



ZIMBABWE PEACE PROJECT



TIME AFTER TIME: A VIOLENT ELECTION?

JUNE 2023 MONTHLY MONITORING
REPORT

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THE ROUND UP

In the month of June, ZPP recorded a total of 206 violations, a slight increase from 191 recorded in May. The human rights violations are on an increase, and most of the abuses recorded were associated with civil, political, and electoral rights. 61% of the violations were of threats, harassment, and intimidation, 13% of assault and 12% of discrimination. ZPP identified 2 096 victims of human rights violations (62% male, 38% female, 0.3% male persons with disability and 0.1% female PWDs). The general citizens populated the highest percentage of victims, 92%, and Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) supporters followed with 7%. Zanu PF party perpetrated the most violations (61%), followed by the Forever Association Zimbabwe (FAZ) at 9% and Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) at 8%. Manicaland (33) and Harare (30) provinces recorded the highest number violations, whilst Matabeleland North (6) and South (7) and Bulawayo (9) had the lowest.

ELECTIONS ROUND UP

Women in elections

The number of women that will participate in the upcoming election has decreased as compared to the 2018 elections. 14.4% of women participated in the 2018 elections and the percentage has decreased to 11% for the 2023 elections. In the National Assembly 70 out of 637 will be contesting and as of June 30, 2023 and according to the gazette of the nominated candidates no woman had their nomination accepted by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to run for presidency this year. This is a major setback to achieve equal representation of women and men in national political leadership positions as stated by Sustainable Goal 5 which seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. While the Constitution speaks of equal representation between men and women in all institutions it seems it will take a very long time for this to be realised considering that the political parties do not take the issue of the participation of women seriously. For the House of Assembly Zanu PF put forward 187 men against 23 women while the CCC put forward 212 men according to those successful after nomination against 20 women. For the local authority only 15% of the candidates are women while 85 are men.



PWDS IN ELECTIONS

In an interview with CITE, persons with disability (PWD) activist Soneni Gwizi spoke at length about the participation of PWDs in elections. She emphasised that political parties do not make an effort to consult PWDs, on how their situation can be improved so that they are included during elections. She emphasised that PWDs are only considered by political parties when they are donating food or other aid, however, when there are leadership or scholarship opportunities, it is never considered. Few PWDs will participate in the upcoming 2023 election because of the environment that is not conducive. One of the reasons PWDs are not voting in the election is due to the difficulties they face, which include transportation problems, information and communication impediments, and a lack of political awareness or opportunities. She highlighted how political violence is a deterrent for PWD. Some PWDs are advocating for the direct election of PWDs rather than have them rely on the few elected by Electoral College. They argue that the voices are too few and it becomes difficult for them to be heard about what needs to be done for PWD in general and specifically for women and young women with disability and young men with disability.

YOUNG PERSONS IN ELECTIONS

The main highlight of young people's expectations and reality in 2023 is the August 23 general election. An election provides an opportunity for citizens to reimagine and determine how their representation is going to look like for the next 5 years. For young people, the expectation is an improvement in the representation of young people in parliament owing to the quota for young people.

The quota for young people has reserved 10 seats in Parliament coming into effect in this election. Male and female candidates were listed by political parties since the quota for young people uses proportional representation. The 10 seats are an improvement from the 6 seats for young people in Parliament after the 2018 election. However, the expectation is that more young get into parliament outside of the quota to improve representation of young people in decision-making according to WeLead a youth leadership and advocacy organisation committed to bring youth together to co create a safe space.

An analysis of the 2018 Preliminary Voters Roll conducted by the Zimbabwe Election Support Network (ZESN) revealed that only 49% of the 18–22-year age group was registered to vote. This is a reflection that on the ground, young people have demonstrated high apathetic tendencies. However, this year young people were intensely organising around voter registration through social media, walk-on campaigns, art and theatre among other ways. Young people have been organising intensely around meaningful and peaceful participation in the electoral process and the expectation is that this year, young people will participate in the election more peacefully and meaningfully compared to previous elections.

CHALLENGES FACED BY POLITICAL PARTIES DURING NOMINATION

SI 144 of 2022, which increased the cost of nomination to USD \$20,000 for presidential candidates has prevented some women from contesting for president. The only female candidates, Elisabeth Valerio of the United Zimbabwe Alliance (UZA) and Labour, Economists and African Democrats candidate Linda Masarira to have put forward their names were not successful at the nomination court as they wanted to pay the nomination fees in local currency. They faced challenges of not having proof of payment because of bank limits imposed by current monetary policies. Both women have since filed appeals with the Electoral Court to overturn the decision of the nomination court. It is alarming to note that men are running for most of National Assembly seats in constituencies, with women making up less than a third of the candidates in most provinces. Only 2 of the 36 candidates in Matabeleland South are women and 4 women are among the 62 candidates in Masvingo.

Due to financial challenges, the MDC Alliance was also unable to afford to cover the nomination fees for all its 87 candidates for senate, council, and Member of Parliament. The Senate and MP candidates were expected to pay p US\$1000 and prospective councillors US\$100. Devine Mhambi, the leader of the Nationalists Alliance Party, challenged the nomination fees before the Constitutional Court. The Constitutional Court ruled against the exorbitant 2023 election candidates' nomination fees gazetted by the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), ordering Parliament to re-examine the Statutory Instrument (SI) 145 that set the nomination fees. On 14 June the Parliamentary Legal Committee issued a non-adverse report on SI 144 of 2022 that set out the nomination fees to stand. The MPs were given a week to evaluate the matter by the acting speaker of parliament Mr William Mutomba, but nothing was changed. Due to Zimbabwe's economic difficulties, the nomination fees are a barrier for many parties that want to exercise their rights and field candidates for the elections.

ZANU PF THREATENS INDEPENDENT CANDIDATES WITH EXPULSION

Zanu PF factional ruptures manifested through threats by senior ruling party politicians to expel losing candidates in the Zanu PF primaries threatening to contest as independents in the August 23 polls. Senior members of the ruling party have threatened to expel the candidates that lost during the Zanu PF primaries and decided to run as independents in the elections scheduled for August 23. Speaking at a workshop which was closed to the media, Zanu PF national political commissar Mike Bimha reportedly said losing candidates should wait for the next election to try their luck. "So far I don't know any candidate who will contest as an independent candidate, but if you contest as an independent candidate, you would have automatically expelled yourself from the party," Bimha said. The threats were further buttressed by Defence Minister Oppah Muchinguri who declared that all Zanu PF members who will contest as independent candidates will have automatically expelled themselves from the party. In Gutu East, George Vhengere reportedly decided to go independent after the party disqualified him after winning the primaries. In Gutu West Mutoh Mutoh and Tafadzwa Dhererai Shumba from Mwenezi West reportedly felt discriminated against and opted to contest as independent candidates. In Midlands province, former State Security Minister Owen Ncube warned aspiring legislators against garnering more votes than President Emmerson Mnangagwa in next month's polls.



