

SILLY SEASON

EPISODE ONE



THE ZIMBABWE PEACE PROJECT
MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT
OCTOBER 2021



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The main opposition political party, MDC Alliance, contributed to nearly three percent of violations.

The police continue to be in the spotlight for violating human rights this month as they are responsible for seven cases of unlawful detention and also largely liable for the 134 cases of harassment and intimidation, together with Zanu PF.

The situation points to a worrying trend as the country approaches the 2023 elections. Hate speech continued to dominate the political environment.

Zanu PF maintained its dominance on the list of human rights violators in the month of October 2021.

For the second time the ruling party contributed to over 50 percent of all the human rights violations and this is largely attributable to the attempts by the party to stop the campaign activities of the MDC Alliance.

Zanu PF mobilized its supporters to disrupt and attack the MDC Alliance leader Nelson Chamisa's convoy in three provinces, Masvingo, Manicaland and Mashonaland West and in the interests of democracy and equality in political contestation, these incidents were unwarranted.

In one of the incidents, the [MDC Alliance claimed](#) its Zvimba South Constituency Coordinating member Maria Wemba was abducted at Murombedzi growth

point in Zvimba West by suspected Zanu PF militia. She was allegedly found later naked and badly beaten.

ZPP condemns in the strongest terms the actions by Zanu PF, and urges the party supporters and activists to respect the founding values of the Constitution, which clearly stipulate that Zimbabwe is a multi-party democracy entity where opposition political activity is guaranteed.

ZPP also calls on the police to act professionally, impartially and without fear and favour in order to bring justice to victims of violence.



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The events of this month laid bare the selective application of the law, where Zanu PF activities have gone on without any hindrances and where police have been used to subtly and overtly disrupt opposition political activity.

This is largely because while the MDC Alliance was having hurdles thrown in its way, Zanu PF continued to conduct the last round of the its district and provincial internal elections.

These were characterised by incidents of violence and arrests were only made where the police acted against those in power.

For example, in Bindura, on October, 15 police officers were arrested after they assaulted

Zanu PF supporters in Mupandira near the provincial capital, Bindura, and the matter allegedly got the attention of President Emmerson Mnangagwa who allegedly suspended some senior officers.

The Zimbabwe Peace Project, recorded 15 cases of intra-party violence within Zanu PF, a 50 percent increase from last month's 10 cases and out of these, there have been no arrests of any Zanu PF supporters, which goes to show that the ruling party gets away with internal violence, and that impunity is a great cause for concern.

The Zimbabwe Republic Police follows behind Zanu PF as perpetrators of human rights

violations at just over 32 percent. The social and economic state of the country did not improve and while government pushed for an increase in COVID-19 vaccination to 38 percent of the population, Zimbabweans continued to fail to access basic healthcare, education, water, and other social services. The economy did not make it any easier as prices were on a sustained increase spurred on by the fall of the Zimbabwean dollar against the United States dollar.

This month, we also take a look at the post-Zanu PF conference environment and the unfolding political environment as the country heads towards 2023.



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Politically, the country is turning a corner into what is set to be a bruising tussle for political power and with Zanu PF having already showed signs it will use its leverage of having access to state resources, the turf is set.

What concerns ZPP most is that all of this happens at the detriment of the poor people who have to bear the brunt of political expediency at the expense of service delivery.

For example, Zanu PF spent millions of dollars to conduct its conference in Bindura, where State power, opulence and grandiose were at display right in the heart of one of Zimbabwe's poor regions.

While the party is free to conduct its business in any way, the concern is that Zanu PF as the ruling party, continued to utilize government resources from all the ministries to further its political processes and this is very unfortunate and exposes the need for the return to a situation where the line between the state and the ruling party is clear.

Furthermore, the President of the Chiefs Council, Fortune Charumbira, went on to make remarks that prove the partiality of traditional leaders.

Charumbira has claimed that traditional leaders were not bound by the Constitution because the chieftainship institution was in existence

before the country's charter was crafted.

He later told NewsDay, "What Constitution? What came first, the Constitution or the chiefs? We came first as chiefs before the Constitution," he said.

Chapter 15.2 of the Constitution stipulates that traditional leaders are not allowed to bear allegiance to any political party or to participate in partisan politics.

This is not anything to be taken lightly as chiefs and village heads have been among the major perpetrators of political violence in Zimbabwe and we will call on Charumbira to retract his words and clearly declare and instruct chiefs to be apolitical.



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1.0 Executive summary

We recommend

In light of the increased political activity across the country, ZPP continues to urge restraint and tolerance. This is because in the context of a democratic society that Zimbabwe seeks to achieve, intolerance and violence can only take the country backwards.

Political parties and individuals vying for public office have a duty to conduct themselves in a peaceful manner and to respect the rights of citizens.

The rights that we continue to remind politicians of include the right to free expression, freedom of association, assembly and affiliation.

