

2023 Elections: Doom and Gloom ?



July 2023 Monthly Monitoring Report

The Round Up

In the month before the elections ZPP recorded 301 human rights violations, a large increase from 206 in June 2023. The recorded violations demonstrate that citizens are not able to access an environment that is free to exercise their constitutionally guaranteed freedoms in independent Zimbabwe. 54% of the violations were of threats, harassment, and intimidation, 19% of assault and 12% of discrimination. ZPP identified 5 006 victims of human rights violations (59% male, 39% female, 1% male persons with disability and 0.9% female PWDs). The general citizens populated the highest percentage of victims, 91%, and Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) supporters followed with 8% and Zanu PF with 0.3%. The Zanu PF party perpetrated the most violations (59%), followed by the Forever Associates Zimbabwe (FAZ) at 12% and the ZRP at 6%. Mashonaland Central (79) and Manicaland (59) provinces recorded the highest violations, followed by Harare (41) whilst Matabeleland North (5) and South (2) and Bulawayo (12) had the lowest. ZPP is largely concerned about how women continue to be victims of human rights abuses and violations generally and the targeting of female opposition supporters in particular. ZPP has documented a slight increase of female victims from 38% in June to 39% for July.



Assault of Human rights defenders and aspiring candidates

In the discharge of their duties, human rights defenders particularly the media personnel faced harassment and assault. The case in point being Annastancia Ndlovu, a journalist with Voice of America (VOA) based in Bulawayo who was assaulted by a group of Zanu PF members. It is said that Ndlovu was recording stories and experiences of the vendors who were being forced by Zanu PF to register in party cell groups. Facts confirm that Ndlovu was assaulted for

recording the experiences of the vendors. She had her phone confiscated and it was later given back to her. This is another case of violence against a journalist in the course of their duties.

During the 2023 pre-electoral period ZPP has observed an alarming trend of attacks and intimidation against CCC activists in their localities. Attacks on aspiring candidates have been documented by ZPP, primarily against aspiring local authority and national assembly candidates.

“Government Invites Foreign and Regional Observers

The government through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade invited regional and international observers to observe the 2023 harmonised elections. In July invitations were sent to a number of international organisations, political parties, and foreign observer missions, including those from the United States, Russia, the United Kingdom, 15 Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) nations, the African Union, the Pan-African Parliament, Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), African Caribbean Pacific group of states (ACP), the European Union, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Commonwealth, and numerous nations from Europe, the Americas, the Caribbean, the Pacific, and Asia. The invitation was extended to 51 embassies and 9 consulates accredited to Zimbabwe. However, President Emmerson Mnangagwa cautioned foreign observer missions accredited to observe the August 23, 2023, harmonised elections to stick to their mandate and avoid interfering with "electoral processes", a move meant to limit their watchdog role in promoting democracy in Zimbabwe. On 22 July President Mnangagwa in a speech to Zanu PF supporters and locals at a rally held in Muzarabani South constituency in Centenary, warned observer missions to focus on their duties or risk being embarrassed. The President alleged that there were some foreign observer missions who wished that violence would rule the elections.

Political and Gender dynamics

In the past, ZPP has recorded incidents of political violence in Chitungwiza involving members of Zanu PF and MDC-Alliance then led by Advocate Chamisa which is now identified as the Citizen Coalition for Change (CCC). The coming on board of other political players from other political parties brings in another political dynamic. The ruling party is currently using the intimidation of opposition candidates to deter aspiring candidates from running for political office. "They anticipate violence but let me reassure them that we oppose such inappropriate behaviour. We are a caring people that value peace and work to foster it. We will humiliate anyone who wishes for violence" Mnangagwa declared. In a similar incident in June, President Emmerson Mnangagwa charged at Western countries accusing them of attempting to interfere in Zimbabwe's electoral processes. He said this during an engagement meeting with artisanal miners. In his speech, Mnangagwa fumed at people who undermine the democracy that the nation enjoys, saying "Musoro wambuya wako". (loosely meaning your grandmother's head) This is an age old insult which has also been feminised.

In response to an invitation from the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of Zimbabwe, the European Union sent an EU Election Observation Mission (EOM) to the harmonized elections on August 23, 2023 led by Mr. Fabio Castaldo as head of mission. The EU deployed 46 long-term election observers to Zimbabwe's 10 administrative provinces to commence operations. The mission's core group of 11 experts arrived in Zimbabwe on July 8 and were set to be joined by the long-term observers. The mission representatives highlighted the EU's commitment to promoting democracy and the rule of law as demonstrated by the deployment of an election observation mission to the general elections in Zimbabwe. Furthermore the Chief Observer, Mr. Castaldo stated "Democracy requires more than elections, but a country cannot be a democracy without holding genuine elections".

Political violence

There has been an increase in cases of politically motivated violence since the proclamation of the election day by President Emmerson Mnangagwa on 31 May. ZPP recorded an increase in violence targeting opposition Citizen Coalition for Change activists by suspected Zanu PF supporters in Harare, Mashonaland Central, Masvingo, Manicaland and some parts of Midlands.

In Mbare, a known industrial hub for informal traders became a political hotpot in Harare CCC activist Grace Mirirodhi and 9 other CCC women were attacked by Zanu PF supporters led by Cde Olembe on July 13. The perpetrators forcefully stripped Grace of her party regalia and left her half naked. (RRB5508307 Matapi Police Station). On 14 July, 3 Zanu PF youths clad in party regalia sprayed Talent Matiutza with an unknown substance and she fainted. They were accusing her of supporting the CCC. The case was reported at Stoddard police station (RRB 5495723). That same day (14 July), CCC activist Shame M was assaulted by Zanu PF youths while putting up CCC posters in Mbare. The victim sustained injuries. CCC activist Washington Dzungwa was brutally assaulted by suspected Zanu PF youths in Mbare while sticking posters for Mbare aspiring legislator Starman Chamisa on July 14. The victim was beaten indiscriminately with sticks and sustained chest pains. The trend of assaults targeting opposition CCC activists continued on 21 July in Mbare, when CCC activist Denford Jambare was brutally assaulted by a group of approximately 45 Zanu PF youths who disembarked from a lorry beating CCC members indiscriminately. The victim was attacked with sticks by the youths at Pfumojena Council bar area around 5:30pm. He sustained internal injuries, and the perpetrators confiscated his phone before leaving him unconscious.