Zanu PF threatens Independent Candidates with expulsion

Ncube who is the current Zanu PF Midlands provincial secretary for security, said polling more votes than Mnangagwa, the party's presidential candidate, was a cardinal sin they should avoid at all costs, come August 23. Speaking in Gweru on 28 June during the Mkoba North constituency campaign launch, Ncube said Mnangagwa is the head of the train, hence no Zanu PF member should get more votes than him. "So when we are campaigning, it's the President first, followed by the MP and then the councillor," Ncube said. These utterances could actually be pointing to a likely 'bhora musango' scenario as experienced in 2008.

It is worrying that Zanu PF has set up internal structures to intimidate and silence its own supporters 2 months before the 2023 general elections. The trend is likely to spill over and influence a violent environment. ZPP calls upon political parties to reign in their leaders and supporters to desist from systematic use of threats and inflammatory statements which violate citizens' political rights. Section 67 of the constitution sets out the political rights of Zimbabwean citizens. Citizens have the right to stand for public office and, if elected, to hold public office. Section 133C of the Electoral Act also provides that a person who, through intimidation, prevents or obstructs or attempts to prevent or obstruct a political party or candidate from campaigning in any election shall be guilty of an offence and liable to a fine not exceeding level ten or to imprisonment.

CCC CANDIDATE SELECTION EXERCISE IN CHAOS

The Citizen Coalition for Change candidate selection process which was concluded in June was marred by chaotic incidences of violence and clashes pitting some senior politicians against each other after the delimitation of electoral boundaries by ZEC. In Harare, Tendai Biti clashed with Harare North legislator Allan Norman "Rusty" Markham after his constituency was merged with Biti's Harare East constituency. Biti, who strongly resisted to contest for a Senatorial seat instead of a House of Assembly seat to open a slot for Markham called Markham a snake, whose head must be crushed. Some racial and hate language was also used when reference was made to 'vasina mabvi' (meaning those without knees a common description of white people who were always in trousers hiding their knees). In Highfield West, there was chaos during a CCC candidate nomination meeting for wards 24, 25 and 26 at Lusaka Community Centre on 18 June. It is alleged that Mbwende, an aspiring candidate was disqualified for violence while Erick Murai and Lovelorn Makuwerere were among nominees for parliamentary positions. However, the process was marred by verbal altercations following complaints of unfairness of the process. Although there were no visible incidents of physical violence, there were serious altercations during and after the meetings. ZPP condemns hate speech and violence which is common in opposition and ruling parties in varying scales. ZPP believes that hate speech has the potential to incite public violence and is harmful. Political parties and their leaders must strike a balance between freedom of expression and freedom of the media and hate language. There is need for political parties and leaders to use responsible language and desist from using inflammatory language which breeds violent conflict.

The Monthly Monitoring Report (MMR) is a publication produced by the ZPP which documents all forms of human rights abuses including political and/or electoral violence in this electoral period. The report creates awareness about social, political, economic, civic, and cultural rights. It is also used to initiate advocacy efforts with different stakeholders. Prior to the elections, ZPP has launched the #RRRV2023 campaign to encourage citizens to Resist, Reject, and Report violence. The campaign seeks to advocate for an environment conducive for free, fair and credible elections. The campaign is designed to allow voters to report violence which they experience and witness while also raising awareness and responsiveness levels to put pressure on duty-bearers to be accountable for their actions.

MAJOR HIGHLIGHTS

Hate Language



Hate speech by politicians, especially those from the ruling party were uttered in a confrontational manner. The use of hate language has been mainly perpetrated by Zanu PF activists during meetings and rallies. In one of their star rallies in Bulilima District at Nyele village, Zanu PF Provincial Chairperson for Matabeleland South, Mangaliso Ndlovu likened the Citizens' Coalition for Change leadership and supporters to cockroaches stating that they are confused with no strategy. While Ndlovu is entitled to freedom of expression within the political context, it must be noted that hate language fuels violence. Beyond that, the sentiment that he used during the rally is the same hate language that was used in the 1980's by Robert Mugabe during the Gukurahundi genocide. Similarly, such language which likens human beings to pests fueled the violence in Rwanda and left many people dead. During an engagement meeting with artisanal miners, President Mnangagwa insulted individuals and institutions that undermine the 'democracy' that prevails in the country. In his speech, Mnangagwa fumed by stating that to those that undermine the democracy that the country enjoys, 'Musoro wambuya wako' (Big head of your grandmother). The insult has been widely used in societies where women are undermined and looked down upon. This is a clear violation of women's rights as hate and inflammatory language tends to be feminised.

Community members in Zhombe urban were not spared of hate language. It was noted that Christopher Matambo of Zanu PF threatened opposition members with death especially those from the the Citizens' Coalition for Change. It is said that Matambo is also working hand in glove with Forever Association Zimbabwe where they are targeting opposition members and delivering death notices. The use of hate language fuels violence if not regulated by bringing the perpetrators to book.

ZPP condemns the use of hate language by prominent politicians ahead of the harmonised elections. ZPP believes that hate language incites violence therefore politicians should desist from use of hate language to promote peace prior, during and after elections. We are also aware that hateful words can all too easily lead to physical attacks on citizens and set off an electoral cycle of violence. As an organisation that monitors politically motivated human rights violations and violence, we believe that some of the statements made are potentially explosive and might ignite violence in the not-so-distant future.

Intimidation by FAZ

The activities of Forever Associates Zimbabwe continued to violate citizens' rights to freedom of assembly and association and their political rights. Looking at the figures of perpetrators it seems FAZ has overtaken the Zimbabwe Republic Police to become the second only to Zanu PF. A case of intimidation was reported in Chegutu East ward 16 at Waze business centre on 12 June 2023. It is alleged that members of FAZ Olivia Mushonga, Muzvare and Shyne Nyathi told two CCC activists that they will be targeted after the elections.