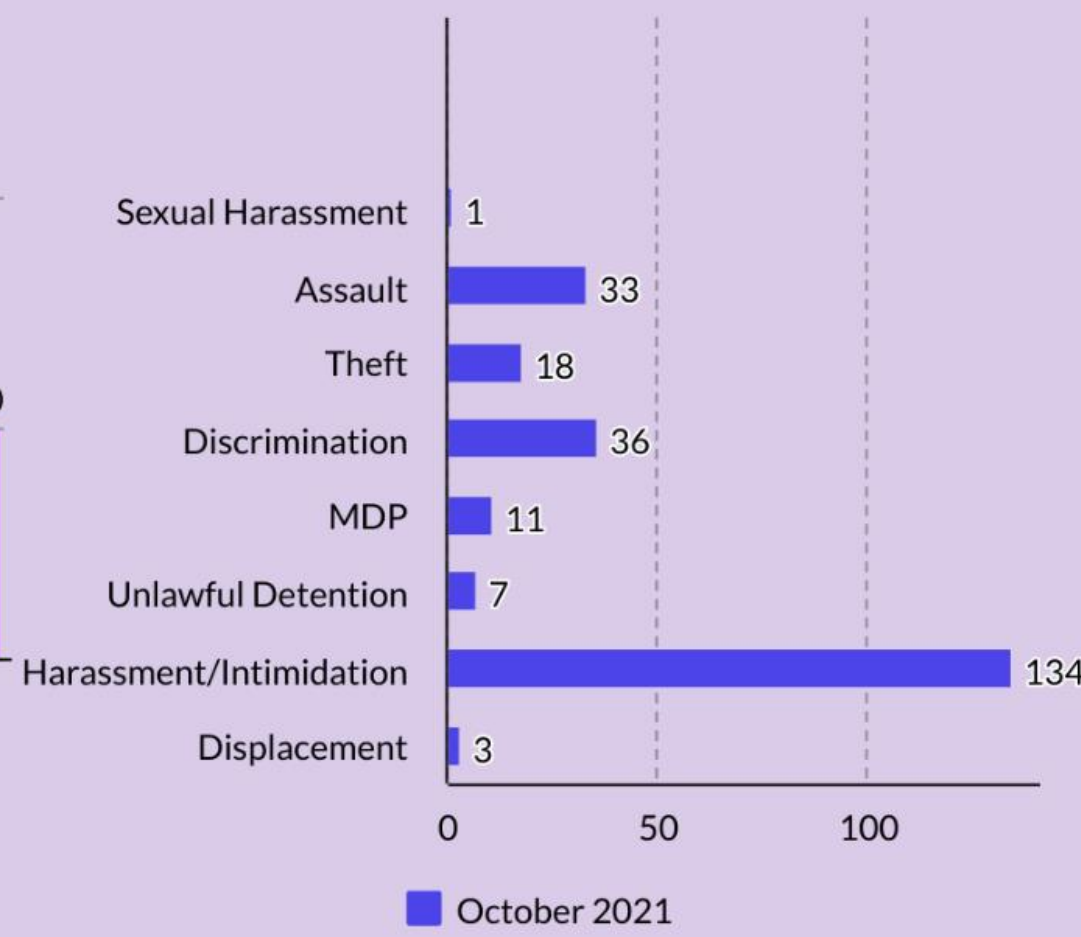
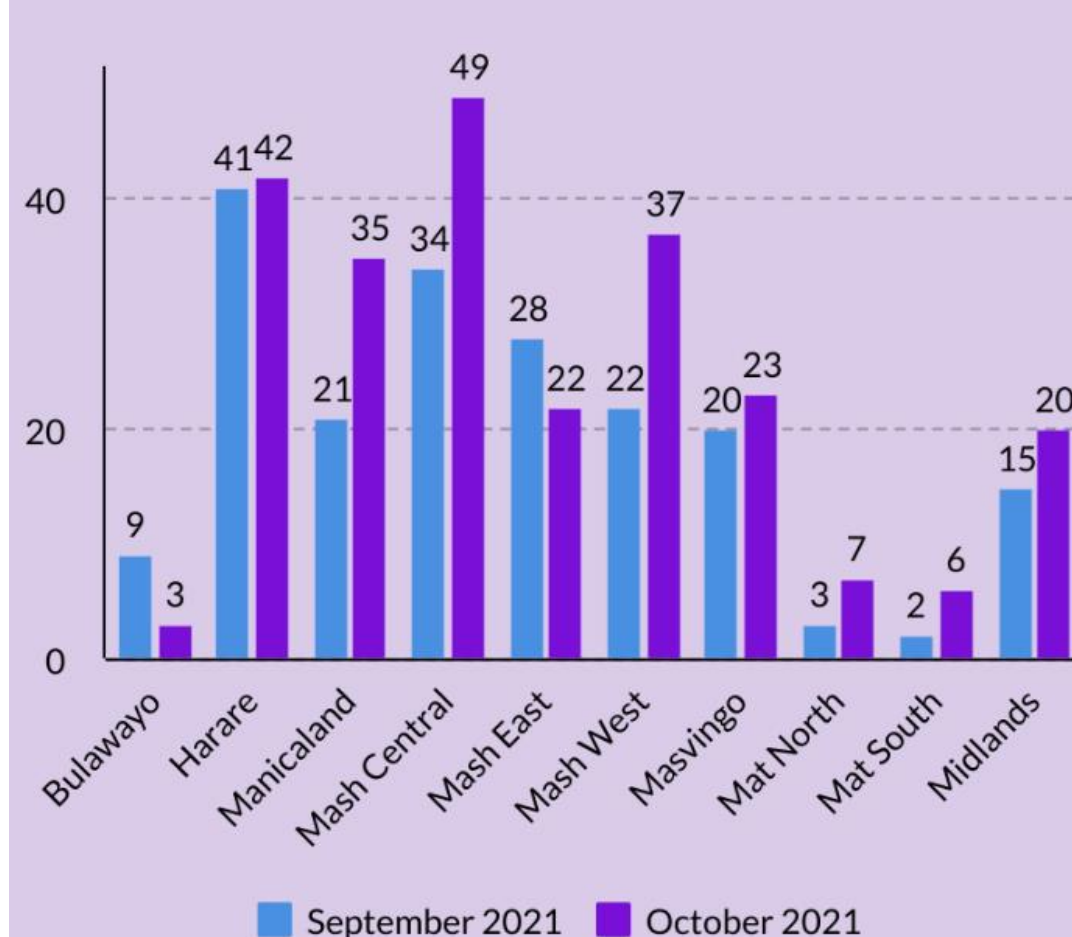
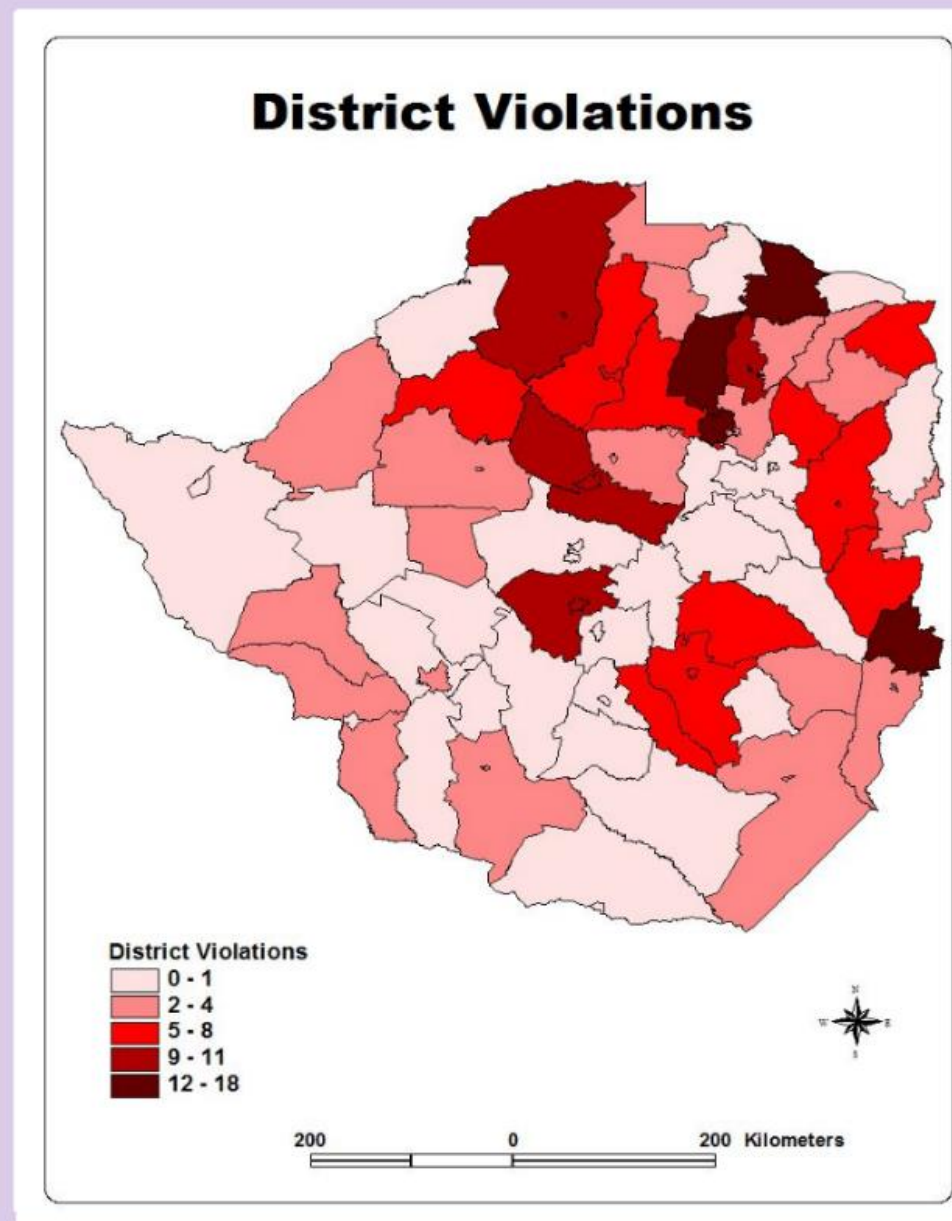
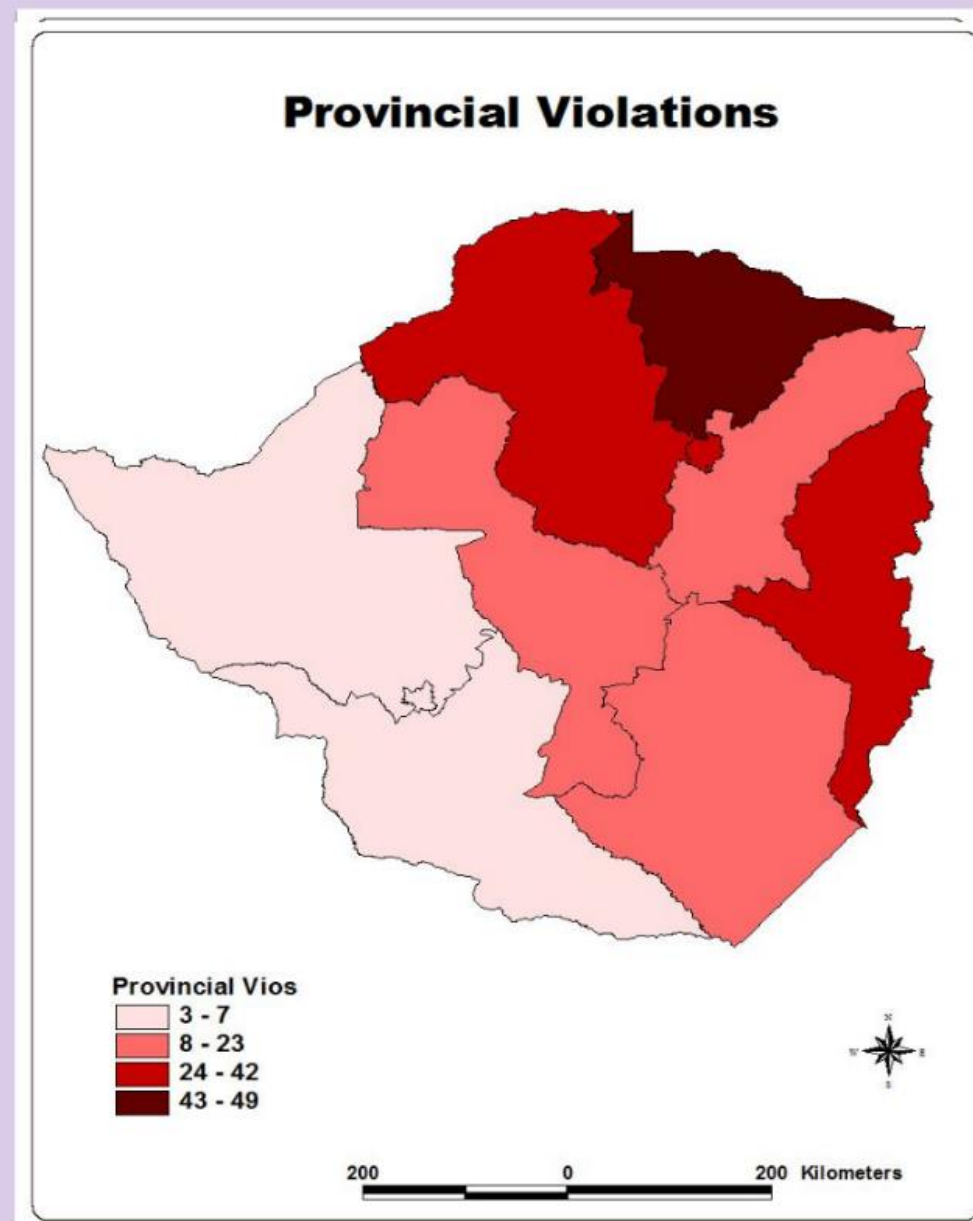
Belonging to or sympathizing with a political party of one's choice is not a crime; it is a fundamental right!