In Zengeza East Chitungwiza, CCC activists James Nkonde, Calvin Mutizira, and Albert Masamba were brutally assaulted by alleged Zanu PF youths in Zengeza during a door-to-door voter mobilisation campaign. The victims were reportedly ambushed by the youths who assaulted them with chains, clenched fists and booted feet. Nkonde sustained an eye injury, Mutizira mouth injuries while Masamba had his phone confiscated by the perpetrators. The incident happened on 7 July 2023. On 17 July, CCC activist Tryvine Musokeri was assaulted by suspected Zanu PF youths in Zengeza East Chitungwiza on his way home. The victim sustained a broken finger while trying to repel the youths who were assaulting him for his activism. In Epworth, four CCC activists Agnes Mabhena, Agnes Chiwashira, Rujeko Chipiramhosva and Ndomupe Machoba were brutally assaulted by a group of Zanu PF supporters led by Cde Ottoman and Cde Mahachi. Social media video footage of the victims showed bloodied images of three women and a man. The incident happened on 21 July and was reported at Domboramwari Police Station in Epworth (RRB5639026). On 20 July in Churu constituency at Takaz shopping centre ward 1 about 20 Zanu PF youths led by Barrington Mtanga, Privy and Kaseke chased a CCC campaign team led by Farisai Nyakudya, Tendai Mbambe and Tatenda Mukurunge. The youths reportedly blocked their 'baby' Quantum vehicle before smashing windows. They allegedly attempted to burn the vehicle, putting fire underneath it; however, the victims escaped driving off at high speed. 3 CCC activists sustained injuries following the attack.



In Manicaland, ward 5 Mutare Central CCC activists Gift Mendi, Martin Sashiri and Christopher Mafukirei Masaka were assaulted by suspected Zanu PF supporters in the Maonde area. It is alleged that the perpetrators used sticks and knobkerries to assault the victims. The incident happened on 14 July 2023. In Nyanga South, it is alleged that Zanu PF activists assaulted village head Zvinaiye Gonda for allowing CCC members to hold a meeting in ward 5 Gonda village. Reports say that CCC activists held their meeting opposite Gonda's homestead on 2 July before Zanu PF convened their meeting at the same venue on 15 July. Upon hearing that CCC had successfully convened their meeting, the ruling party activists assaulted village head Gonda accusing him of sanctioning the meeting. On 22 July in Mutare Central Sakubva ward 4, CCC activists were allegedly attacked by a group of about 45 Zanu PF youths during a door to door campaign in ward 2 and 3. About 45 Zanu PF youths reportedly led by Master Payee, Cde Singa, Nyasha Muchenje and Cecilia Gambe ambushed CCC activists attacking them with stones and tree logs. CCC activist Amos Madzitire sustained a broken arm (in 3 places) and was ferried to hospital for an emergency procedure. The scan reportedly identified that he sustained 3 fractured bones on the right arm.

In Mashonaland Central, CCC aspiring local government candidate for ward 27 Mazowe North Never Tembo was attacked by suspected Zanu PF supporters affiliated to aspiring Zanu PF Mazowe North legislator Tsungi Makumbe. The incident was recorded at Forrester estate farms F section in Mvurwi farming areas on 17 July 2023. In Mazowe West on 9 July, CCC activists Elisha Benjamin and Tendai Dandajena were reportedly attacked by Zanu PF members in Mazowe West concession while coming from a rally which was barred by the police in Bindura. It is alleged that the victims were attacked with stones and tree logs by rowdy youths who hurled insults, also calling them sellouts. In Mazowe Central, Chiweshe rural CCC aspiring Mazowe North legislator Elison Manyika and his campaign team were attacked by Zanu PF activists during a community campaign at Chideu village ward 2. Reports indicate that an unmarked Toyota Wish vehicle carrying Zanu PF youths rammed into Manyika's vehicle and the perpetrators jumped out armed with iron bars and knives forcing the victims to flee. It is alleged that the perpetrators were sent by Zanu PF Mazowe North aspiring legislator Tsungi Makumbe. In ward 6, Bindura North on 17 July 2023, CCC activist Madhi Mukombwe was brutally assaulted by Zanu PF youths in Chipadze. The perpetrators reportedly attacked Mukombwe accusing him of participating in opposition politics before leaving him with facial injuries.

In Mashonaland West, Zanu PF Youth Chairperson Paymore Gwagware reportedly attacked CCC activists who were conducting a community campaign in Hurungwe West at Gorezha Township in ward 26 (Chief Nematombo's jurisdiction). Reports confirm that Gwangare assaulted CCC activists Knowledge Chigoma and Solomon Ndoroyerwizi before vandalising a vehicle belonging to CCC aspiring ward 26 Councillor Innocent Zvarevashe. The incident was reported at Magunje police station under RRB 555/46/72 & 555/46/73. In Kadoma Central it is alleged that 3 Zanu PF youths were assaulted by Citizens' Coalition for Change supporters in Kadoma for defacing CCC posters.



The trio who were moving around Rimuka ward 3 pulling down CCC posters were allegedly assaulted by CCC supporters led by Raphael Zuze. It is said that the ruling party youths were assaulted in ward 13. The incident happened on 30 July 2023. In Chegutu Central, Zanu PF youth Ngonidzashe Chakandika was assaulted for putting President Emmerson Mnangagwa 's campaign posters outside a fast-food outlet, Chicken Inn. The incident happened in Chegutu Central on 24 July. Chakandika allegedly defied instructions from Chicken Inn employees, who confronted him to pull down Mnangagwa's campaign material on a pole adjacent the outlet. Following a tussle, Chikandira was assaulted by Chicken Inn staff. It is alleged that the Chicken Inn staff claimed that they were instructed by the Manager to remove any poster pasted close to their premises. The case was reported to Chegutu Central Police Station.