The trio reportedly warned them of a possible re-run in October saying that they will be punished worse than what happened in 2008. In Mudzi North ward 10 at Muguwamadzi Village, war veteran Kari Kuvimba threatened people with death if they attend opposition party meetings, wear opposition party regalia or vote for CCC during the elections. He reportedly warned people saying that he was above the law citing that no one can arrest him. Further he advised people to go and report anywhere stating that he was untouchable. "We are the sons and daughters of the President, nothing will happen to us," said Kuvimba. To buttress his point he said, "We are going to burn down houses of those who are opposing Zanu PF. FAZ is writing down names of people who are supporting the opposition and these will be dealt with. " On 26 June, Zanu PF held a meeting in Guruve North at Katoni village in ward 23. The meeting was addressed by Solomon Musvaire, a member of FAZ. Reports indicate that during the meeting Masvaire advised people to join ruling party cell structures before elections. Those who attended the meeting were warned to abide by the following;

- Cell chairpersons are to lead their cells and closely monitor their members when voting on August 2023
- All opposition members should be clearly known so that they don't vote on polling day
- Those who do not support Zanu PF should be identified for punishment if the situation becomes tense in case of a re-run. It is said that the agenda of the meeting was to advise the electorate that they were being closely monitored hence they should vote well for Zanu PF to achieve 5 million votes.

Many videos and audios along the same lines have gone viral and the message is the same that citizens are being watched, they should be a member of the Zanu PF cell structures, attend weekly meetings where registers are kept and go to the polling station together as a cell group to avoid the worst that could happen to them. In some communities, people have been told that if they are members of CCC they should relocate until after the elections as they might be caught in a cross fire. The ZPP is deeply troubled by the misinformation that communities are getting to the effect that some people somewhere will know how they would have voted. It is important that voter education has to start in earnest and set the record straight for some of the mis/disinformation citizens are subjected to.




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CAMPAIGNS AND ENVIRONMENT

Zanu PF Chipinge rally

Suspensions and tensions escalated in the communities as political parties heightened their campaign activities. The environment became hostile especially for opposition parties. On 24 June Zanu PF convened a campaign rally in Chipinge at Mutema Secondary. The event was graced by senior Zanu PF politburo members led by President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Vice President Constantine Chiwenga and Minister of Information Broadcasting and Publishing Services Monica Mutsvangwa. Despite President Mnangagwa unveiling ambulances and hospital equipment at St Peter's Hospital in Checheche, many people were forced to attend the campaign rally. It is said that people were forced to attend the rally by Zanu PF officials who included district, youth and women's league chairpersons. At a local meeting held in ward 18 and 19 in Chipinge East, residents were told to attend the rally without fail. Zanu PF officials were quoted at the meeting saying "munhu wese ngaende, mabhazi tinokupai tikakuona uri pamba tiri kurova, midhudhudhu takapiwa nezweise zweekutakurisa. Pakuvhota tichatarisa vese vasinakuenda tichitaka munhu"(meaning everyone must attend the rally, buses have been availed to ferry people, and that some were also given motorcycles to ferry people. If citizens are seen in their homes, they will be dealt with and at polling stations they will identify those who will not vote to punish them). Many people reportedly attended the rally in fear. Public resources such as Zimbabwe United Passenger Company (ZUPCO) and school buses were assigned to ferry people to the rally. However, after the rally, many people were dropped off before reaching their destination, while others had to find their way back home on foot. ZPP identified some of the branded school buses which were from Mt Selinda High and Gazaland High School.

In Buhera West ward 14 at Murambinda Growth Point, villagers were forced to board ZUPCO buses assigned to ferry them to the rally. Even vendors were warned that they risked losing their vending spaces if they failed to take heed of the call. Zanu PF youths and some traditional leaders particularly village heads and secretaries were mapped among the perpetrators who force marched many people to attend against their will. ZPP implores the ruling Zanu PF party to respect the political rights of citizens. The systematic use of threats and intimidation to drive people to attend political activities against their will violates citizens' rights to freedom of assembly and association and rights to personal security. Section 67 of the constitution sets out the political rights of Zimbabwean citizens. Citizens have the right to free, fair and regular elections and referendums and adults have the right to vote in elections and referendums. They may also stand for public office and, if elected, to hold public office. In terms of Section 67(2) (a) of the Constitution, Zimbabweans have the right to form political parties or to belong to political parties of their choice. Political parties and candidates for election have the right to campaign peacefully and to have access to the media to disseminate information to the electorate about their policies.

CRIMINAL LAW (CODIFICATION AND REFORM AMENDMENT BILL)
PATRIOTIC BILL
ECLIPSE OF DEMOCRACY IN ZIMBABWE

The Upper House of Parliament (the Senate) on 4 June passed the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Amendment Bill, often referred to as the Patriotic Bill, a sign of the eclipse of democracy in Zimbabwe. The bill seeks to amend the Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23], with the addition of four clauses, three of which have been described as progressive excluding Clause 2. Clause 3 will amend Section 65 of the Principal Act to make 15 years the minimum required punishment for rape, in response to the rise in crimes of sexual violence and rape. Clause 4 proposes to amend Section 155 of the main Act's definition of dangerous drugs to include prepared opium, prepared cannabis resin, and a drug schedule. Clause 5 proposes to amend Section 174 of the main Act as the existing definition of criminal abuse of office, as provided for in Section 174 (i), is fairly broad, allowing public officials to be charged for honest mistakes made while doing their duties. It is worrying to note that the proposed amendments to Clause 2 (3) says that , "Any citizen or permanent resident of Zimbabwe who, within or outside Zimbabwe, intentionally partakes in any meeting, whose object or one of whose objects the accused knows, or has reasonable grounds for believing involves the consideration of or the planning for the implementation or enlargement of sanctions or a trade boycott against Zimbabwe (whether those sanctions or that boycott is untargeted or targets any individual or official, or class of individuals or officials), but whose effects indiscriminately affect the people of Zimbabwe as a whole, or any substantial section thereof shall be guilty of wilfully damaging the sovereignty and national interest of Zimbabwe and liable to a penalty that includes a fine not exceeding level twelve or imprisonment for a period not exceeding 10 years, or both.

ZPP fears that this clause will be used to criminalise the work of human rights defenders, opposition supporters and pro-democracy campaigners. The Bill of Rights in the constitution of Zimbabwe remains the guiding framework for citizens engagement in political and electoral processes hence legislations such as the Patriotic Bill have implications of suppressing citizens from enjoying their rights freely without fear or intimidation. It is worrying that if the Bill becomes law, the government will likely outlaw criticism from CSOs and other developing partners which will be a step backwards from democracy in Zimbabwe. The constitution of Zimbabwe has a clear legislative mandate for all citizens including non-state actors hence it should remain the only guiding governance framework for people to adhere to instead of repressive policies and legislations. Credit is given to Veritas and Pindula for this article.