We also call on the ruling party to end its abuse of state institutions such as the police, and that the line between government and the ruling party should remain clear.

Human Rights Violations Monthly Dashboard

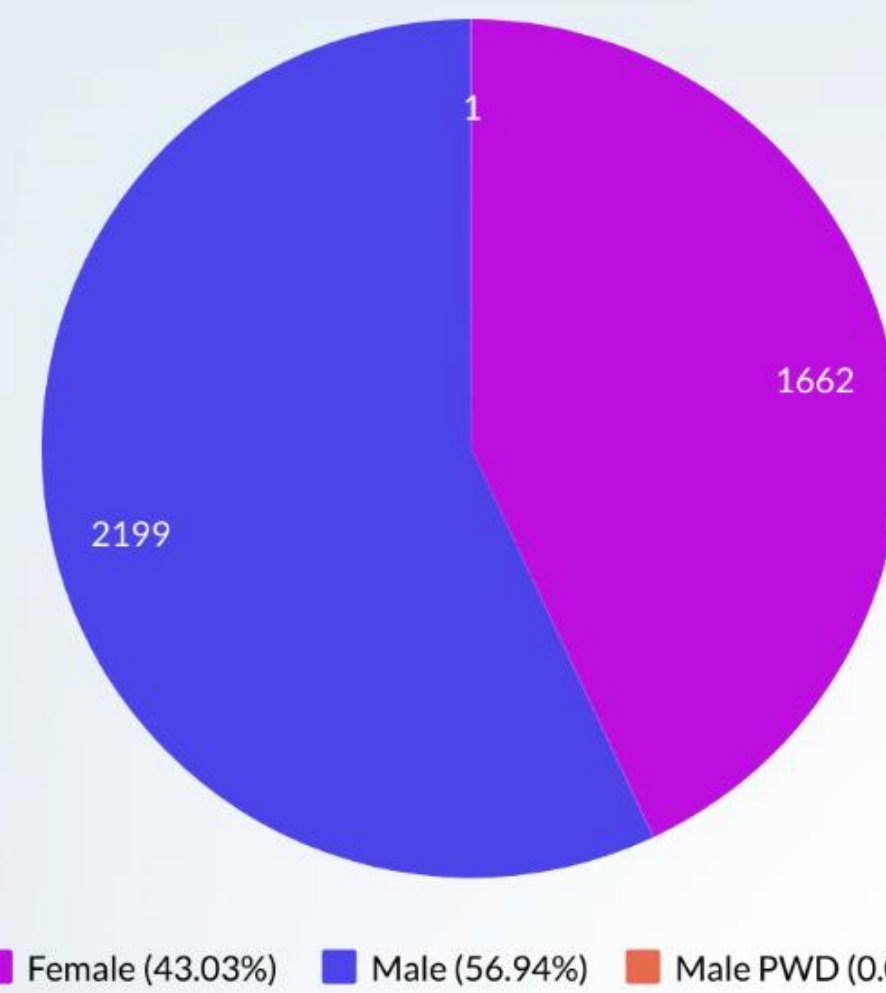
Zimbabwe Peace Project

Report time frame: October, 2021

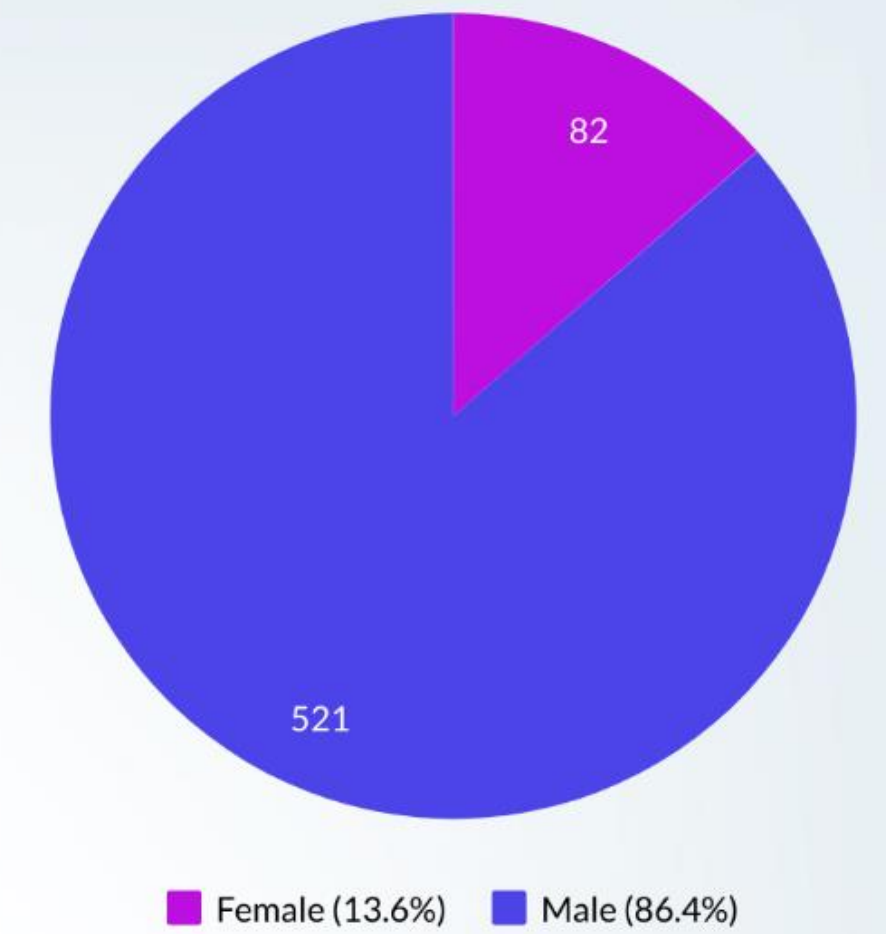


Provincial Violations

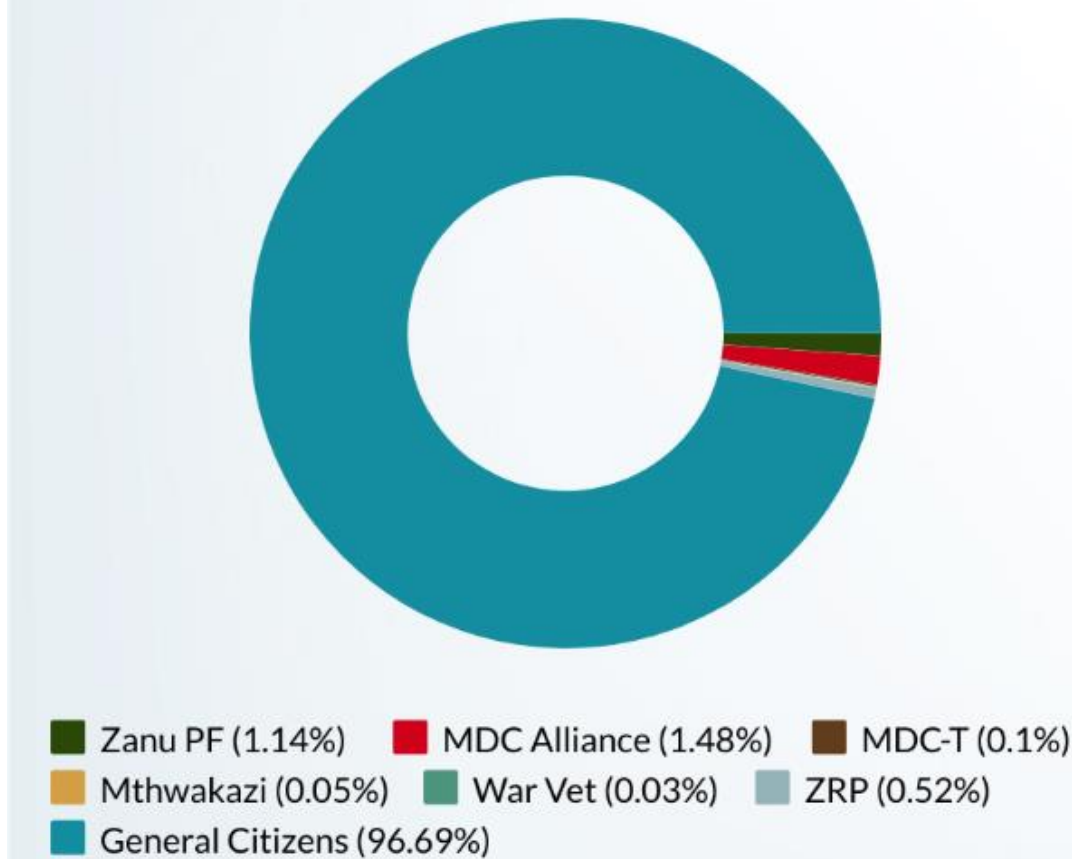
Types of Violations



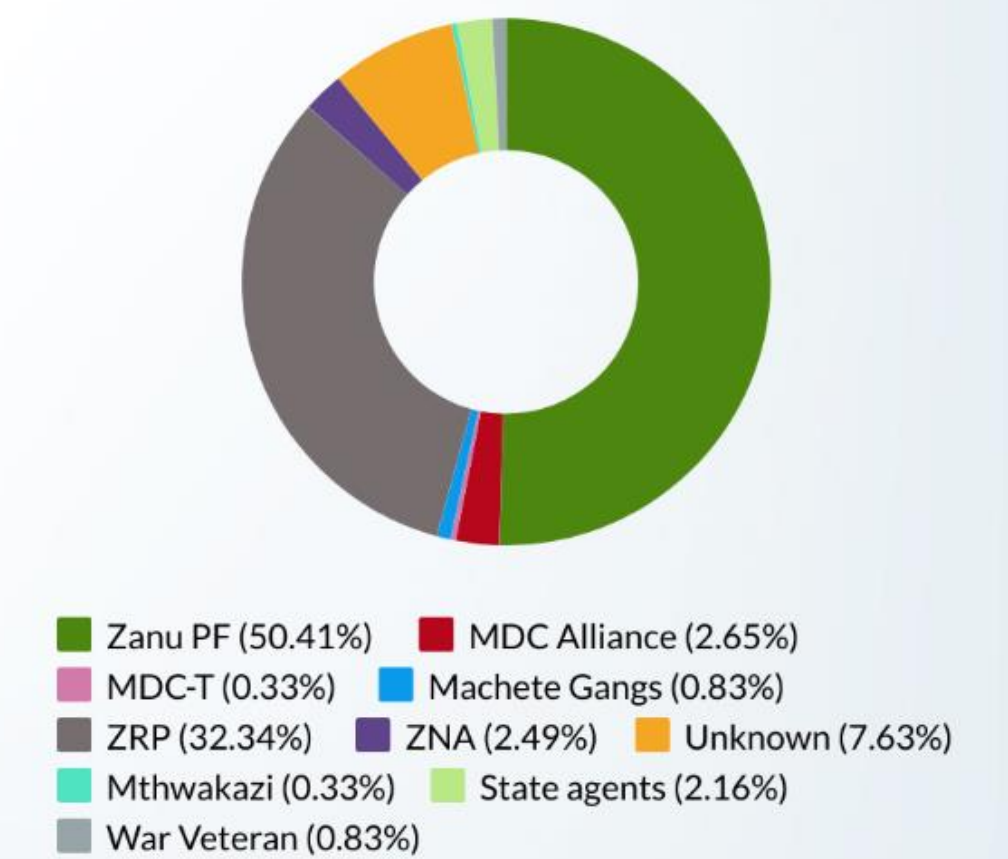
Gender of Victims