ZHRC tells Chiefs to stay away from politics

Traditional leaders have been reported as a major perpetrator of human rights violations as they continue to further the Zanu PF agenda. In many human rights reports they have been accused of intimidating, harassing and mobilising for the ruling party while violating the political rights of the citizens. It is against this backdrop that the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission (ZHRC) emphasised the need for the traditional leaders to stop mingling in politics. Their continued partisan approach violates Section 281 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act of 2013 that clearly prohibits traditional leaders from being members of any political party, participating in any politics or from furthering any interests of any political party to that effect. According to the Constitution, traditional leaders should treat all persons within their areas equally and fairly. For this reason, ZPP noted a case where Chief Gambiza ordered all village heads to put on the ruling party regalia during the funeral proceedings of a community member. Gambiza, who had put on the ruling party's regalia told all mourners that Zanu PF was the only winning party and everyone under his jurisdiction is mandated to vote for. Chief Saba of Binga North in ward 9 was reported to have told villagers that anyone seen campaigning for the opposition party Citizens Coalition for Change shall be beaten up and expelled from the village. Saba said this during the village head meeting and warned village heads that they need to mobilise for the party.



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Uebert Angel Appointed African Union's African Parliament Ambassador

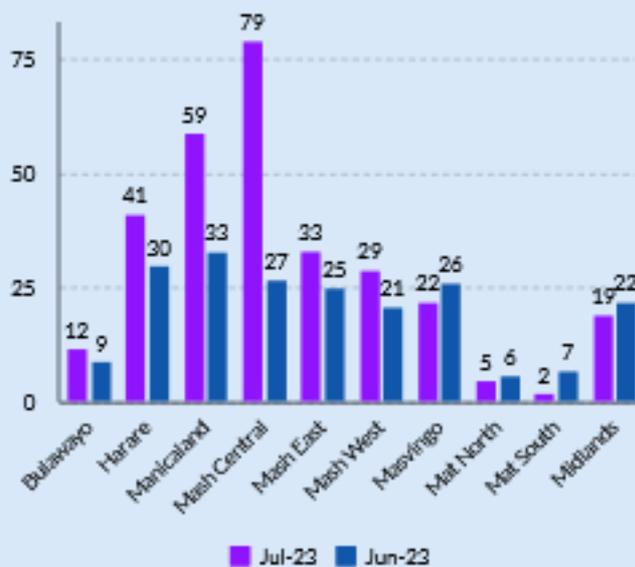
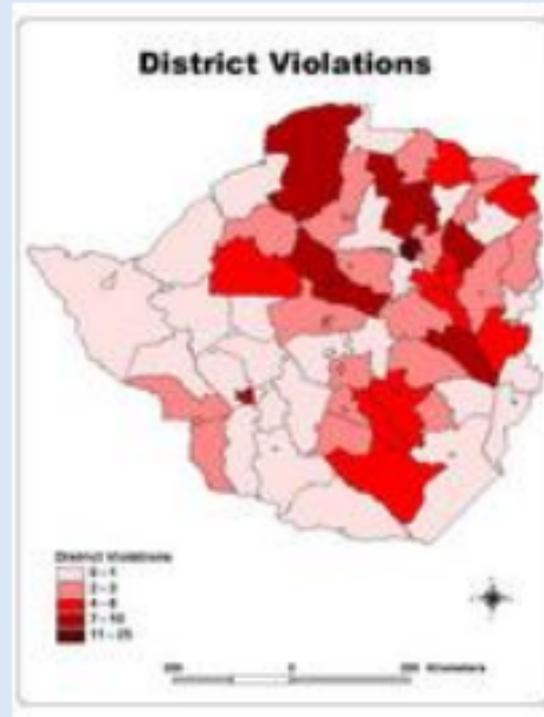
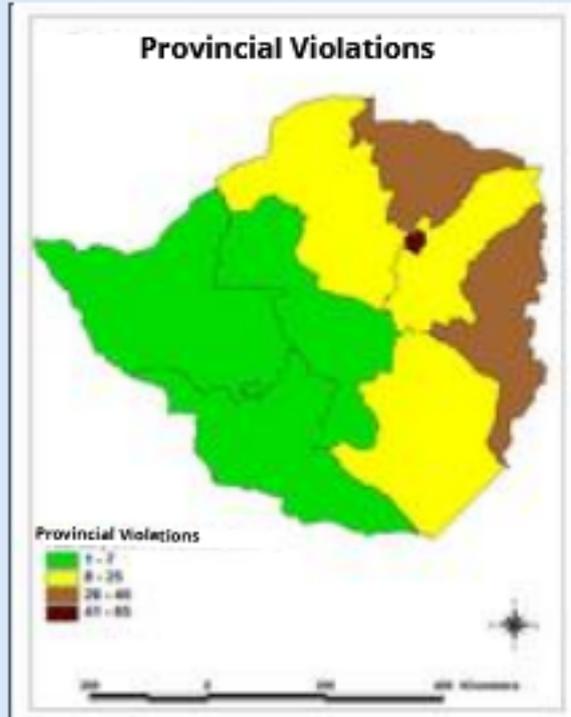


Zimbabwe's Ambassador At Large, Uebert Angel was appointed as the African Union's Pan African Parliament Ambassador for Interfaith Dialogue and Humanitarian Affairs. His responsibilities include interacting with government representatives, civil society organisations, and religious leaders to promote interfaith dialogue and cooperation to foster peaceful cohesion. Al Jazeera's undercover investigation implicated him as the one who uses his diplomatic cover to transfer illicit funds into Zimbabwe and launder US\$1.2 billion. The Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission is an entity mandated to combat crime and corruption, according to Chapter 13 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act, 2013, and has the authority to order the Commissioner General of Police to look into cases of suspected corruption. The Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission should investigate the allegations exposed by the Al Jazeera expose`.

