

Tanzania – The Second Covid Coup?

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President John Magufuli's disappearance makes him potentially the 2nd "Covid denier" head of state to lose power.

by [Kit Knightly](#), *OffGuardian*

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John Magufuli, [President of Tanzania](#), has disappeared. He's not been seen in public for several weeks, and speculation is building as to where he might be.

The opposition has, at various times, accused the President of being hospitalised with "Covid19", either in [Kenya](#) or [India](#), although there remains no evidence this is the case.

To add some context, John Magufuli is one of the "Covid denier" heads of state from Africa.

He famously had his office submit five [unlabelled samples for testing](#) – goat, motor oil, papaya, quail and jackfruit – and when four came back positive and one "inconclusive", he banned the testing kits and called for an investigation into their origin and manufacture.

In the past, he has also [questioned the safety and efficacy](#) of the supposed "covid vaccines", and has not permitted their use in Tanzania.

In the Western press Magufuli has been portrayed as "anti-science" and "populist", but it is not fair to suggest that the health of the people of Tanzania is a low priority for the

President. In fact it's quite the opposite.

After winning his first election in 2015 he slashed government salaries (including his own) in order to increase funding for hospitals and buying AIDs medication. In 2015 he cancelled the Independence Day celebrations and used the money to launch an [anti-Cholera campaign](#). Healthcare has been one of his administration's top priorities, and Tanzanian [life expectancy has increased every year](#) while he has been in office.

The negative coverage of President Magufuli is a very recent phenomenon. Early in his Presidency he even received glowing write-ups from [the Western press](#) and [Soros-backed think tanks](#), praising his reforms and calling him an "example" to other African nations.

All that changed when he spoke out about Covid being hoax.

When he was re-elected in October 2020 the standard Western accusations of ["voter suppression"](#) and ["electoral fraud"](#) appeared in the Western press which had previously reported his approval rating as high as 96%.

And the anti-Magufuli campaign increased momentum in the new year, with Mike "we lied, we cheated, we stole" Pompeo initiating [sanctions against Tanzanian government officials](#) as one of his final acts as Secretary of State. The sanctions were notionally due to "electoral irregularities", but the obvious reality is that it's due to Tanzania's refusal to toe the Covid line.

Just last month, The Guardian, always the tip of the spear when it comes to "progressive" regime change ran an [article headlined](#):

It's time for Africa to rein in Tanzania's anti-vaxxer president

The article makes no mention of goats, papaya and motor oil

testing positive for the coronavirus, but does ask – in a very non-partisan, journalistic way:

What is wrong with President John Magufuli? Many people in and outside Tanzania are asking this question.”

Before going on to conclude:

Magufuli [is] fuelling anti-vaxxers as the pandemic and its new variants continue to play out. He needs to be challenged openly and directly. To look on indifferently exposes millions of people in Tanzania and across Africa’s great lakes region – as well as communities across the world – to this deadly and devastating virus.

The author doesn’t say exactly *how* Magufuli should be “*challenged openly and directly*”, but that’s not what these articles are for. They exist simply to paint the subject as a villain, and create a climate where “something must be done”. What that “something” is – and, indeed, whether or not it is legal – are none of the Guardian-reading public’s business, and most of them don’t really care.

Oh, by the by, the article is part of the Guardian’s “Global Development” section, which is sponsored by the [Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation](#). Just so you know.

So, within two weeks of The Guardian publishing a Gates-sponsored article calling for something to be done about President Magufuli, he has disappeared, allegedly due to Covid. Funny how that works out.

Even if Magufuli miraculously survives his bout of “suspected Covid19”, the writing is on the wall for his political career. The Council on Foreign Relations published [this article](#) just yesterday, which goes to great lengths arguing that the President has lost all authority, and concludes:

a bold figure within the ruling party could capitalize on the current episode to begin to reverse course.”

It's not hard to read the subtext there, if you can even call it "subtext" at all.

If we *are* about to see the sudden death and/or replacement of the President of Tanzania, he will not be the first African head of state to suffer such a fate in the age of Covid.

Last summer Pierre Nkurunziza, the President of Burundi, refused to play along with Covid and instructed the WHO delegation to leave his country...before dying suddenly of a "heart attack" or "suspected Covid19". His successor immediately reversed *every single one* of his Covid policies, including inviting the WHO back to the country.

That was our [first Covid coup](#), and it looks like Tanzania could well be next.

If I were the President of Turkmenistan or Belarus, I wouldn't be making any longterm plans.