RISE IN CASES OF VIOLENCE IMMEDIATELY AFTER PROCLAMATION OF ELECTION DATE

There has been an increase in political violence since the proclamation of the election date by President Mnangagwa on 31 May. ZPP has recorded 34 cases of politically motivated violence from 31 May to June 30. A CCC activist was assaulted by Zanu supporters in Hurungwe West at Doro township village in ward 26. The activist narrates how the youths tore his CCC t-shirt in the presence of his parents and children before assaulting him with open palms and fists. The perpetrators also threatened him with death before escaping to safety. The victim says he spent the night in the bush following the incident in fear that they would come after him. In ward 18, on 12 June, it was noted that 8 CCC youth members were assaulted in Vungu constituency about 3 km away from the home of Chief Sogwala. It is alleged that they were assaulted by Zanu PF activists after they were forced to wear the regalia of the ruling party. A case on the violation of the right to personal security was reported on 14 June in Guruve South at Getto Nyakapupu village in ward 3. A CCC activist had his regalia ripped off by Prosper Dzengedza, who is alleged to be a soldier resident in the same ward under Chief Bepura's jurisdiction. Dzengedza reportedly spotted the victim wearing a CCC cap and a T-shirt before ripping off his party regalia. Some nearby villagers reportedly came to the vendor's rescue pleading with Dzengedza to forgive him. The victim reportedly went home half naked.

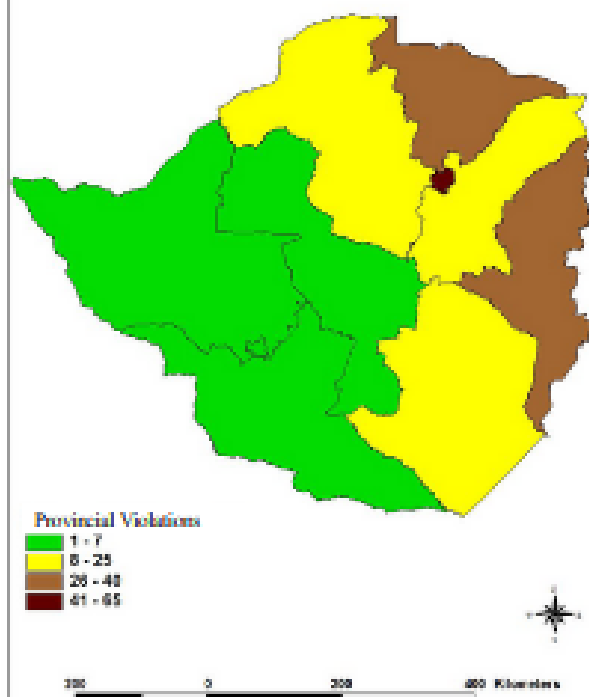


Human Rights Violations Monthly Dashboard

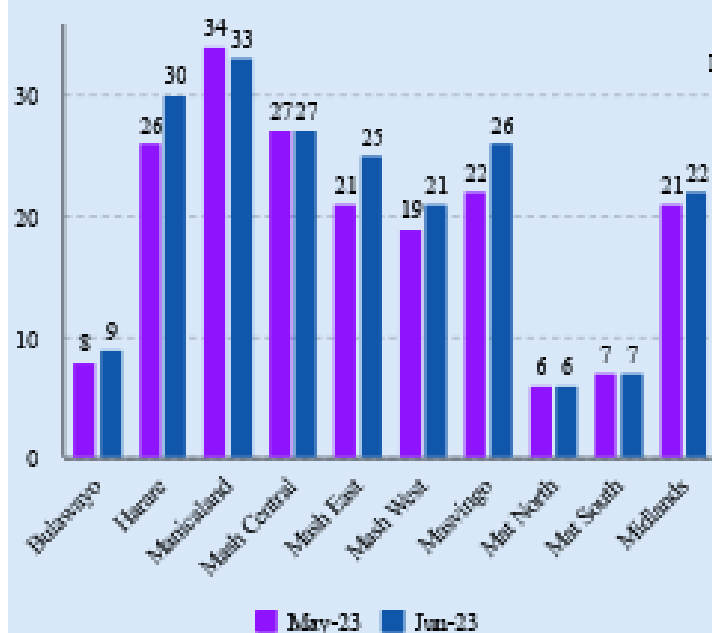
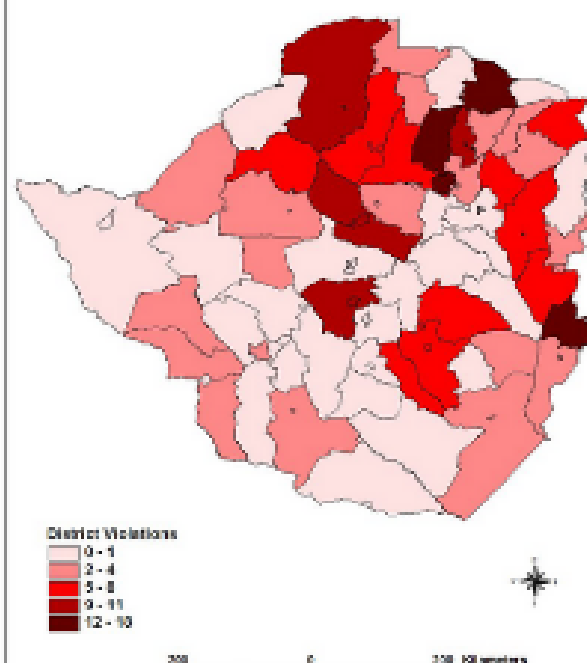
Zimbabwe Peace Project