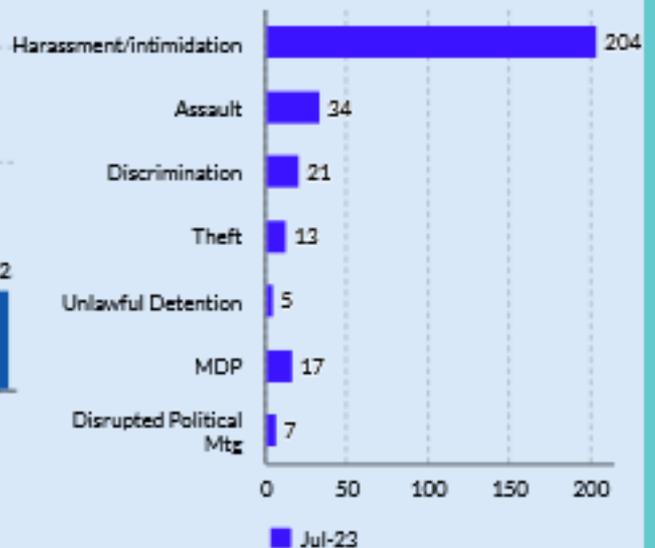
Human Rights Violations Monthly Dashboard

Zimbabwe Peace Project

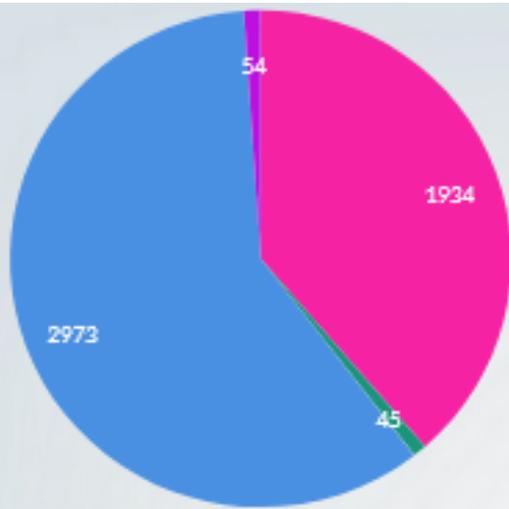
Report time frame: July, 2023



Provincial Violations

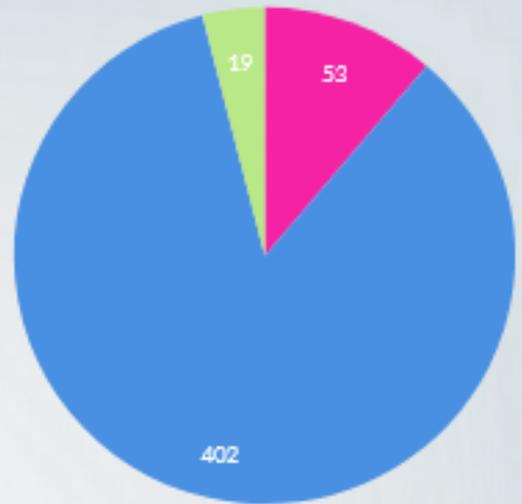


Types of Violations



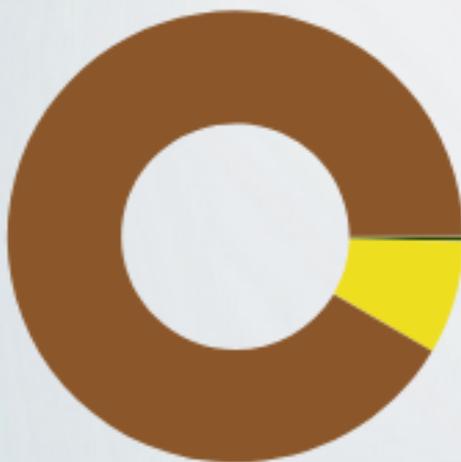
Female (38.63%) Female PWD (0.9%) Male (59.39%) Male PWD (1.08%)

Gender of Victims



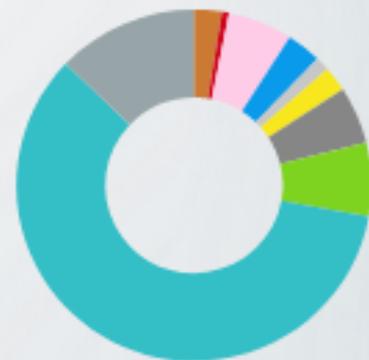
Female (11.18%) Male (84.81%) Unknown (4.01%)

Gender of Perpetrators



Zanu PF (0.34%) CCC (8.15%) General Citizens (91.51%)

Victims Affiliation



Mthwakazi (2.53%) State agents (0.63%) Traditional Leaders (5.91%) War Veteran (3.16%) ZNA (1.27%) Unknown (2.32%) CCC (5.27%) ZRP (6.75%) Zanu PF (59.28%) FAZ (12.87%)

Perpetrators Affiliation



Manicaland (21.43%) Mash Central (35.71%) Mash East (14.29%) Mash West (7.14%) Masvingo (14.29%) Midlands (7.14%)

Food & Other Aid Violations



Intra Party Violence

In Harare, on 3 July, Zanu PF coerced vendors and informal traders in Mbare to attend a campaign rally that was addressed by Vice President Constantino Chiwenga. Reports indicate that several vendors and small business owners were forced to close their vending stalls to attend the rally which was held at Mbare Stoddart Netball complex. Despite the cold weather, huge numbers turned up for the rally albeit at the expense of small businesses in Mbare. Some vendors in the Mupedzanhamo area were forced to close and threats of violence were directed at them if they failed to attend. NewZimbabwe.com confirms that there were also running battles between suspected Zanu PF youths and vendors who defied calls to attend the Chiwenga rally. On 19 July vendors and proprietors at Makomo home industry in Epworth South were allegedly forced to close business to attend a Zanu PF rally addressed by Vice President Kembo Mohadi. It is alleged that Zanu PF youths assigned by Zanu PF aspiring legislator Taedzwa Mutana ordered all businesses to close for people to attend a rally. Most proprietors from ward 2, 3 and 4 were forced to close business and attend the rally. In Epworth North, Zanu PF also convened a rally at Kubatana Primary School. Students and their teachers were reportedly forced to abandon their daily school lessons because of the rally. At the rally, Zanu PF officials took turns to denounce opposition parties before distributing mealie meal and maize seed to people. In Hunyani constituency, Zanu PF activists led by aspiring legislator Mr Machaya and party activist Cde Boroma went door to door forcing people to attend a rally at Glenwood shopping centre. Ruling party members were intimidating people to attend the rally which was attended by Harare South legislator Tongai Mhangagwa. Zanu PF youths clad in party regalia were spotted running in streets holding whips telling people to leave their homes and attend the rally. In Epworth South, a case of intimidation was reported in wards 2, 4 and 5 on 30 July. It is said that Zanu PF youths were running in the streets singing revolutionary songs heading towards Epworth secondary school. A ruling party vehicle was stationed near the school carrying youths and one of them was identified as Thamos Kambuyi of ward 5. An unidentified ruling party woman activist was heard telling youths to close down Makomo home industrial area for all businesspersons to attend a ruling party rally. ZPP is in possession of a short audio of the incident.