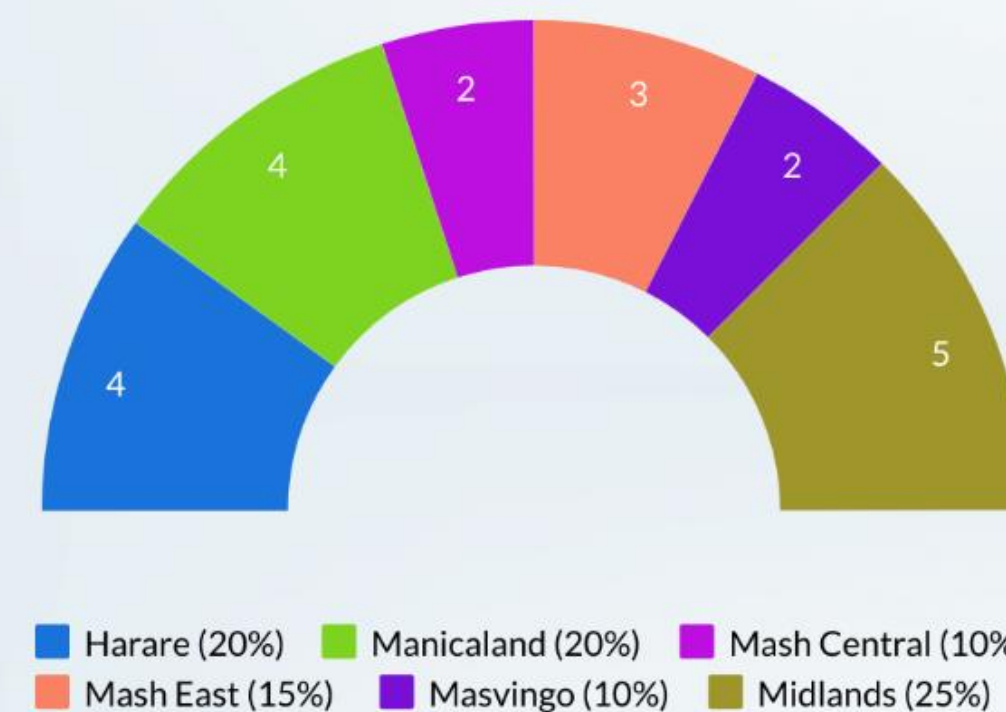
Gender of Perpetrators



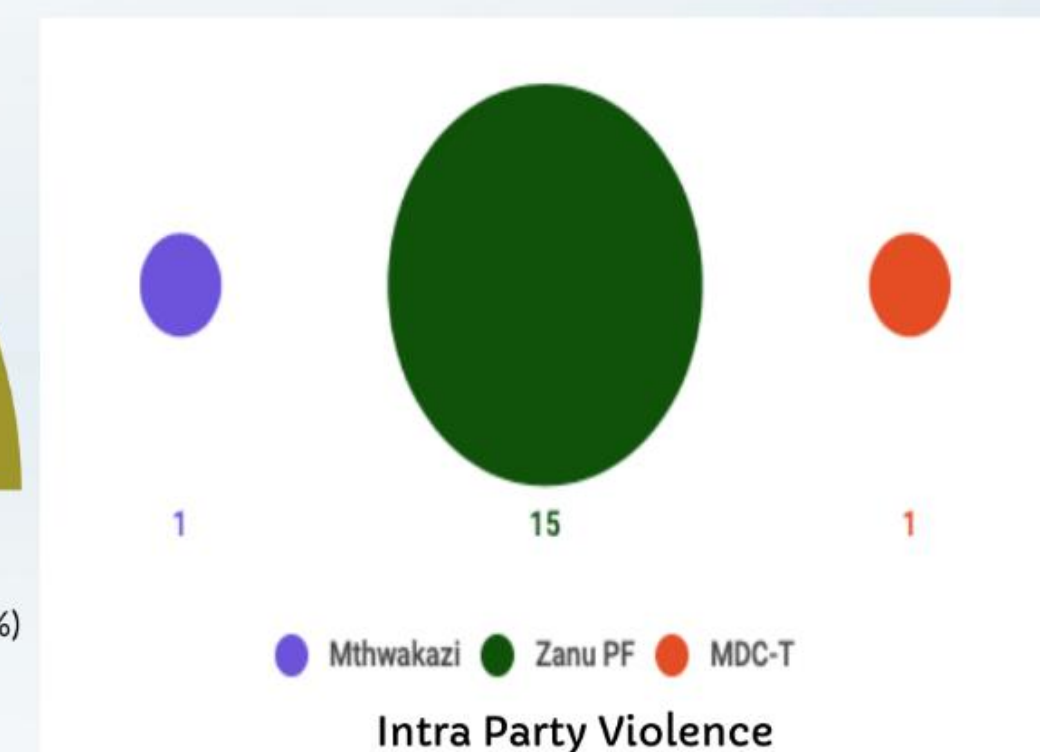
Victims Affiliation



Perpetrators Affiliation



Food & Other Aid Violations



Intra Party Violence



2.0
Violations
infographics

NEW THIS MONTH



3.0

#RRRV2023

Introducing a new component of the Resist Reject and Report Violence (#RRRV2023) campaign

This month, the Zimbabwe Peace Project introduces a new feature to refine its campaign to resist, reject and report violence ahead of the 2023 election.