Report time frame: June, 2023

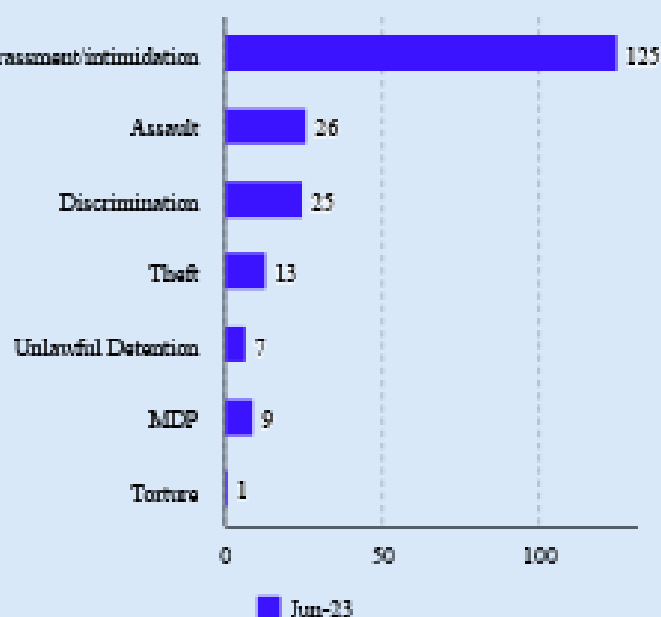
Provincial Violations



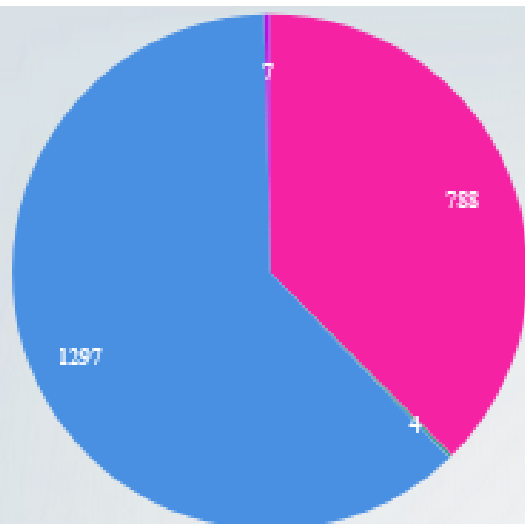
District Violations



Provincial Violations

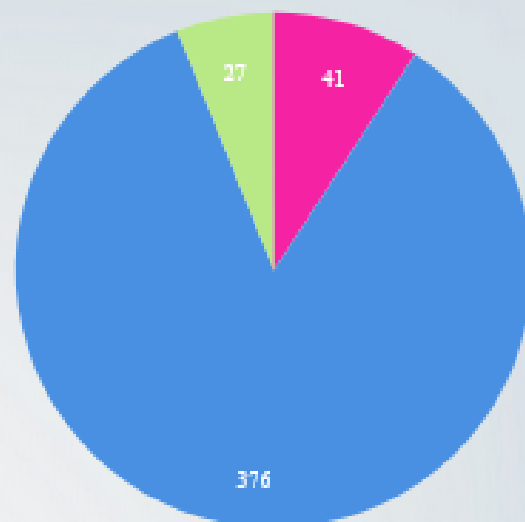


Types of Violations



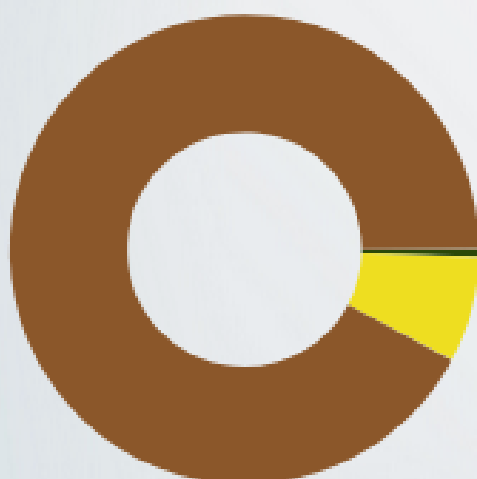
Female (37.6%) Female PWD (0.33%) Male (61.88%)
Male PWD (0.33%)

Gender of Victims



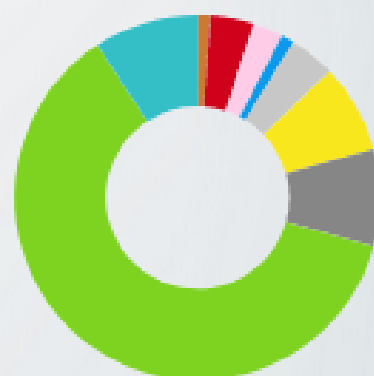
Female (9.23%) Male (84.68%) Unknown (6.08%)

Gender of Perpetrators



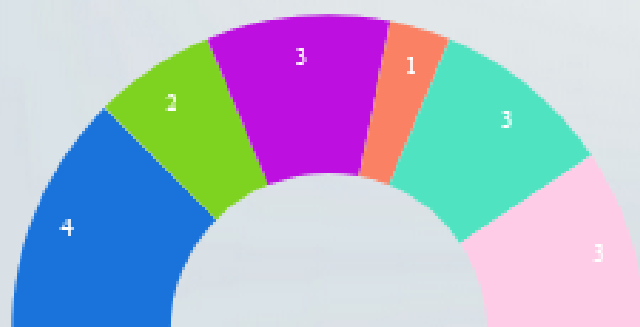
Zanu PF (0.52%) CCC (7.3%) General Citizens (92.18%)

Victims Affiliation



State agents (1.13%) Traditional Leaders (3.83%) War Veterans (2.7%) ZNA (1.13%) Unknown (4.03%)
CCC (7.88%) ZRP (3.56%) Zanu PF (61.49%)
FAZ (9.23%)

Perpetrators Affiliation



Manicaland (25%) Mash Central (12.5%) Mash East (18.75%) Mash West (6.25%) Masvingo (18.75%)
Midlands (18.75%)

Food & Other Aid Violations



Zanu PF CCC
Intra Party Violence

Key Findings and Mitigation Measures

Court observations

The judiciary, which is meant to be completely independent and impartial, has been used to stifle dissent through arbitrary arrests, protracted incarceration, and the denial of bail of political and human rights activists. The trial of four University of Zimbabwe students began on June 1; they were denied bail and remanded in custody until June 21. They were accused of creating and communicating protest artwork on government buildings to express their displeasure with the alleged illegal imprisonment of prominent Member of Parliament, Job Sikhala. Since his arrest in June 2022, Job Sikhala has been denied bail fifteen times. He was charged with instigating violence following the murder of CCC activist Moreblesing Ali. As political parties prepare for the harmonised elections on August 23, 2023, this has been seen as an attempt to keep activists from election preparations and campaigns. The opposition party Transform Zimbabwe leader, Jacob Ngarivhume, was arrested for organising and leading the 31 July 2020 anti-corruption demonstrations. On April 28, he was given a 48-month prison term with a 12-month suspension. In June, high court judge Justice Pisirayi Kwenda reserved his judgement in jailed Ngarivhume's challenge against both conviction and sentence.