In Masvingo on 7 July, the police barred Citizens Coalition for Change rallies scheduled for Masvingo province. Chiredzi South, officer commanding police Chief Superintendent R Chihwereva barred two CCC rallies planned for Chikombedzi and Chiredzi Central at Tshovani stadium saying that there were official openings of two clinics (Gwasera Clinic and Rusununguko clinic) by the Minister of State for Provincial Affairs and Devolution Affairs Masvingo. In Masvingo West, Officer Commanding Police, Chief Superintendent D. Maringire barred the CCC Chivi rally citing a similar excuse that the venue had been booked first by Zanu PF. In two letters, the police said the activities were not in compliance with the Maintenance of Peace and Order Act (MOPA).

In Manicaland Mutare Central, it is alleged that Zanu PF activists disrupted a Citizens' Coalition for Change campaign on 22 July. Ruling party youths allegedly mobilised by Zanu PF leaders Esau Mupfumi and Binali Yard perpetrated violence forcing CCC to abandon their campaign launch at Beithall Sakubva in Mutare Central. It is alleged that Mupfumi and Yard bused youths from Penhalonga who blocked the CCC event barricading roads in Sakubva. It is said a Zanu PF member Newton Tagariremo from ward 3 Chinyausunzi chased CCC Mutare Central aspiring legislator Brian James' driver with a machet and iron bars but the driver escaped. The launch which was set to be addressed by Brian James was aborted.

In Mashonaland Central, on 9 July, the opposition CCC rallies scheduled for Mazowe Central and Bindura were barred by the police on unclear circumstances while Zanu PF solely continued to enjoy the right to freedom of assembly and association. Mashonaland Central province officer commanding police Mazowe District, Chief Superintendent Masimba E barred the CCC Mazowe Central rally citing that the venue had already been booked by another political party. The same was the case in Bindura as the police alleged that Bindura municipal council was yet to complete some renovations at the stadium. CCC spokesperson Advocate Fadzai Mahere confirmed the banning of CCC rallies in a statement.

It is worrying to note that the politics of intimidation and harassment of people has been used as a catalyst by Zanu PF to instil fear in the electorate. In most instances, people in rural communities have been threatened with violence worse than that of 2008 if the ruling party loses the 2023 general elections. This has resulted in many people living in fear.

ZPP calls upon political parties to respect citizen's fundamental political rights and rights to freedom of assembly and association. Section 67 of the Zimbabwe Constitution sets out the political rights of Zimbabwean citizens. Subject to the constitution, they 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.

Vendors frog marched to rallies



The rights to the freedom of assembly and association as well as the personal security of citizens, particularly vendors, have been violated during this election season. Vendors have been coerced into attending political party rallies throughout the ten provinces against their choice. Their livelihoods and businesses have suffered as a result. In order to make ends meet, many people, particularly women, eke a living as vendors. As a result, many families are likely to experience food shortages due to the violation of vendors' rights and forced closure of businesses, which will place an even greater pressure on the women who are usually caregivers. Owners of businesses linked to opposing parties have experienced intimidation and vandalism.

Nullified Opposition candidates' nomination

On 12 July 2023 the high court nullified Saviour Kasukuwere's nomination for president. The former Zanu PF political commissar Kasukuwere accused Zanu PF of utilising the legal system as a battlefield for political conflicts. On 27 July, the High Court pronounced that 12 CCC candidates could not run for the National Assembly since they submitted their papers after the 4 pm deadline.



The CCC's spokesperson, Fadzai Mahere, emphasised that the decision would be challenged since it was unconstitutional. Elisabeth Valerio, who is the only female presidential candidate in 2023, challenged the nullification of her nomination on the basis she wanted to use local currency to pay for her nomination fees. She stated that the nullification was unconstitutional and would appeal against the decision.

It is worrying to note that the politics of intimidation and harassment of people has been used as a catalyst by Zanu PF to instil fear in the electorate. In most instances, people in rural communities have been threatened with violence worse than that of 2008 if the ruling party loses the 2023 general elections. This has resulted in many people living in fear. ZPP calls upon political parties to respect citizen's fundamental political rights and rights to freedom of assembly and association. Section 67 of the Zimbabwe Constitution sets out the political rights of Zimbabwean citizens. Subject to the constitution, they 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.

Key Findings and Mitigation Measures

The Plight of female human rights defenders

On July 4, 2023 the CCC two female activists were acquitted by the High Court on charges of communicating falsehoods following their abduction in 2020. Joana Mamombe, Cecilia Chimhiri and Netsai Marova were arrested and accused of faking their abduction and torture. This demonstrates the struggles that numerous female human rights defenders face in order to obtain fair trials in Zimbabwe. In August 2019, Samantha "Gonyeti" Kureya, a female comedian whose skits and films parody the government and its policies, was kidnapped, tortured, and subjected to inhumane and degrading treatment. She was then later arrested on allegations of wearing police uniforms without authorisation. The legal system does not protect human rights defenders who require psychological or medical assistance, instead they will suffer further abuse due to prolonged detentions and arbitrary arrests. Civic space in Zimbabwe is shrinking and women who are more vulnerable are mostly affected.

Recommendations

CSOs are urged to initiate early response mechanisms to ensure human rights defenders' needs including legal and medical assistance are quickly responded to.

Cases of Arson among supporters

ZPP recorded 4 cases of arson targeting opposition Citizens' Coalition for Change activists by suspected Zanu PF supporters. The victims reported that they suspected their rivalries in Zanu PF. In Chiredzi South, 2 CCC activists experienced arson attacks from suspected Zanu PF supporters. In ward 7, a CCC member had his hut torched by suspected Zanu PF members on 19 July 2023. The victim was seen sticking posters of CCC aspiring legislator Douglas Gumba before the incident. A report was made at Chambuta police station (RRB 5483395). In ward 6 on 20 July, another CCC member's hut was burnt (CR39/07/23 Chambuta police station). The victims lost wares including food, cement, live chickens, mattresses, kitchen utensils and property all of which has affected their livelihoods.



