

Kenya governor under fire after putting Hennessy bottles in coronavirus care packages

By Bethlehem Feleke, CNN

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Kenya currently has more than 230 confirmed cases of coronavirus

Nairobi, Kenya (CNN) — Recipients of Nairobi politician Mike Sonko's Covid-19 care packages can expect to receive the typical food staples except for one item -- alcohol.

Sonko, the governor of the Kenyan capital city, Nairobi, confirmed in a media briefing on Tuesday that his care packages include a few small bottles of the cognac, Hennessy.

The governor justified the inclusion of alcohol as "throat sanitizer."

"I think from the research conducted by the World Health Organization and various organizations, it has been believed that alcohol plays a major role in killing the coronavirus," Sonko said in a video.

"We will have some small bottles of Hennessy in the food packs that we will be giving to our people
Nairobi Governor Mike Sonko

Note: WHO warns that drinking alcohol does not protect you against COVID-19 and can be dangerous
pic.twitter.com/vuSuVAb8dy

— Citizen TV Kenya (@citizentvkenya) April 14, 2020



In a [post released by the WHO](#) on Tuesday, the organization said that alcohol can weaken the health of an individual and make them more vulnerable to viruses including coronavirus.

Githinji Gitahi, the CEO of Amref Health Africa, a medical nonprofit, in a post on Twitter [condemned](#) Sonko's claim and appealed to Kenyans to dump the alcohol.

This isn't the first time Sonko has been met with public scrutiny. The governor was arrested late last year on [corruption charges](#), and was forced to surrender some of his duties to the national government.

Meanwhile, Hennessy has refuted through local media the claims by the Nairobi governor that its drink in particular or alcohol in general can ward off coronavirus contagion.

"Hennessy would like to stress that the consumption of our brand or any other alcoholic beverage does not protect against the virus," reads part of its [statement](#) to Nairobi News.

CNN was unable to reach Sonko for comment.

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