Recommendations

The Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission is urged to engage with the Judicial Service Commission and jointly investigate all reports of human rights violations and all cases involving journalists and human rights defenders.

Food Aid and Politics

Politicisation of food hand-outs has characterised ruling Zanu PF party politics for decades since the country attained its independence in 1980. The politics of food has been used as a gimmick by the old and new dispensations to lure people to vote for Zanu PF during elections. People especially those in rural communities who face food insecurity have been mobilised to vote for the ruling party in return for food handouts. The introduction of the Pfumvudza presidential aid scheme meant to boost Zimbabwe's food security has been politicised by Zanu PF politicians and traditional leaders to benefit ruling party supporters only. In most instances opposition supporters have been turned away from distributions for not attending Zanu PF meetings and for defying the call to join ruling party structures. Often, opposition party supporters have been told to go and benefit from their leaders. In Masvingo on 10 June, there was chaos when Zanu PF supporters looted a truckload of mealie meal at a rally addressed by President Mnangagwa at Mucheke stadium. It is alleged that angry ruling party supporters looted one truck of mealie meal after information came out that the mealie meal was not going to be distributed as had been promised during the rally. Masvingo Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution [Ezra Chadzamira](#) had earlier promised the crowd that the President had brought mealie meal and everyone was going to get an allocation.



However, soon after the President and his entourage left, the trucks started driving off, leaving people stranded, although some individuals claimed that the trucks were going to the Grain Marketing Board (GMB) depot in Masvingo to distribute the aid there. Hundreds of people then mobbed the last truck and started looting the mealie meal leaving the driver helpless. It is alleged that party supporters, mainly youths, went on top of the truck, removed the tent covering the mealie meal, and started throwing the 10 kg packets to the cheering crowd.

Recommendations

ZPP implores the government to implement the recommendations of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food Ms Hilal Elver following her fact finding mission to Zimbabwe in 2020. Elver recommended that in accordance with the Zimbabwe Constitution, the government should permit all people to have access to food aid without any reference to their regional origin or residence, or political affiliation. The government should instruct local authorities in charge of beneficiary and distribution lists to abide by the principle of non-discrimination and to follow the criteria set up by the Food and Nutrition Council. The Government should also monitor the food distribution at the local level to find out whether such incidents occur. Moreover, special effort should be made to ensure access to highly vulnerable populations first, such as women and children head of households, the elderly, disabled and those affected by HIV/AIDS.



Nomination Court

On 21 June the nomination court sat to accept candidates for the 2023 harmonised elections. Candidates vying for the presidential position were submitting papers at the High Court while aspiring parliamentarians were being served at the Provincial Magistrate Courts. Candidates for senate, women's quota and young people made submissions at the Provincial Magistrate Courts and councillors at all council offices countrywide. Zanu PF incumbent President Emmerson Mnangagwa, Citizens' Coalition for Change president Nelson Chamisa and 9 other aspiring candidates successfully submitted their papers at the High Court through their lawyers. In this year's elections, only 11 candidates successfully registered for the top position as compared to 23 who contested the Presidential elections in 2018. The decrease in the number of presidential candidates can be attributed to the hefty nomination fees gazetted by ZEC. Presidential candidates had to pay \$20 000, up from \$1 000 in the 2018 elections, to qualify to run in 2023 while aspiring Members of Parliament were required to pay \$1 000, up from \$50 in 2018. The results for the nomination court established that among the 11 Presidential candidates there was no woman candidate represented.

This is after Lead President Linda Masarira and Elisabeth Valerio of (UZA) failed to file their nomination court papers as they intended to pay the nomination fees in local currency. Among 210 House of Assembly seats only Zanu PF and CCC successfully fielded candidates in all constituencies. ZEC refused to field 87 candidates from MDC Alliance who failed to pay their nomination fees and the matter was filed with the electoral court. There were candidates in the parliamentary race and 41 double CCC candidates. Zanu PF recorded three independent candidates, George Vhengere (Gutu East), Mutoho Mutoho (Gutu West) and Tafadzwa Dherera Shumba from Mwenezi West while Themba Mliswa registered for Norton as an independent candidate. CCC spokesperson Advocate Fadzayi Mahere set the record straight that signatures were forged citing that the party had filed criminal charges, petitioning the Electoral Court to remove the names of the accused from the candidate list for the August 23 elections. The CCC said ahead of the sitting of the Nomination Court, it sent specimens of signatures of approved party signatories allowed to sign for candidates representing the party. The party said it was unsure how ZEC accepted the nomination papers of the 41 candidates, and concluded that if they indeed submitted matching signatures, these could only have been forged. ZPP also recorded an incident of violence outside the Chinhoyi nomination court in Mashonaland West. Zanu PF legislator for Chegutu West, Dexter Nduna was assaulted by rival supporters of Farai Chigavazira, who defeated Nduna in the primary elections. Nduna claimed that he was there for a legal case, however Chigavazira's supporters thought he was there to file nomination papers and they attacked him. Nduna alleged he suffered a broken arm and leg in the altercation. He said a police report had been filed and the perpetrators could face arrest.

Recommendations

Civil society organisations (CSOs) and international observers are urged to keep an eye on the election procedures and report any incidents that violate the constitution and hinder vulnerable groups from participating fairly.

TOWARDS A ZIMBABWE WHERE THERE IS PEACE, JUSTICE, DIGNITY AND DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL

#RRRV campaign

ZPP is running the #RRRV 2023 campaign that encourages citizens to resist, reject and report violence in 2023. ZPP strives to support a peaceful electoral process where voters can resist and reject political orders inciting violence in the upcoming 2023 harmonised elections. ZPP developed a mobile application – SPECC, to report Social, Political, Economic, Civil, and Cultural violations. The application provides citizens with a platform to report violations with an option to do so anonymously. The App is available on Google Play and Apple stores, and WhatsApp Chabot called Batsi or Mncedisi. The verified reports are documented in the Monthly Monitoring Report, and the victims are assisted with accessing service providers for legal or medical support. All this is intended to create an active citizenry that resists, rejects and reports violence.



Message to International observers

ZPP urges early arrival and commitment from regional and international observers. The pre-election period is crucial to holding free and fair elections, and all the documented violations demonstrate how the environment is unconducive and may lead to violent elections in the run up to and post August 23, 2023. Therefore, for observers to contribute to free and fair democratic processes, early observation is crucial. President Mnangagwa has extended invitations to international observers ahead of the elections. ZPP calls for long-term observers, who usually arrive in the country a few weeks before elections to be deployed earlier and assess the situation on the ground before the elections.