One of the victims suspects a Zanu PF councillor identified as Roja Mashoro who has been threatening CCC supporters during ward and village meetings. In Mazowe Central, on 28 July, suspected Zanu PF activists torched 2 houses belonging to a family suspected of supporting the opposition CCC. Reports confirm that the homesteads belonging to the father and son were razed to the ground in an arson attack around 11pm by suspected Zanu PF supporters in Mazowe Central Chiweshe ward 3 rural. It is alleged that since then, ruling party supporters in the village and some traditional leaders have declared the area a no-go area for the opposition. That same day, suspected Zanu PF activists torched a cattle kraal and goat pen belonging to another CCC activist in ward 3, Mazowe Central at Musonza village. It is alleged that the victim was targeted by ruling party activists for supporting the opposition CCC. A villager who spoke on condition of anonymity reported that the arson was meant to kill livestock but fortunately the animals escaped through the fire. Livelihoods were affected as the victims were left without adequate shelter to sustain their families.

Towards A Zimbabwe where there is Peace, Justice, Dignity and Development for All

ZPP is a Non-Governmental Organisation that was founded in 2000 by a group of faith based and human rights NGOs working and interested in human rights and peace-building initiatives. ZPP has become a vehicle for civic interventions in times of political crises. ZPP monitors and documents incidents of human rights violations and breaches of peace.

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 anonymously if they so choose. The App is available on Google Play and Apple stores, and WhatsApp Chatbot called Batsi or Mncedisi. The verified reports are documented in the Monthly Monitoring Report, and the victims are assisted to access service providers for legal or medical support. All this is intended to create an active citizenry that resists, rejects and reports violence.

Special Focus

In the month of July the special focus delved on issues of 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 57 cases in which the political rights of citizens were violated. Mashonaland Central had 9 cases recorded as the highest.

Four CCC activists were brutally assaulted by alleged Zanu PF supporters in Harare's Epworth suburb. The victims were reportedly attacked by a group of Zanu PF supporters led by Cde Ottoman and Cde Mahachi. Social media video footage of the victims showed bloodied images of three women and a man. The incident happened on 21 July and was reported at Domboramwari Police Station in Epworth (RRB5639026).

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.

Right to Personal Security

ZPP recorded 34 cases related to the violation of the right to personal security. Mashonaland Central recorded 10 cases and Matebeleland South recorded a case.

On 26 July, a mob of Zanu PF supporters besieged a CCC activist's house in concession Mazowe West threatened to discipline him for supporting the opposition. The ruling party supporters invaded the home singing revolutionary songs forcing the victim to flee. Reports indicate that the victim was saved by some police officers from the Concession police post who dispersed the mob. Since then, the victim and his family have been living in fear.

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 African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (ACHPR).

Freedom of Assembly and Association

In the month of July, ZPP recorded a total of 36 cases related to freedom of assembly and association. Manicaland had the highest number, 9 cases and Mashonaland East recorded 2 cases being the lowest.

A Zanu PF youth was assaulted for putting President Emmerson Mnangagwa 's campaign posters outside a fast-food outlet, Chicken Inn. The incident happened in Chegutu Central on 24 July. The victim allegedly defied instructions from Chicken Inn employees, who confronted him to pull down Mnangagwa's campaign material on a pole adjacent the outlet. The victim defied their orders and was assaulted by Chicken Inn staff. It is alleged that, the Chicken Inn staff claimed that they were instructed by the Branch Manager to remove any poster that was close to their premises. The matter was reported to Chegutu Central Police Station.

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 administrative justice

In the month of May, ZPP recorded 7 cases of right to administrative justice.

It is alleged that Zanu PF youths camped at Ranja pre-school base in Mudzi North ward 17 have been forcing nearby villagers to contribute money for welfare. Reports indicate that the youths have camped at the pre-school since 3 July which has resulted in many people living in fear. The youths reportedly wake up every-morning running in streets singing revolutionary songs denigrating the opposition CCC. It is alleged that Chief Mukota (Alex Manhando Turo) assigned them to compile names of CCC supporters saying when the government deploys soldiers, they should be ready to submit names of traitors.

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.

Right to Education

In the month of July, ZPP recorded a total of 4 cases.

A case on the right to education was reported in Mt Darwin West at Sorera primary school in ward 16. Pupils with outstanding tuition fees and levies were turned away from school by the school head Mrs Matsvai together with SDC members led by Mr Clemence Dahwa. The incident happened at a time when pupils were preparing for examinations.

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'.

Provincial Outlook

Mashonaland Central Province

Mashonaland Central recorded an increase in cases of intimidation and harassment of opposition supporters and citizens by traditional leaders and Zanu PF activists. A case of intimidation was reported in Mvurwi urban ward 3 at a Zanu PF campaign launch where the party was unveiling a local authority candidate. Zanu PF activist and war veteran Cde Nhepera reportedly threatened people to vote for Zanu PF or face certain consequences. Nhepera also warned people that in case of a possible run off they were going to kill people, especially opposition supporters. "You can go and report wherever you wish, even now you can go tell the police," said Nhepera in full view of community members. Nhepera is an A2 farmer at Mondynes farm about 10km from Mvurwi town along Mvurwi Mutorashanga road in Mazowe north ward 26. In 2008, he was known for commanding a torture base at Dhawe farm in ward 26 where a lot of people were beaten and left living with permanent injuries. On 26 July, a mob of Zanu PF supporters besieged a CCC activist's house in Concession Mazowe West threatening to discipline him for supporting the opposition. The ruling party supporters allegedly invaded the victim's home singing revolutionary songs forcing the victim to flee. Reports indicate that the victim was saved by some police officers from the Concession police post who dispersed the mob. Since then, the victim and his family have been living in fear.

