French gas company Total, and Maputo. So far, 898 people have been tested, and the Ministry is concentrating on testing contacts of people who have Covid-19.

Borders were closed and a Covid-19 state of emergency came into effect on 1 April. Schools were closed and regulations have been added to try to impose social distancing. South Africa, with over 3000 cases and 50 deaths, has imposed a strict lockdown. Mozambique appears to be following the successful Hong Kong and German model of early intervention, persuasion, and contact tracing and testing. That depends on the disease not having spread far into the community without being reported (as happened initially in South Africa); despite the lack of a formal reporting system, there seem to have been no reports so far from health units in Mozambique of people with Covid-19 symptoms.

The best measure of Covid-19 is deaths per million population. South Africa is still under 1 death per million. In Europe early intervening countries include Greece (11 deaths per million population), Denmark (60) and Portugal (67). Countries with high death rates include Spain (429 per million population), Italy (384), the UK (228) and Netherlands (210); some countries like the UK only report Covid-19 deaths in hospital, so the real number is substantially higher.

Mozambique has not imposed a full lockdown and is using a mix of persuasion and regulation. The problem is that so many people in this very poor country live from day to day, earning enough each day to buy food. Hunger is a more present threat than Covid-19. Initial cases have come from people who brought the disease from abroad or who have full time employment with Total. And these somewhat better off people are being more careful about social distancing - and perhaps it is possible to keep these people from spreading the disease to the rest of the population.

After the rapid approval of the government's five year plan on Thursday (18 Apr), parliament suspended its sittings due to Covid-19 and the state of emergency. It had already moved from the parliament chamber to the larger Chissano Conference Centre so the members of parliament could sit further apart.

The government tried to impose restrictions on public transport, including buses and mini-buses (chapas) carrying only one-third the official number of passengers, and a ban on bicycle taxis and 3-wheel motorcycle taxis. But there was a huge backlash. In Quelimane, bicycle taxis, which are ordinary bicycles with a second seat welded to the rack on the back, are the only form of public transport. So government backed down and allowed bicycle taxis and chapas with people only seated and not crush-loaded - but only if driver and passengers wear masks.

Police on Friday seized 77 driving licences from bus and minibus drivers in Maputo, who were not wearing face masks. The spokesperson for the Maputo City police, Leonel Muchina, said the seizure of the driving licences was "a measure of persuasion". The driving licences will be returned, he said, as soon as the drivers show up at a police station wearing masks. Muchina added that the police fined six drivers for carrying more people than their vehicles are licensed for. "If the vehicle only has 15 seats, then it should only carry 15 passengers", he said. (AIM 18 Apr)

Two models of what could happen

Ecuador's biggest city, **Guayaquil**, is close to the equator with temperatures rising to 30 degrees all year round - a perfect test of whether tropical countries are more resistant to Covid-19. Guayaquil has a population of 3 mn, just a bit larger than Maputo-Matola. Guayaquil is one of the worst-hit places in Latin America in the Covid-19 pandemic. Its health service is overwhelmed and hundreds of bodies have been left unburied, sometimes lying in the street. The official charged with collecting bodies in Guayaquil, Jorge Wadad, said in the first two weeks of April almost 6,000 more deaths had been registered than the average for this time of year. (BBC 17 Apr) https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-latin-america-52329500

Testing and tracing are the lessons from **Hong Kong** on stopping Covid-19 without a lockdown. Hong Kong has a population of 7.5 mn, and it one of the most densely populated cities in the world. It has had just 715 confirmed case and only four deaths. Sarah Boseley, health editor of the *Guardian*, said this was because Hong Kong "took the route that the World Health Organization recommends and embarked on a rigorous programme of testing everyone with symptoms." By early March, they were testing 1000 people a day. Schools were closed, but there was no formal lockdown; nevertheless, most people began wearing masks and avoiding crowded places. (London *Guardian* 18 Apr) https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/apr/17/test-trace-lessons-hong-kong-avoiding-coronavirus-lockdown citing a 17 April paper in the eminent journal *the Lancet* https://www.thelancet.com/journals/lanpub/article/PIIS2468-2667(20)30090-6/fulltext

White elephant airport delayed

Chongoene airport, Gaza, being built by China Aviation International Construction and Investment Co Ltd ,will be six months late due to Covid-19. Work continues, but at a slow pace. The airport has little prospect of generating enough traffic, and is entirely a political gesture - by President Filipe Nyusi to give an airport to the Frelimo heartland of Gaza, and by the Chinese to support Nyusi.

Because of Covid-19 many of the 42 Chinese workers involved in the construction of the terminals, car parks, access road and landscaping did not return after Chinese New Year. The company has 146 Mozambican workers. Covid-19 has also delayed the delivery of equipment and materials from China. Construction began in October 2018 and the airport was to be handed to the government of China on 30 March 2021, which, in turn, would hand it over to the Mozambique government in May 2021. This is now delayed by six months.

Could Covid-19 save the pangolin?