ZPP calls for equitable access to state media for all political parties.

ZPP recommends that all state media channels offer political parties equal access to their media outlets as well as networks. The media is an important tool during the election period to promote harmony and tolerance among all political parties or to disseminate information that promotes a free and fair election. The state media, notably Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC), covers rallies for the ruling party but is not allowing equal access to opposition gatherings. ZBC outside broadcast the Zanu PF rally in Chipinge live on their social media pages and on local radio stations on June 24. All candidates should be made visible to the public by the media so that voters can make informed decisions.

SPECIAL FOCUS

In the month of June the special focus area centred on equality and non-discrimination, political rights, freedom of assembly and association, personal security and right to administrative justice.

Political Rights

ZPP recorded a total number of 21 cases in which the political rights of citizens were violated. Mashonaland Central and Midlands had five cases each, while Mashonaland East, Manicaland, and Matebeleland South recorded a case for each.

A case of intimidation was reported in Headlands at Kwirire Primary Ward 32. Esau Njereka an alleged serving member of the Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) who is a candidate representing Zanu PF Ward 32 for the Councillor seat reportedly intimidated people. Reports indicate that Njereka was moving around threatening people with violence if they do not vote for Zanu PF in the upcoming elections. It is alleged that he threatened to unleash violence in the community if Zanu PF loses the 2023 harmonized elections to the opposition Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC).

Section 67 of the Zimbabwean Constitution states that every Zimbabwean citizen has the right to form, to join and to participate in the activities of a political party or organisation of their choice, to participate, individually or collectively, in gatherings or groups or in any other manner, in peaceful activities to influence, challenge or support the policies of the Government or any political or whatever cause.

Freedom of Assembly and Association

In the month of June, ZPP recorded a total of 18 cases related to freedom of assembly and association. The highest number of cases were recorded in Manicaland and Mashonaland Central which had 4 cases each and Bulawayo recorded 1 case.

On 26 June in ward 21 at Gangare Clinic of Bikita East it was reported that Zanu PF was forcing citizens to attend their cell group exercise and coerced the participants to wear regalia of the party. The group was led by Vengai Muchini, Innocent Musora, Tinotenda Rangarira and Kudakwashe Machinapaya. Citizens were made to sing Zanu PF songs, recited chants and equally warned citizens to support the party and not opposition. A few minutes earlier Muchini phoned Gangare Primary School, the Deputy Head Mr. Machicho Martin (53) with the intention of distributing the regalia to the 18 staff members.

According to Section 58 of the Constitution, every Zimbabwean has the right not to assemble or associate with others nor be compelled to belong to an association or to attend a meeting or gathering. The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, Article 10 states that, "every individual shall have the right to assemble freely with others." In addition, Article 11 states that, "every individual shall have the right to freedom of movement." The right to freedom of association is guaranteed under Articles 12(3), 27(2) and 28 of the African Charter on Democracy, Elections and Governance.

Right to Personal Security

ZPP recorded 13 cases related to the violation of the right to personal security. Manicaland recorded 5 cases which was the highest number recorded and Mashonaland East recorded a case.

On 21 June 2023 in ward 7, Goromonzi South at around 0730 hrs, a CCC aspiring councillor and other CCC members gathered at Samutoko shops popularly known as Solomio. The CCC members were clad in party regalia in preparation for the nomination process to be held at Ruwa Local Board Main Offices. As they were singing and ululating, they were confronted by Zanu PF youths who arrived in a pickup truck. An altercation ensued as ruling party youths were ordered to discipline the CCC members calling them sell outs. The situation became tense as the Zanu PF members threatened to assault and facilitate the arrest of the CCC candidates to bar them from submitting papers for nomination. The situation normalised after the intervention of 2 police officers who calmed the rival groups. However, the situation remained tense as CCC activists residing in the area were further harassed and threatened with eviction from the area.

Section 52 of the Constitution states that every Zimbabwean has the right to bodily and psychological integrity, which includes the right to freedom from all forms of violence from public or private sources. Articles 3 and 5 of the UDHR recognise that every person has the right to personal liberty and security, and this is supported by Article 6 of the ACHPR.

Right to Education

In the month of June, ZPP recorded 2 cases. Masvingo and Midlands recorded a case each.

A case on the right to education was reported in Kariba at Kariba Primary School on 30 June 2023. Pupils were turned away from school over non-payment of tuition fees including those who are registered under the government BEAM scheme. It is said that School Development Committee (SDC) chairperson Dorcas Kandela and School head Bridget Masocha went class by class sending students home.

The United Nations (UN) Agenda 2030 sustainable development goal number 4 (four) advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education which promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all and is in line with the national legislative framework in Zimbabwe. Section 75 of the Zimbabwe Constitution says, 'every citizen and permanent resident of Zimbabwe has a right to – (a) basic State-funded education, including adult basic education'.

SPECIAL FOCUS

Right to administrative justice

In the month of June, ZPP recorded 5 cases of right to administrative justice. Mashonaland Central recorded 3 cases and Harare had 2 cases.

A case on the right to administrative justice was reported in Mt Darwin West at Chitse Clinic in ward 12. It is said that parents were finding it difficult to get birth records because of high fees charged by the institution. They said the USD5 fee was too steep and not affordable. It is alleged that the clinic was charging \$5 USD which is not affordable to villagers. Reports indicate that over the years, late registration incurred a charge of \$1.00 USD.

Section 68 of the Constitution stipulates that every Zimbabwean has a right to administrative conduct that is lawful, prompt, efficient, reasonable, proportionate, impartial and both substantively and procedurally fair.

PROVINCIAL OUTLOOK

Mashonaland West

The activities of the Zanu PF affiliate Forever Association Zimbabwe continued to violate citizens' rights to freedom of assembly and association. On 23 June, Zanu PF youths Jealous Mutemachani and Mavis Kanokora barred two CCC members from attending a soccer gala in Hurungwe West Mashuma village in ward 17. The ruling party youths, who are devout members of FAZ confronted the two CCC members before probing who had invited them for the activity. This did not go down well with others who challenged them for politicising the event resulting in chaos. Eventually Mutemachani and Kanokora left the event threatening people with unspecified action.

Intimidation was reported in Chegutu East ward 16 at Waze business centre on 12 June 2023. It is alleged that members of FAZ Olivia Mushonga, Muzvare and Shyne Nyathi warned two CCC activists saying they will be targeted after elections. The trio reportedly warned them that in the event of a rerun in October they will be punished worse than what happened in 2008.

