

K...
with
Bryan McInnis

...spent more
...knows you do not simply
drive into Kampala city centre during rush
hour without a plan. The odds of sitting in
traffic until your leg muscles begin to lose
memory are too high. Fortunately, I am not
a dummy.

Before beginning my commute, I drove
down the road to a shop I will call God
Makes a Way Auto Mechanic. I presented
the required secret handshake and quiet-

...er carrying my salva-
...a pair of clip-on blue and red lights.

With daylight breaking across the ho-
rizon and traffic building on Ggaba Road,
I clipped them onto the front grille and
switched them on. Their brilliance cut
through the morning haze and silently
communicated a very important message
to every taxi driver, boda rider, pedestrian
and commuter on the road.

This man's plans are far more impor-
tant than yours. What happened next was
nothing short of miraculous. Traffic parted.

...ing enormously through the wa-
flashing lights. I felt generous that
and allowed them to follow.

Leadership requires sacrifice.

Of course, I should be clear that
recommending this. Kampala al-
though enough unofficial importance
through its roads. There are mon-
when traffic feels less like trans-
and more like a national refer-
status. The largest vehicle wins
confident driver wins. The pe-
willing to behave as if the enti-
awaiting their arrival often wir-

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BLURRY LINES

with Tony Natif

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Ebola: Embrace presidential Germaphobia

We millennials, especial-
ly the variety that has
never staggered out-
side the confines of
central Uganda, have a tenden-
cy to say we are the generation
born into war and the last to ex-
perience war. We are talking lit-
eral bullets and grenades flying
around; *duka duka* being an alert
for an approaching bunch of mil-
itary thugs and not a signal that a
phone snatcher needs way.

Anyway, that was so 1980s and
the country has since been large-
ly pacified. Instead of those wars,
the greatest existential crises we
have faced are pandemics. HIV,
Covid and Ebola come to mind.
We have somehow managed to
fight our way out of such crises, of
course not without some signifi-
cant loss of compatriots on the
battlefields, but survive our soci-
ety has. With lessons too.

Uganda and especially DRC are
facing yet another existential cri-
sis of a zoonotic nature, in that fa-
miliar foe; Ebola. This virus is said
to once again have originated
from near the dense Ituri forests
of Eastern DRC where fellas do
not see bats as flying biohazards
but exotic snacks, not much dif-
ferent than Caviar in a high end
restaurant in Milan.

The exaggeration is mine but
these are actually very serious is-
sues. This thing can turn your in-

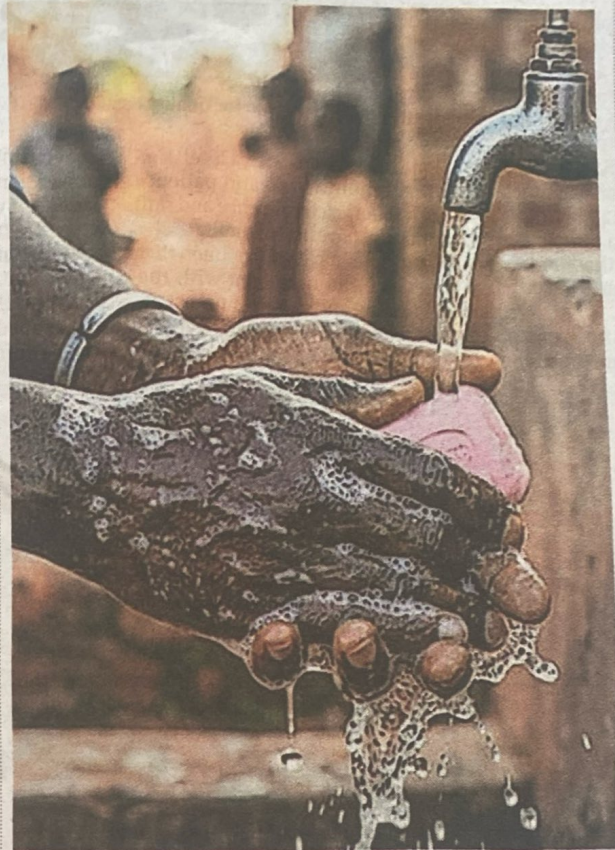
sides into bloody soup and has
you bleeding from orifices you
did not know you had, as you
make your way to an excruciat-
ingly painful death.

If you came here for our usu-
al goofy pieces, I feel your pain. I
am sorry for the gross description
but my public health side could
not let me share jokes when we
have this crisis. I want you alive
next week so we can keep drink-
ing whisky and laugh at the odds.
Having said that, I will try to tem-
per down your pain by giving you
some good news.

Uganda has largely avoided the
brunt of this storm, with DRC tru-
ly drinking from the hosepipe.
But with the way numbers are
trickling in from our Ministry of
Health, it might not be long be-
fore we have an avalanche on our
hands. No pun intended. And this
is where I would like to encourage
you fellas to embrace Presidential
level germaphobe tendencies.

In case you have not noticed,
our president is probably the
biggest germaphobe among all
global world leaders. I mean, the
man still moves around with his
mask, these many years post-Cov-
id-19 crisis. To him, social distanc-
ing is not just a phrase, it is how
he greets and interacts with his
adoring supporters and minist-

A, week or so ago, in the heat



of the whole presidential swear-
ing in festivities, the man gave a
speech where he said control of
Ebola was easier than control of
Covid-19; the latter having been
handled better than any other
country in the world. His words.

Drawing on that experience,
he wondered why we do not just
give up touching people and in-
stead look at them and move on
with our lives. Not sure this rest-
less, ever shifting Kampala dat-
ing pool will understand what
the old man is saying but he has
a huge point.

Due to the mechanism of
spread, hands are a major cul-
prit in spreading bodily fluids.
Wash them like you are washing
away generational poverty. Grab
those masks and watch for ran-
dom sneezers. Retrace your teen-
age aura days and keep a distance
from people. Unless you must
physically meet, take those meet-
ings online. This is Covid times
but instead of air, we have fluids.
The initial symptoms might al-

so be the same. Remember this;
it is never just a fever. When it
comes with abdominal pain and
a running tummy, do not wait for
blood. Keep a distance from your
loved ones and immediately re-
port to hospital.

Of course I am not gonna talk
about hugging or shaking hands.
That surely is obvious. The water
that softens spaghetti is the same
water that hardens eggs. Just be-
cause you have gotten away with
numerous handshakes does not
mean the next one will be harm-
less. Cash is king, I know, but at
this point, cash might be the King
of the Highway to the grave.

Try to use digital currency for
now; you never know how many
hands have touched that note. As
for attending funerals, you might
wanna avoid or at least scrutinise
that post mortem like a crim-
inal defense attorney before you
attend. If you must. We do not
want yours to be next. Stay safe
out there. We shall beat this b-
tle and soon.