The campaign, #RRRV2023 is

specifically designed as an early warning system of political violence with the view that relevant agents can adopt preventive measures. It is also designed to create active citizen participation in resisting, rejecting and reporting acts of political violence.

This is because ZPP has noted how community members are used to mete out violence against each and the moment they unite against violence, peaceful contestation is likely to prevail.

So, the new feature, the #RRRV2023 campaign, separates politically motivated human rights violations from all the other forms of violations, and using a highly sophisticated data analysis tool, ZPP maps the severity of the violations to give an indication of the political volatility of each province.

(SEE NEXT PAGE)

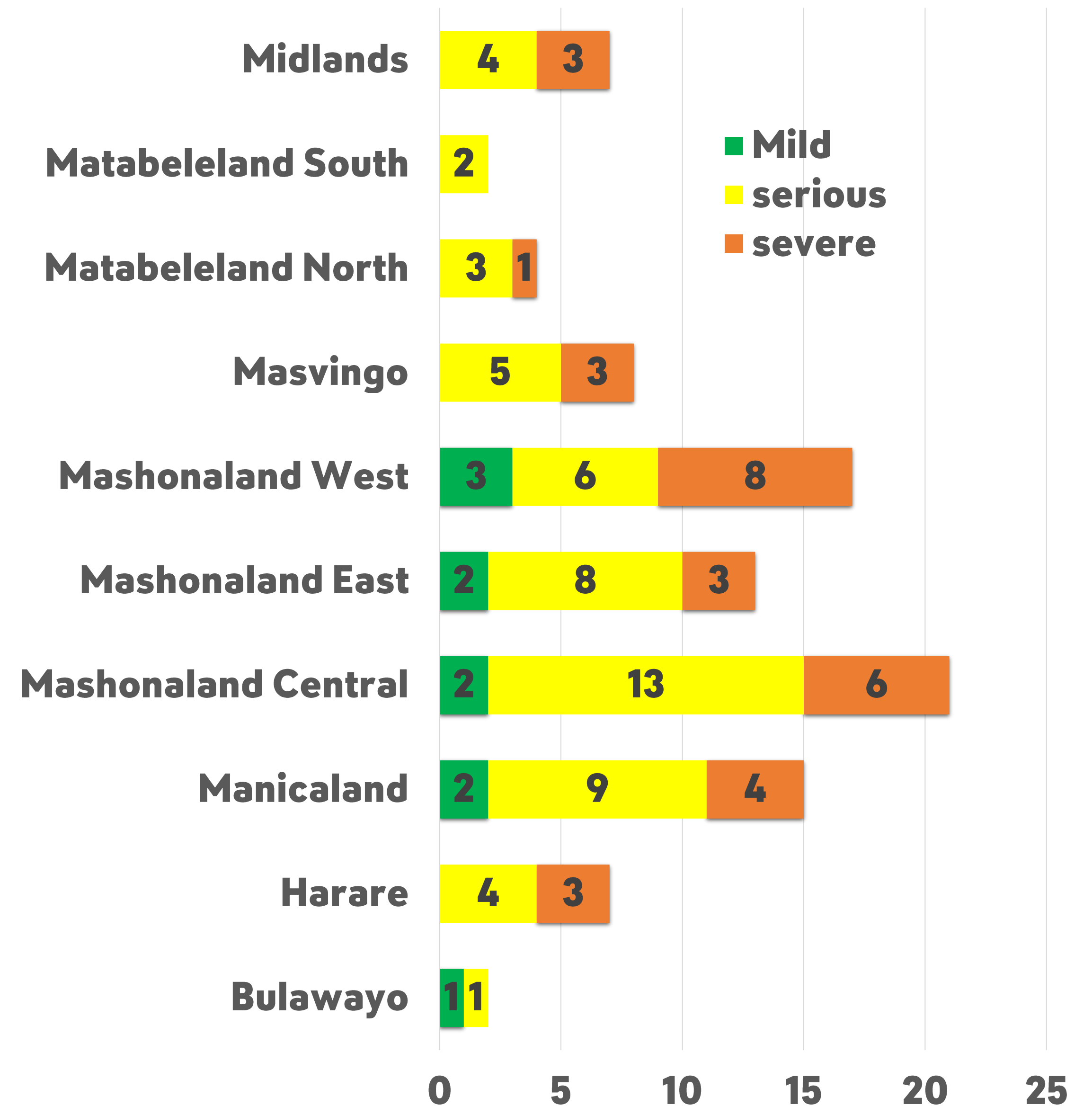
As noted in the graph, Mashonaland Central province has the highest number of politically motivated human rights violations with a total of 20 politically motivated violations, 13 of which are serious and five are severe.

Mashonaland Central is followed by Mashonaland West, which has 15 cases, six of which are severe, and Manicaland comes third with a total of 13 violations followed by Masvingo’s eight cases.

Mashonaland Central comes first as a result of the political contestation that took place in Zanu PF ahead of the party’s conference. Generally, the province, which the party claims is its stronghold, is characterized by deep-seated factional politics that date back to nearly a decade ago when the former President Robert

Mugabe purged then Vice President Joice Mujuru and several others who hailed from this province.

In the 2017 military coup, several other top officials like Saviour Kasukuwere lost their positions and this has left the province fractured and in interviews carried out by the ZPP while assessing the impact of the Zanu PF national conference happening in the province, Zanu PF supporters confirmed the trend. This was also confirmed by the gravity of human rights violations during the campaign for the provincial post by the current chair Kazembe, who used his clout as Home Affairs minister to interfere in the work of the police. In September, a challenger to Kazembe, Lazarus Dokora was assailed by alleged hit-men who used claw hammers to smash his car allegedly with the intention killing him.



In October, 15 police officers were arrested after they assaulted Zanu PF supporters in Mupandira near the provincial capital, Bindura, and the matter allegedly got the attention of President Mnangagwa who allegedly suspended some senior officers (see Mashonaland central Section).

For Manicaland, Mashonaland West, and Masvingo, the politically motivated human rights violations are related to the visit by the opposition MDC Alliance leader Nelson Chamisa's tour into these provinces.

Zanu PF continued to mobilise its supporters to either disrupt or counter Chamisa's activities and in some cases state security agents were involved in what remains as cause for concern considering that political freedoms are guaranteed by the Constitution.

In Mutare, Manicaland province,

Chamisa's party claimed that a vehicle in which Chamisa was travelling was shot at. The party showed images of the vehicle's broken windows.

In Zaka Zanu PF supporters stoned Chamisa's convoy and videos made rounds of the altercations.

Soon after the Zaka attack on Chamisa, Zanu PF Political Commissar Patrick Chinamasa admitted that the attack had been executed by his party members and added that the MDC Alliance leader 'provoked' Zanu PF supporters who retaliated by attacking his convoy.

On the same day, government spokesperson, Nick Mangwana vehemently denied the involvement of Zanu PF and instead, bizarrely accused the MDC Alliance of stage-managing their own attack using the same language that government has used to accuse civil and political activists of abducting themselves.

Name of Province	Severity	Rate	Highest Rate	Overall Color Code for the Province.
Bulawayo	Fatal	0	2	
	Severe	0		
	Serious	2		
	Mild	1		
Harare	Fatal	0	2.6	
	Severe	2.6		
	Serious	2.3		
	Mild	0		
Manicaland	Fatal	0	1.9	
	Severe	1.6		
	Serious	1.9		
	Mild	0.3		
Mashonaland Central	Fatal	0	2.5	
	Severe	1.7		
	Serious	2.5		
	Mild	0.2		
Mashonaland East	Fatal	0	2.5	
	Severe	1.4		
	Serious	2.5		
	Mild	0.3		
Mashonaland West	Fatal	2	2.4	
	Severe	2.4		
	Serious	1.6		
	Mild	0.4		
Masvingo	Fatal	0	2.5	
	Severe	2.3		
	Serious	2.5		
	Mild	0.3		
Matabeleland North	Fatal	0	3	
	Severe	1.5		
	Serious	3		
	Mild	0		
Matabeleland South	Fatal	0	4	
	Severe	0		
	Serious	4		
	Mild	0		
Midlands	Fatal	0	2.6	
	Severe	0		
	Serious	2.3		
	Mild	2.6		

The attempts to disrupt Chamisa's campaign trail continued into Mashonaland West when he visited Hurungwe, Chegutu, Chivhu, Zvimba and other areas.