Harare

In Harare, there was chaos during the ZEC voter inspection exercises held in Chitungwiza North Seke at St Aidan primary school, Seke High and at Unity M Creche on 1 June. Many residents who came for inspection found their names missing on the voters roll while others had been moved from their previous 2018 polling stations to other centres far from their places of residence. At Unity M Creche, chaos started when ZEC officials advised people with missing names to re-register at Seke Teachers' college, which resulted in verbal altercations. The activities of FAZ continued to violate citizens' rights to freedom of assembly and association and their political rights. In Glenview South ward 32 at Glenview 3 primary during a ZEC voters roll inspection exercise, members of FAZ were sitting at the gate collecting details of people coming to inspect their names. The FAZ members who were also clad in ruling party regalia were advising people to vote for Zanu PF on their way out of the school. A case on the right to shelter was reported in Harare Central Ridgeview area behind West-Ridge Primary School. On 9 June, the Harare City Council demolished several houses constructed in Ridgeview opposite Ridgeview industrial site areas. About 3 families were left homeless with property worth thousands of US dollars vandalized. A resident who spoke on condition of anonymity cited that they were not given notice about the scheduled demolitions. "We only saw a grader arriving to demolish our property", said the victim. ZPP has images showing some of the structures which were demolished.

Mashonaland East

Mashonaland East recorded violations associated with civil and political rights. In Mudzi North Botso village at Nyamapanda Business Centre in ward 1. It is said that villagers were forced to attend a Zanu PF meeting addressed by ruling party Youth Chairperson Gumisai and aspiring MP Benjamin Musweweshiri. Villagers were reportedly warned to attend the meeting without fail including vendors and businesspersons. They reportedly took turns to threaten people for not attending ruling party meetings saying they must repent before it's too late. In Hwedza South, since the proclamation of the election date by President Mnangagwa on 31 May, people in Matsvai village in Goto ward 7 Hwedza South, are being threatened and intimidated with violence by Zanu PF supporters. The ruling party youth and some traditional leaders are threatening violence if people fail to attend Zanu PF meetings. One of the perpetrators Mai Ananis has been calling for violence against opposition CCC supporters.

Manicaland

Manicaland recorded an increase in cases of intimidation and harassment of citizens by Zanu PF supporters ahead of the 2023 harmonised elections. There were serious threats by Zanu PF supporters to unleash violence on opposition CCC supporters. On 17 June, a group of four Zanu PF sympathisers besieged a bar in ward 33, of Buhera South, around 2000 hrs, brandishing an AK47 rifle. The youths who were in search of the CCC ward coordinator, and a CCC activist reportedly fired gunshots at the bar. Villagers who were drinking at the homestead abandoned their liquor and left the venue running for their lives. In an incident reported on 22 June (10am), Raymond Madzinza Saurombe the current acting Chief in Manicaland led a delegation of traditional leaders including some officials from the Ministry of Local Government to Rusitu community, ward 23 in Chimanimani East. Saurombe who claims to be the spokesperson of all traditional leaders from Chimanimani district allegedly attacked the Rusitu community for allowing opposition parties especially the CCC to hold activities in the area. He is said to have told the gathering that no opposition parties should campaign there. He called all opposition parties sell outs before warning people of the dangers of being members of the opposition. He further said that Zanu PF will take unspecified harsh measures against traitors. Traditional leaders were told to 'shepherd' their people to the polls on 23 August 2023 and ensure that all their people voted for Zanu PF by all means necessary.

Masvingo

Political space for opposition parties continued to shrink as Zanu PF limited space for level contestation through intimidation and harassment. In ward 21 at Gangare Clinic of Bikita East it was reported that Zanu PF was forcing citizens to attend their cell group exercise and coerced the participants to wear party regalia. The group was led by Vengai Muchini, Innocent Musora, Tinotenda Rangarira and Kudakwashe Machinapaya. Citizens were made to sing Zanu PF songs, recite chants and warned to support the ruling party and not opposition. A similar intimidation tactic was recorded in Chivi Central, where Munashe Pwanyai the ward 16 councillor intimidated villagers and opposition members. It was said that when he was given a chance to speak as the ward councillor at a funeral in Gwenyaya village, he started chanting Zanu PF slogans. More so, the surge in intimidation cases was witnessed at Nyika Growth Point, it was noted that a CCC supporter and businessperson was intimidated by approximately 12 Zanu PF supporters. It is said that the group led by Vena Nyangara, and one called Gopo approached the CCC supporter and ordered him to move from the growth point as he was an opposition supporter. The assailants were shouting that the CCC supporter should be killed or else have his property burnt to ashes.

Midlands

There was an increase of surveillance and intimidation aimed at supporters and leadership of opposition parties. It was reported that a member of the CCC was violently attacked at Siyahokwe Business Centre for wearing a CCC t-shirt with CCC aspiring MP for Chirumhanzu South, Hon. Cheza's picture. The assailants, led by Innocent Gundani and his brothers who are aligned with the ruling party, Zanu PF. This incident adds to a disturbing pattern of violence associated with Zanu PF during election periods.



Matabeleland South

The surge in intimidation by the members of the ruling party was recorded in the province. At Zezani Business Centre in Beitbridge West, it was reported that on 15 June Thabani Ndou of Zanu PF made remarks that those without Zanu PF membership cards shall never find peace in their homes. This intimidated citizens and caused them to be fearful. It is said that Ndou instructed villagers to buy Zanu PF cards from ward 5 chairperson. This left citizens feeling seriously intimidated and living in fear.

Bulawayo

There was continued electoral malpractice in the province. In Mpopoma-Mzilikazi constituency, at Matshiphisini shops, it was reported that Vuyani Moyo of an unknown political party was seen defacing posters of Zanu PF aspiring candidate, Admire Masikati. It is said that Moyo defaced two posters which is electoral malpractice and punishable by law.

Matabeleland North

At Sipepa Business Centre it was reported that Chief Mathuphula Khumalo violated the Traditional Leaders Act by instructing all village heads to vote for the ruling party and force citizens to vote for Zanu PF. It is said that Mathuphula made remarks that they need to punish everyone who voted for the opposition. In Nkayi South, it was noted that a Zanu PF member Judith Chingarande allegedly told villagers to vote for Zanu PF and the Member of Parliament candidate Stars Mathe. Chingarande warned opposition supporters that they risk being removed from the food aid beneficiary list if they continue supporting the Citizens' Coalition for Change.

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