Harare Province

The province recorded cases associated with civil and political rights violations. In Harare Central on 5 July, human rights lawyers Obey Shava and Chamunorwa Chingwe were brutally assaulted and left for dead by at least four men driving in a green Mercedes Benz sedan and a Toyota GD6 in Harare. The incident took place outside Selborne Routledge Primary School in Belvedere shortly after 7 PM. Advocate Thabani Mpofu, who was briefed on the attack narrated that Shava received a phone call from a man who claimed to have an urgent legal matter and asked to meet him in the Belvedere area. Shava reportedly agreed to meet the individuals he intended to drop off a lawyer colleague in the same area. The assailants attacked them as soon as he came out of his car and confiscated his phone before leaving him for dead. Shava sustained broken legs and was admitted at a private hospital while Chingwe escaped with minor injuries.

On 26 July, a chemical explosive device was thrown at the house of the CCC St Mary aspiring legislator Brighton Mazhindu. Reports indicate that the arson attack happened at midnight at a time when the victim and his family were asleep. Mazhindu reportedly told Newsday that the explosive device caused damage worth US\$1,000. The explosion shattered windowpanes blew off his carport roof, and caused cracks on the wall. The victim suspects his rival CCC candidate lawyer Fred Masarirevu who also filed his papers under the CCC, although the opposition party disowned him. "I was awakened by a disturbing sound at around 1:30am. I suspect Freddy because he does not have any support in the constituency". In response to the accusations, Masarirevu denied any involvement and accused Mazhindu of dragging his name into the mud. He stated that he was not a politician like Mazhindu and alluded to the dirty nature of politics. The incident was reported to the police (RRB5644417). The Police Bomb Disposal and Forensics Unit attended the scene. Police spokesperson, Assistant Commissioner Paul Nyathi, confirmed that investigations were underway, and a detailed statement would be released in due course.

Mashonaland West Province

Mashonaland West recorded political rights violations. It is alleged that Zanu PF activists barred a Council meeting meant to educate people on municipal by laws in Chegutu East at Dombwe farmers hall ward 17. Reports indicate that Zanu PF activists Tapiwa Karonga (ward 18 Councillor) and Fanuel Makamure (Zanu PF chairperson) halted the meeting saying that it was not supposed to be held in ward 17 under CCC Councillor Stewart Kamudyariwa. They reportedly argued that Kamudyariwa and his supporters should not be allowed to participate in government initiatives saying the meeting will not be convened there. In Chegutu east ward 16, Zanu PF aspiring Councillor Tapiwa Karonga intimidated people to vote for Zanu PF during a ward meeting. In his address on 6 July 2023, Karonga said people will be assaulted worse than what happened in 2008. He reiterated that this year many people will be targeted, especially those aligned to the opposition CCC.

Mashonaland East Province

In Mashonaland East, Mudzi North, Mutesva villagers in ward 10 under Chief Goronga were forced to attend a political meeting which was addressed by aspiring Zanu PF Mudzi North legislator Benjamin Musweweshiri. On 25 July, a village head was assigned to compile names of all absentees for unknown reasons. It is said that during the meeting villagers were made to sing revolutionary songs chanting ruling party slogans denouncing the opposition CCC. In his address Musweweshiri warned people against supporting opposition parties saying they risk facing serious consequences. Villagers were also advised to report to the village head when they receive a visitor at their homes. In ward 2 Mudzi North at Nyahuku village, on 7 July, legislator Newton Kachepa and his aide Karima addressed a village meeting. It is said that during the meeting Kachepa inquired why people did not vote for him during the primary elections before issuing threats to punish. He went on to say that he was going to kill them one by one which left many people living in fear. In his closing remarks, Kachepa threatened people with a lot of suffering if they chose not to follow what he was telling them. In Mudzi North at Kotwa Growth Point ward 10. It is alleged that Zanu PF youths sent by aspiring legislator Benjamin Musweweshiri were running in streets singing revolutionary songs denigrating the opposition CCC. The youths forcibly made vendors to abandon business and join them. It is said that even people with health challenges were forced to run around Kotwa growth point singing and chanting Zanu PF slogans.

Manicaland Province

In Manicaland cases of political intolerance were on the rise ahead of the 2023 harmonised elections. It is alleged that members of the Forever Associates Zimbabwe (FAZ) were intimidating villagers in Makoni West around Mavhudzi, Matsika and Chiduku areas. On 22 July, they openly told villagers that they will bring a list of people who will be allowed to vote in the area. "All those whose names do not appear on our list will not be allowed to vote", said an unnamed FAZ member at Chiduku primary school where they addressed parents and teachers. On 26 July, Zanu PF held a meeting at St Bedes Tswatswa shopping centre in ward 13, Makoni West. The meeting was scheduled for everyone to attend without fail. It is alleged that in his address, Zanu PF district chairperson Mr D Totohwiyo intimidated people to support the ruling party Zanu PF or face a reign of terror after elections. People were reportedly warned to vote for Zanu PF to stay safe and continue benefiting government aid. A woman was warned in full view of villagers to advise her children to stop CCC activism and join Zanu PF before it's too late. A case on the right to human dignity was reported at Chegore Secondary School in Mutare North on 28 July 2023. It is alleged that the school staff led by the head Mr Kuziva assaulted female students which infringed on their rights to human dignity. The staff reportedly assaulted girls on the buttocks accusing them of engaging in sexual activities and love affairs within the school premises. It said the victims were made to lie down on their bellies to receive the corporal punishment.

Masvingo Province

The intimidation and victimisation of villagers as a means to force them to be part of the Zanu PF cell structures was a worrying record. In Bikita East, Zanu PF activists identified as Mary Ngongoni told citizens that they needed to rally behind Zanu PF and all the activities of the ruling party. Allegedly, Ngongoni further instructed all village heads to identify and punish individuals in the community that fail to attend Zanu PF activities. In Bikita East at Gangare Primary in ward 21, it was reported that Zanu PF aspiring councillor Vengai Muchini announced that all civil servants were to be visited by the ruling party agents to monitor where they had registered to vote. Muchini went on to announce that civil servants who vote for the opposition are likely to lose their jobs and get blacklisted from any government employment. In that meeting the ruling party and FAZ activist Jaison Mungovi forced all civil servants to chant Zanu PF slogans. In Bikita South, ward 1 a Zanu PF activist identified as Tafirenyika Rashai intimidated the school administration and teachers at Gawa Primary. It is alleged that Tafirenyika ordered the School Development Committee to stop operating as they were all suspected CCC supporters. It is said that Tafirenyika told teachers to attend local Zanu PF activities to avoid being beaten and punished.

