

## Prime Minister spearheading national petitions for coping with CORONAVIRUS

- \* The number of patients reached 284, requiring further attention
- \* Requests religious leaders to ensure that religious gatherings are reduced
- \* Rebukes food prices, especially sugar

Prime Minister Kassim Majali has said that until yesterday (April 21, 2020) a total of 284 patients have been diagnosed with corona virus (Covid-19) of which 256 patients are progressing well, seven are in special care, 11 have survived and 10 have died.

He made the statement today (Wednesday, April 22, 2020) while addressing various religious leaders who participated in the intercession of the National Conference on Coughing Disease (COVID-19) at Karimjee Areas, Dar es Salaam.

He said a total of 2,815 people who were close to the patients had been monitored for their health while among them, 1,733 people were infected and 12 people were infected (they are on the list of 284 people).

"The World Health Organization estimates that by the end of April, 2020 our country will have 524,716 patients but we thank God that we have not yet reached this goal."

Regarding the situation in the country, the Prime Minister said the City of Dar es Saalam and the island of Zanzibar, are leading the infection and demanded more precautions. "The city of Dar es Salaam is the most contagious so I urge the public if you have nothing to do, you have no reason to wander and businessmen do not have to come to Kariakoo, you can do business in your area," he stressed.

"It is time for everyone to continue taking precautions to avoid infection. Avoid unnecessary crowding, you have no reason to trust anyone, see that everyone is sick. "

In particular, the Prime Minister has called on religious leaders to take proactive steps to prevent the disease by educating believers to take all necessary precautions. "I urge the religious leaders to take extra precautions to ensure that gatherings in houses of worship are reduced including believers staying in space, at least one meter from one another and setting up places for washing with water and soap and handwashing in all houses of worship." .  
"Limit the number of meeting days to worship and hours of worship or sermons whenever necessary. For example, the meetings or gatherings of singing groups, youth, mothers or believers are generally better off during this period, "he emphasized.

In response to the Government's actions, the Prime Minister has said the Government continues to take various steps to control the spread of the disease, including preventative education, forming National Committees at the level of Ministers, Secretaries, Health Team and providing instructions to the Defense and Security Committees.

"We have targeted outpatient facilities, we have purchased equipment to deal with this disease, especially for health care providers. We have strengthened our laboratories with the aim of expanding the scope of the sample testing, to more than seven centers in the country where preliminary testing is from there to verification at the National Laboratory, "he said.

At the same time, a statement released by the Ministry of Health, Social Development,

Gender, Elderly and Children has mentioned regions that have had 30 new patients out of the 254 population last announced.

These patients and their number in brackets are from the provinces of Dar es Salaam (10), Zanzibar (9), Mwanza (4), Coast (2), Dodoma (2). The others are Kagera, Manyara and Morogoro which all have individual patients.

In another move, the Prime Minister has condemned the behavior of some traders who are willing to raise food prices during the fasting month of Ramadan.

"This week Muslim believers are beginning the fast of Ramadan, so I urge traders to make sure the essential foods during this period are sold at regular prices.

He said there is currently enough sugar in the country so prices will remain the same regardless of season. "I urge the Regional Commissioners, whoever is found to be selling sugar at the price of shs.4,500, take action against it as it is not the intention of our Government," he stressed.

On their part, speaking at different times, the religious leaders who participated in the petition, have praised the Government for the steps it has taken so far in dealing with the disease.