The pangolin is an endangered species frequently illegally hunted in Mozambique for sale to China and Vietnam. They look like scaly anteaters and feed on ants and termites, but in fact are the only mammal covered in scales. Their scales are used in traditional medicines and they are said to be the world's most trafficked mammal. Up to 1 million pangolins per year are exported illegally from Africa. But Covid-19 has led China to enforce a ban on the import of pangolins and their scales.

Coronaviruses in humans sometimes come from bats. But bat viruses do not bind to human cells, so the virus first has to be taken by another animal host which does have coronaviruses that bind to human cells. Sars passed from bats through civits (a cat-like animal) on to humans, while Mers appears to have passed from bats through camels to humans. Initial studies suggest that Covid-19 may have passed from bats to pangolins to humans. Thus the ban, which could end the illegal trade in pangolins in Mozambique. (@Verdade 16 Feb, London Observer 19 Apr: https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/apr/18/covid-19-a-blessing-for-pangolins)

Banking news

Portuguese bank accused of 'colonial thinking': Caixa Geral de Depósitos (CGD), the Portuguese state bank, owns the majority of BCI (Banco Comercial e de Investimentos), one of the four banks which dominate the sector in Mozambique. Despite being a long established bank, CGD has appointed only three Mozambicans to its 13-member BCI administrative council, and all are white, which is highly unusual in the Mozambican banking sector. Carta da Moçambique (14 April) points out that the administrative council decides on promotions and remuneration. Unlike South Africa, race has usually been a low key issue in Mozambique, and Carta notes that it is "inconceivable" to have only white men at the top. CGD is still trapped in "colonial thinking", says Carta.

Portuguese bank BCP is suing Mozambique over the \$2 bn secret debt. BCP (Banco Comercial Português) owns BIM in Mozambique, which lent \$100 mn to MAM as part of a VTB London branch syndicated loan (itself part of the Credit Suisse-led \$2 bn secret loan package). On 8 April BCP filed its court action in the English High Court against the government of Mozambique and MAM. (Law360, Reuters)

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Background reading

Special reports

Mozambique heroin transit trade

English - LSE - http://bit.ly/Moz-heroin

Portuguese - Pt - CIP - http://bit.ly/HeroinaPT

Gas for development?

Gas_for_development_or just_for_money?_2015 <u>bit.ly/MozGasEng</u> Gás_para_desenvolvimento_ou_apenas_dinheiro?_2015 <u>bit.ly/MozGasPt</u> Social protection report - 2017 Mozambique - http://bit.ly/MozSocPro Special report on four poverty surveys: bit.ly/MozPoverty

2018 Constitution - http://bit.ly/2KF588T

Minimum wage and exchange rates 1996-2018 -- http://bit.ly/MinWage18

\$2bn secret debt - in English

Kroll - Full report on \$2bn debt - http://bit.ly/Kroll-Moz-full

Kroll report summary - http://bit.ly/Kroll-sum

Key points of Mozambique parliament report - Nov 2016 - http://bit.ly/MozAR-debt-En

Following the donor-designed path to Mozambique's \$2.2 bn debt - http://bit.ly/3WQ-hanlon

In Portuguese:

Parliamentary Report on the Secret Debt (complete) bit.ly/MozAR-debt

Election study collaboration: We have detailed election data from 1999 through 2014 and are inviting scholars to use this data collaboratively. http://bit.ly/MozElData Election newsletters are on http://bit.ly/2H066Kg

Eight books by Joseph Hanlon can be downloaded, free: http://bit.ly/Hanlon-books

Bangladesh confronts climate change (2016)

Chickens and beer: A recipe for agricultural growth in Mozambique (2014)

Há Mais Bicicletas – mas há desenvolvimento? (2008) Moçambique e as grandes cheias de 2000 (2001)

Paz Sem Beneficio: Como o FMI Bloqueia a Reconstrução (1997) Peace Without Profit: How the IMF Blocks Rebuilding (1996)

Mozambique: Who Calls the Shots (1991) Mozambique: The Revolution Under Fire (1984)

Two more will be available shortly to download:

Apartheid's 2nd Front (1986)

Mozambique and the Great Flood of 2000

These are still available for sale:

Galinhas e cerveja: uma receita para o crescimento (2014) (free in English)

Zimbabwe takes back its land (2013)

Just Give Money to the Poor: The Development Revolution from the Global South (2010)

Do bicycles equal development in Mozambique? (2008) (free in Portuguese)

Beggar Your Neighbours: Apartheid Power in Southern Africa (1986)

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Mozambique media websites, Portuguese:

Notícias: www.jornalnoticias.co.mz

O País: www.opais.co.mz

@Verdade: http://www.verdade.co.mz

Carlos Serra Diário de um sociologo: http://oficinadesociologia.blogspot.com

Mozambique media websites, English:

Club of Mozambique: http://clubofmozambique.com/

Zitamar: http://zitamar.com/

Macauhub English: http://www.macauhub.com.mo/en/ AIM Reports: www.poptel.org.uk/mozambique-news

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