3.0 #RRV2023

For example, on 27 October, at Zvipani Business Centre in Hurungwe North, dozens of Zanu PF supporters blocked roads before stoning a vehicle of an MDC Alliance activist who was escorting the Chamisa convoy into the area.

These were not mere coincidences as these happened everywhere where Chamisa went.

On 29 October as MDC Alliance supporters travelled to meet Chamisa in Chegutu, Zanu PF supporters attacked them in Kadoma. After confiscating car keys belonging to an MDC Alliance activist, the Zanu PF supporters

assaulted the opposition supporters, leaving some of them badly injured.

In one of the incidents, the MDC Alliance claimed suspected Zanu PF militia had abducted the party's Zvimba South Constituency Coordinating member Maria Wemba on October 30 at Murombedzi in Zvimba West. She was allegedly found later naked and badly beaten. In Harare, the factional fights in the breakaway faction of the MDC Alliance, the MDC-T, took a nasty turn when an official intending to address the media was accosted and assaulted by those loyal to the current leader Douglas Mwonzora. ZPP believes in peaceful political contestation, constitutionalism and the culture of democracy, and therefore continues to condemn in the strongest terms the violence perpetrated by suspected Zanu PF activists and state security agents in the month under review.

ZPP is concerned about political violence that is perpetrated to stop other political parties from participating in the business of politics for which they were established.

Our constitution clearly allows the freedom of assembly and association. Every person has the right to freedom of assembly and association, and the right not to assemble or associate with others; and opposition politics is not a crime, and any country that purports to be a democracy has a thriving opposition and civil society.

It is of great concern that the ruling party uses government agents and coerces its supporters to engage in violent activities, with senior party officials openly condoning violence against those who do not support Zanu PF. **(see the provincial highlights on Section 7.0 of this report)**



Zimbabwe's economy from a human rights perspective

When President Emmerson Mnangagwa took over power in Zimbabwe in November 2017, a school teacher employed by the government was earning about US\$500.00 a month, an amount that, although not sufficient, could meet the basic needs.

At the end of October 2017, the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ) estimated the food basket at \$146,12 per month, an amount that was not affordable for the generality of Zimbabweans as characterised by the income of teachers.

Four years later, an October 2021 teacher's payslip has a net salary of ZWL16,000, equivalent to just 89 US dollars (based on the parallel market rate).

The grocery needs as at September 2021 were at about \$16 498,65 (about 87 US dollars), according to the Consumer Council of Zimbabwe (CCZ).

According to CCZ, in September, a low-income earning urban family of six required approximately \$41 235,93 (about 230 USD) to sustain its monetary needs per month.

In October, the month-on-month inflation went up to 6.4 percent, the highest ever since August 2020 when it hit the 8.4 percent mark.

October became the third consecutive time monthly inflation has been on an upward trend and

this is seen in the continued price increases in retail shops.

In August 2021, inflation was at 4,2 percent before increasing to 4,7 percent in September 2021 and in October, there was a significant jump to 6.4 percent.

With salaries of the majority workers remaining stagnant, the situation has remained dire for the ordinary Zimbabwean.

The prices of basic commodities have significantly gone up recently with a two-litre bottle of Cooking Oil going up by 90 percent to ZWL 625, from ZWL 329, a 10 kg bag of Mealie-Meal going up to ZWL 1,015, from ZWL 550 in the past month. A 2kg packet of rice now costs ZWL 515.00, up from ZWL 225.00



4.1

BEHIND THE INFLATION

Government has continued to deny responsibility for what is happening to the economy, and has instead chosen to blame, as usual, unnamed 'economic and currency saboteurs'.

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe, which is responsible for pegging the forex rate, has gone on a spree, arresting businesses using the parallel market rate.

This is not a new phenomenon.

Faced with a runaway inflation in 2008, the then Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe Governor Gideon Gono, blamed sanctions, banks, the stock exchange, parallel currency dealers and insurance companies. As well as firing bankers, he blacklisted more than 20 investment companies and froze their accounts.

The script is still the same as the current Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe governor John Mangudya is still using the same tactics but expecting a

different outcome. On October 6, the central bank blacklisted 47 more individuals for allegedly advertising and facilitating illegal foreign exchange transactions and money laundering through social media. This came after 30 individuals were "blacklisted and barred from accessing financial and mobile telecommunication services for the same reasons" on Sept. 28, said John Mangudya, governor of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

A bit of background...

The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) introduced a Foreign Exchange Auction System in June 2020 in a move that was initially seen as progressive as it allowed for what appeared to be a liberalised approach to buying and selling foreign currency by business.

Through this auction system, the RBZ allocates foreign currency that it expropriates from exporters. The auction however, started on a false note as the RBZ still continued to have control of the

exchange rate. This then created two exchange rates, the RBZ one which remained generally fixed, and the street rate, which was quite liquid as it was driven by market forces. As a result, the gap between the formal exchange rate and the parallel market continues to widen fast. The parallel market reflects more closely the real value of the local currency against the US dollar. When the auction system was introduced in 2020, the parallel market rate stood at ZWL 80 for

One US dollar, and today it's anything from ZWL 150 to ZWL 200 against the US dollar. The formal exchange rate stands at One US dollar to ZWL 106.

Businesses are opting to price goods based on the parallel market rate because the ZWL is overpriced. To deal with this, the RBZ implements a litany of measures, including the arrest and freezing of bank accounts of those using exchange rates outside the auction system, or abusing the auction system.



4.2

THE PROBLEM

ZPP has carried out investigations

throughout the month of October and established that the fuel behind the current crisis stems from the weak control systems within the RBZ, which allows connected individuals to access foreign currency at a lower rate, then sell it on the parallel market at a higher rate, then go back to the RBZ to access more.

In interviews conducted with some individuals, some shocking details of the involvement of some top government officials who are part of the chain were revealed. ZPP spoke with some of the money changers who wait outside major retail shops buying US dollars. The money changers have various bank cards loaded with huge amounts of Zimbabwe dollars

and they allow individuals into a shop to buy using the card for an amount equivalent to the US dollars they are selling.

Many of them confirmed that they were just at the end of a long line of individuals and institutions connected to some top officials.

In other words, government is pretty much robbing itself and, in the process, robbing the people of Zimbabwe.





4.3

WHY THE ECONOMY IS A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE

Corruption robs the poor and makes the rich and connected richer.

This is why Zimbabwe is now a nation with such a wide gap between the poor and rich.

The politicians who are in the right places with the leadership are the ones with the access to minerals, government contracts and financial resources and this

is all at the expense of the hardworking and honest-earning Zimbabweans who have to watch their income decline, and social services dwindle.

An average government healthcare institution in Zimbabwe is likely to not have basic medication like paracetamol tablets, and schools continue to go without basic needs like textbooks.

Vulnerable populations like

orphaned children and the elderly are going without any government social support and if at all there is any, it is just ceremonial.

Yet, on the outward, government officials and those connected to financial resources, flaunt their wealth in the midst of gnawing poverty.

And this, this is what makes it a human rights issue.



4.4

THE SOLUTION

The first step is that political leaders need to take the lead in the fight against corrupt and speculative activities

and just speaking against it and doing exactly the opposite, will not suffice.

There is need for an ethical regeneration of the country's leadership to go back to the values and ethos of being a leader, and it can start with a

genuine declaration of not just assets, but interests, connections and any conflict.

For example, many stories have been written about President Mnangagwa or members of his family having their hands in several top companies that do business with the government of Zimbabwe.