In Chivi North constituency in ward 18, a case of malicious damage was recorded where CCC aspiring candidate had his main house, shop and kombi vandalised by Zanu PF and FAZ activists. The attack was led by a guy identified as Mufesi who appeared to be giving directives while others were vandalising. The attack came shortly after the candidate and the party members had completed the training of election agents at Wilson's homestead. Assailants went on to attack the Mashuri shop at Gwitima Business Centre where it is alleged, they beat up a shopkeeper and a bottle store attendant. Another similar case was recorded in Chiredzi South in ward 6 and 7, where it was reported that huts belonging to members of the CCC got torched. The victims were targeted as they are active members of the CCC.

Allegedly, the victims suspect a Zanu PF Councillor identified as Roja Mashoro who was said to have been threatening CCC supporters during ward and village meetings. The arson cases were reported to the ZRP at Chambuta station, ward 7 (RRB 5483395) and ward 6 (CR39/07/23). The victims lost property that include utensils, mattress, food, cement, and live chickens which has affected their livelihood.

Midlands Province

The most striking violation in the province was an arson case that was recorded in Shurugwi at Mahove in Tongogara. It was reported that suspected opposition supporters led by Edwin Madhuvoko set on fire huts of nine families. The arson attacks carried out by Edwin and others targeted Zanu PF members who lost property and other goods. A number of women were affected. The matter was reported to the police. Consequently, there was a witch hunt for opposition supporters especially members of the CCC. In Mahove village of Shurugwi, where a FAZ member Tendai Manhungo instructed all villagers not to entertain CCC members when they carry out door to door campaigns. This happened on the sidelines when Zanu PF members had gathered all villagers to organise for the Cowdray Park rally which took place in Bulawayo. Manhungo further told villagers and party supporters that anyone who welcomes CCC supporters to their home shall be beaten up.

Intimidation and harassment remain the major features in the province. During the funeral proceedings at Kadangwe homestead in ward 10, it was reported that Chief Gambiza ordered all village heads to put on the ruling party regalia. In that funeral Gambiza who had worn the ruling party's regalia told all mourners that Zanu PF was the only winning party which everyone under his jurisdiction is mandated to vote for. Gambiza warned that those that fail to show allegiance to the ruling party shall not be given food. His partisan approach violates Section 281 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act of 2013 that clearly prohibits traditional leaders from being members of any political party, participating in any politics or to further any interests of any political party to that effect.

Other cases of intimidation and harassment were recorded in Gokwe Kana where Zanu PF activists Magola Nyoni and Dorcas Mandhla were threatening people with death notices especially those that were known as CCC activists. In Gokwe Kabuyuni in ward 27, FAZ member Viola Mombeshora intimidated and forced citizens to attend the ruling party campaign meeting. It is said that Mombeshora was moving around with the Zanu PF District Chairperson Vhumbanyama where they told vendors and shopkeepers to attend their meeting. In ward 23 of Redcliff Urban, Mandlenkosi Maqoqoda, the Zanu PF District Chairperson, donated stationery to St Joseph Primary School and forced children and their parents to chant Zanu PF party slogans. This is against the electoral act where children are not to be forced to take part in any political gathering.

Bulawayo Province

The province recorded an increase of cases of intimidation and harassment ahead of the elections. On 17 July between Fife Street and 5th Avenue, Zanu PF activists led by Simiso Ndlovu were forcing vendors to join their party. It is said that the ruling party was moving around in large groups intimidating vendors to join the party or else be expelled from vending bays. Ndlovu was heard remarking on the fact that any vendor, whether operating illegally or otherwise, becomes untouchable if they are protected by Zanu PF.

To boost their numbers in the upcoming elections, the ruling party has since targeted vendors through coercive tactics to take part in their campaign activities. In the same incident, it was reported that Annastancia Ndlovu, a journalist with Voice of America was assaulted by a group of Zanu PF members. Ndlovu was recording the experiences of vendors who were being forced by Zanu PF to register in cell groups. Ndlovu a journalist was manhandled and assaulted for recording the experiences of the vendors. She had her phone confiscated and later given back to her.

Political intolerance continued to surge in the province. This is evidenced by a case at Sizinda Shops where it was noted that Thabani Magutshwa of Mthwakazi Republic Party was going around the shops insulting Zanu PF and CCC supporters with unprintable words. Magutshwa stated that non-Ndebele speakers should not be voted in any parliamentary and council seats in the name of representing the Bulawayo electorate.

Matabeleland North Province

At Lupane Centre, it was reported that a Zanu PF activist identified as Jonathan Vundla was going around the shops instructing shop keepers to campaign for the ruling party. Verified facts indicate that Vundla made a warning remark that the shopkeepers should at least display a Zanu PF poster in their shops to be protected. Vundla further underscored that those that fail to comply might have their licences revoked. The continued intimidation and harassment were aimed at forcing the victims to join the ruling party.

On 19 July in Saba village, ward 9 of Binga North, it was recorded that Chief Saba whose name is Charles Mudenda told villagers that anyone seen campaigning for the opposition party CCC shall be beaten up and expelled from the village. Saba said this during the village meeting where he further intimidated the opposition supporters of CCC. His continued partisan approach violates Section 281 of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act of 2013 that clearly prohibits traditional leaders from being members of any political party, participating in any politics or to further any interests of any political party to that effect. According to the Constitution, traditional leaders should treat all persons within their areas equally and fairly.

Matabeleland South Province

Political intolerance coupled with electoral malpractice was recorded in Bulilima constituency. On 25 July, at Plumtree ward 1, it was reported that a member of the Mthwakazi Republic Party identified as Cephass Mlotshwa tore posters of candidates belonging to Zanu PF and the CCC. It is said that Mlotshwa was remarking that the said parties do not reflect the regional agenda and are all headquartered in Harare. Tearing of posters of other candidates is against the Electoral Act.



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