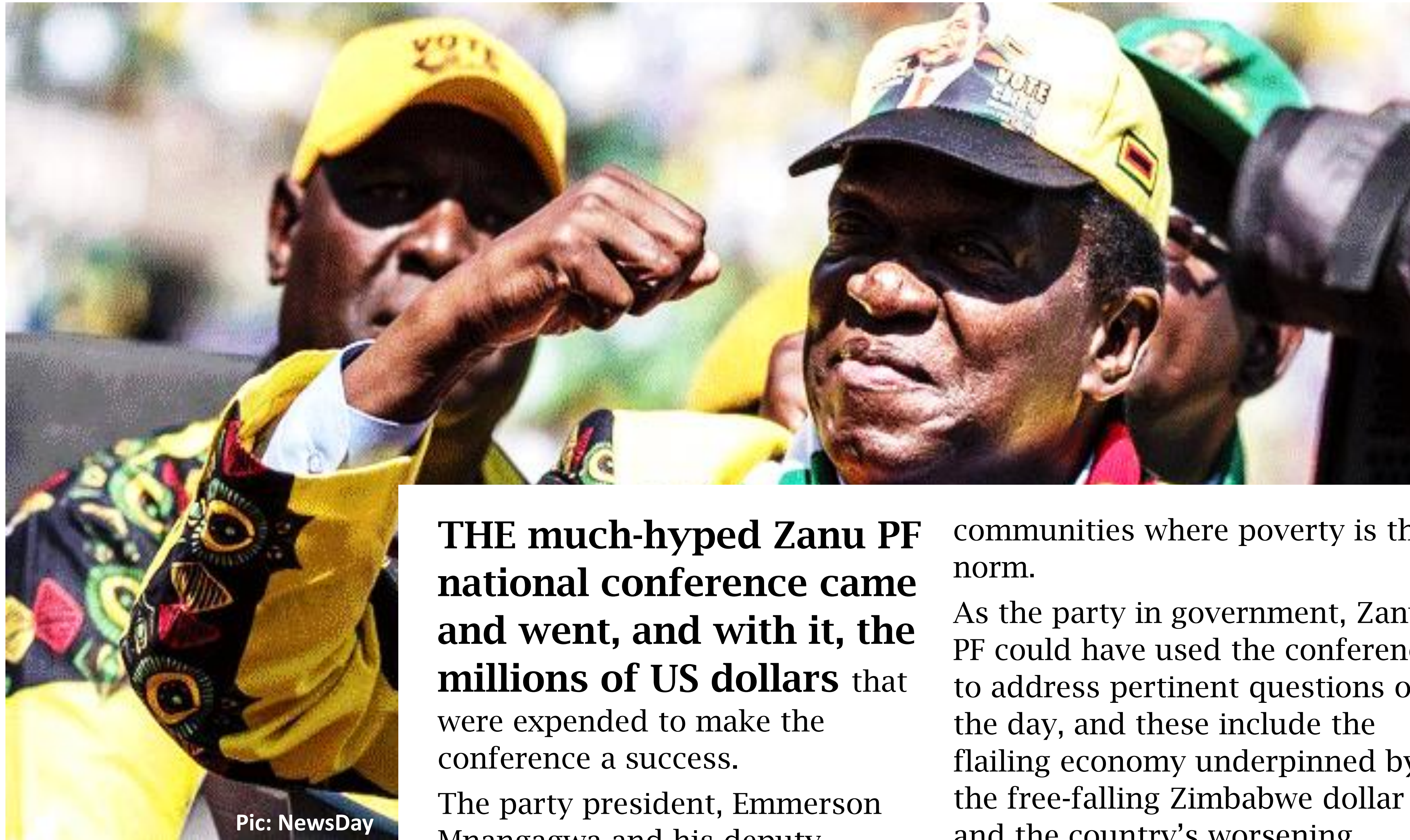
Starting with declaring such interests enables citizens to hold politicians accountable.

The government of Zimbabwe should expeditiously arrest and

prosecute individuals found guilty of corrupt and speculative activities, regardless of status in society.

The Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission should be given the capacity to execute optimally and it should be funded adequately.

Instead of chasing repressive legislation like the Patriotic Act, government should come up with whistle blower protection legislation.



Pic: NewsDay

THE much-hyped Zanu PF national conference came and went, and with it, the millions of US dollars that were expended to make the conference a success.

The party president, Emmerson Mnangagwa and his deputy Constantino Chiwenga flew by helicopter into the usually quiet town of Bindura, which is surrounded by farming and rural

communities where poverty is the norm.

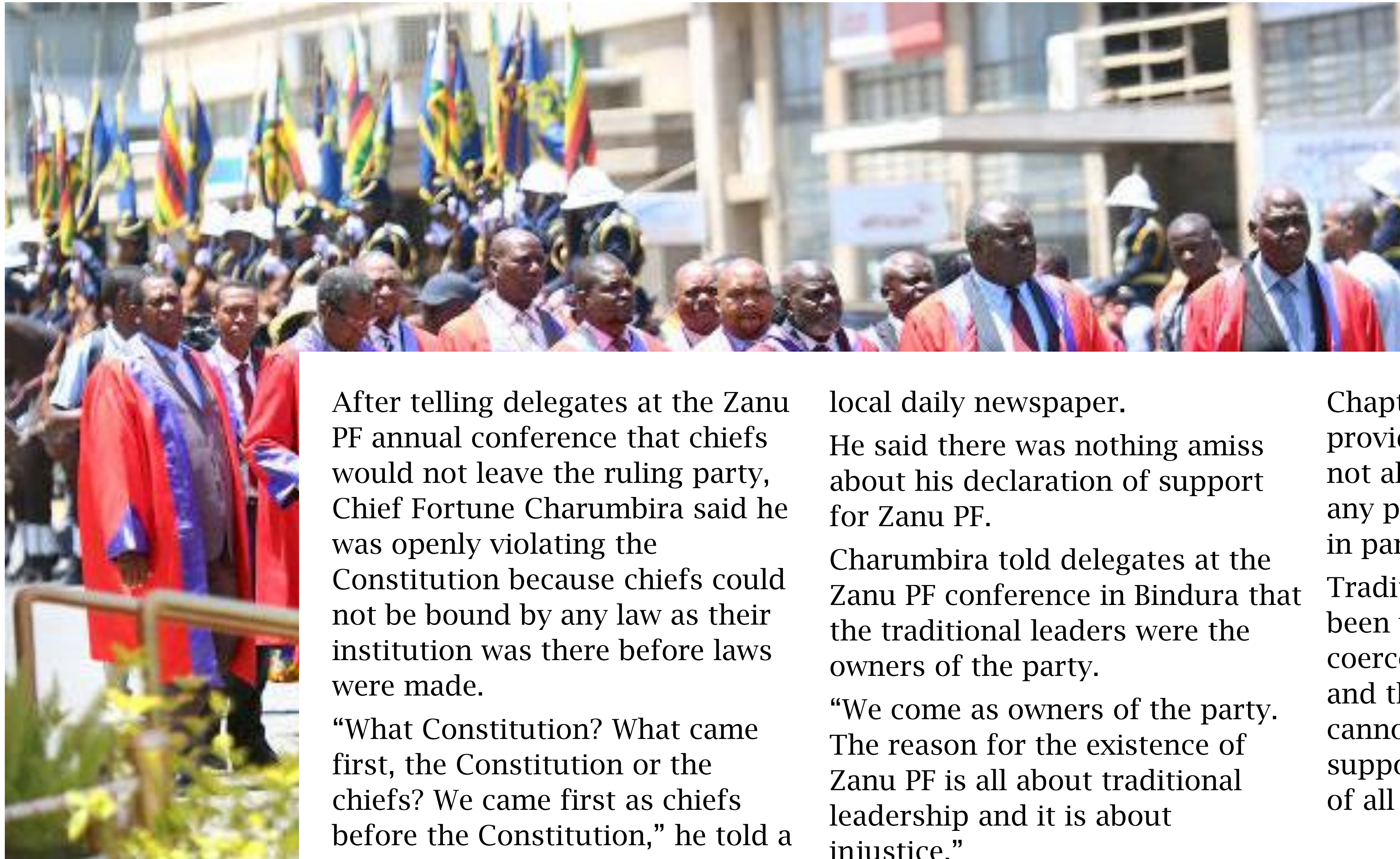
As the party in government, Zanu PF could have used the conference to address pertinent questions of the day, and these include the flailing economy underpinned by the free-falling Zimbabwe dollar and the country's worsening human rights record.

Instead, it became a mega show of wealth and opulence, a fete where the latest vehicles were the major



5.0 The Zanu PF Conference: Opulence Amidst Poverty

highlight; much more like a middle finger to the poor Zimbabweans and a message that said, everyone else is on their own. Everything of importance was simply ignored: the worsening plight of civil servants; the hungry and livid war veterans; the stressed and jobless youths; women and persons with disabilities.



5.1 Are Chiefs Above the Law?

After telling delegates at the Zanu PF annual conference that chiefs would not leave the ruling party, Chief Fortune Charumbira said he was openly violating the Constitution because chiefs could not be bound by any law as their institution was there before laws were made.

“What Constitution? What came first, the Constitution or the chiefs? We came first as chiefs before the Constitution,” he told a

local daily newspaper.

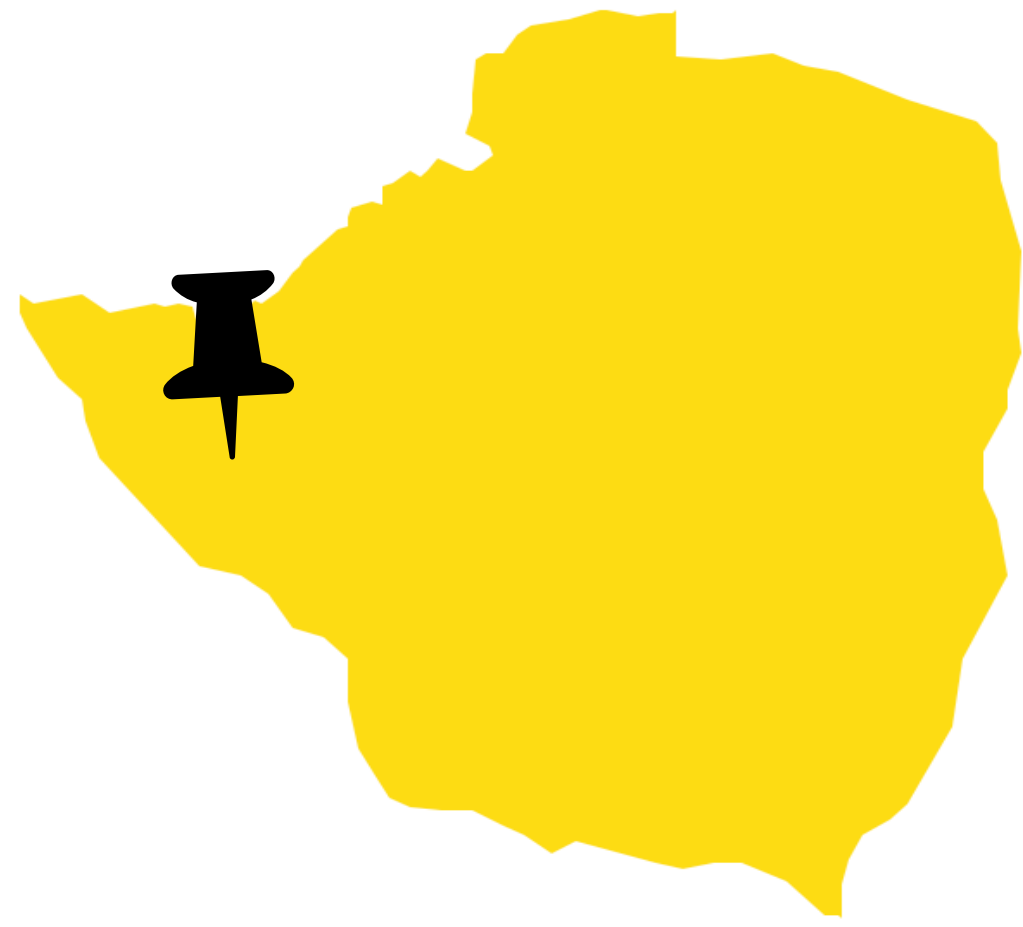
He said there was nothing amiss about his declaration of support for Zanu PF.

Charumbira told delegates at the Zanu PF conference in Bindura that the traditional leaders were the owners of the party.

“We come as owners of the party. The reason for the existence of Zanu PF is all about traditional leadership and it is about injustice,”

Chapter 15.2 of the Constitution provides that traditional leader are not allowed to bear allegiance to any political party or to participate in partisan politics.

Traditional leaders have always been used in past elections to coerce citizens to vote for Zanu PF and the statements by Charumbira cannot be taken lightly as they are supposed to represent the position of all the chiefs in the country.



6.0 Talking human rights in Dinde

On 21 October, the Zimbabwe Peace Project participated in a human rights awareness activity in Dinde Village, about 20 km from Hwange Central Business District.

ZPP joined four other organisations, the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, Zimbabwe Human Rights Association, Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission, Counselling Services Unit, Zimbabwe Livelihood and Humanitarian Development Trust, and the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The Acting District Development Coordinator for Hwange Simon Muleya attended the event.

The event has provided a platform for discourse on the pending evictions of the people of Dinde, reportedly to pave way for a

Chinese coal mining venture. The community had the opportunity to ask various questions about the legal framework on evictions, compensation and the procedures to be followed in order to realize harmony among citizens.

The key questions included:

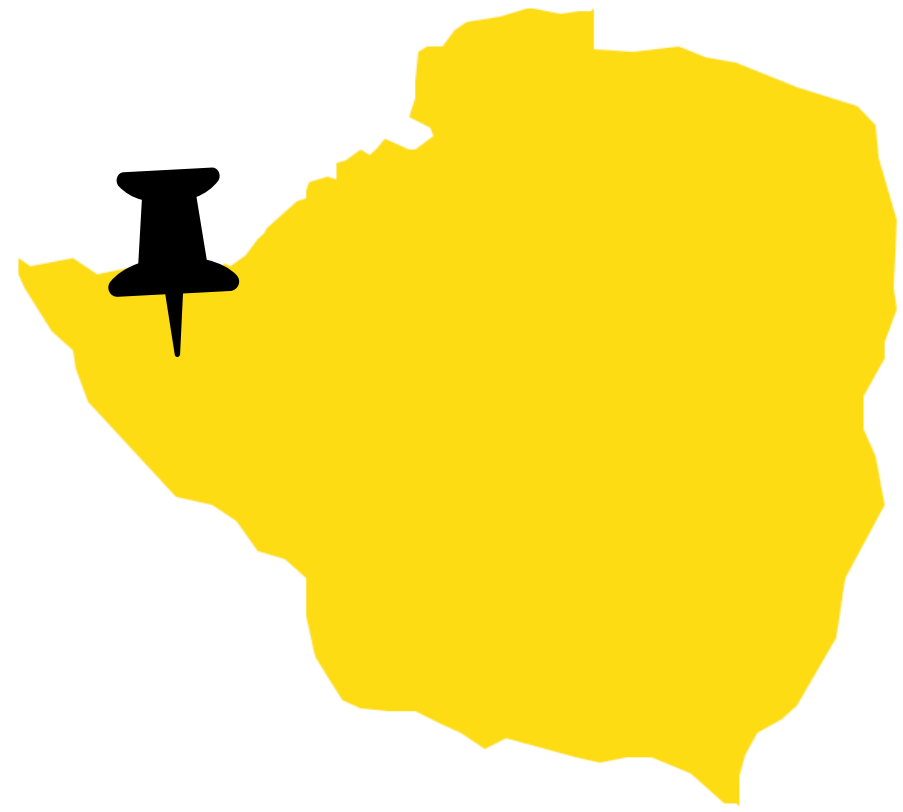
- What provisions does the legal framework have in resolving land disputes?
- What models of compensation exist for those affected by evictions?
- What procedures can communities like Dinde take to seek recourse in the event of being evicted?

Some of the issues the communities raised include these:

The community members expressed disquiet about the presence of the Chinese who have allegedly acquired rights to mine coal in the area.

The Chinese have started blasting and digging in Wards 11, 13, 19 and 20 where they are blasting and digging pits as they prospect for coal and these activities are heightening the villagers' fears of eviction.

What is further fueling the speculation and fear among villagers is that the Chinese have not consulted local village heads, who are the custodians of cultural and ethical practices in the community. ·



6.0 Talking human rights in Dinde

There has been no word from government on the fate of the people of Dinde and for the community, the blasting and digging activities by the Chinese are enough a sign that once full-scale mining starts, they will be moved to another place.

Villagers said they were worried that the Chinese had put some pegs to target mining areas within school premises and near water points.

The village head, Headman Tshuma requested for more knowledge of procedures in order for families to get compensation in the event of an eviction.

He highlighted that in the event that they move they risk leaving

behind the graves of their relatives and government was supposed to allow them to conduct various rituals and veneration ceremonies to appease ancestors in line with their tradition.

The local councillor, Maurice Sibanda said speculation and fear among villagers has created hostilities and disrupted harmony within the community.

In addition to the challenges related to the impending eviction of villagers, the scourge of young girls being married off and gender-based violence, triggered by the growing poverty and declining economy, continues to haunt the poor community.

Community members also expressed disappointment that the local people, who are conversant in the local Nambya language, culture and community dynamics are not getting priority in government local authority employment opportunities.

Community members also expressed concern about the human-wildlife conflict that continues to impact on their livestock rearing business. They complained that wildlife from the nearby Hwange National Park and other areas stray into their communities to prey on domestic animals.



Provincial Highlights

7.1 Harare

Harare, as the capital, always sets the pulse on political developments of the rest of the country and in October, political contestation heightened over the visit by the United Nations UN Special Rapporteur on Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on Human Rights, Alena Douhan.

Douhan was in Zimbabwe in October at the invitation of the government of Zimbabwe to assess the impact of restrictive measures the United States and the European Union have imposed on some Zanu PF and government officials in Zimbabwe over human rights abuses perpetrated by the government and the ruling party.

In order to control the narrative, politicians and citizens exchanged words on social media and this had the impact of increasing the levels of political tensions and divisions.

Notably, Douhan, whose schedule according to sources in government had initially not included civil society and opposition political parties, managed to receive submissions.

Her preliminary report set out, among other recommendations, “meaningful

structured dialogue on political reforms, human rights and rule of law.” “The time is ripe for sanctioning States and key national stakeholders to engage in meaningful structured dialogue on political reforms, human rights and the rule of law and abandon the rhetoric on sanctions as an advocacy tool,” reads part of her report.

The regional bloc, Southern Africa Development Committee (SADC) weighed in and for the first time, admitted that the challenges in Zimbabwe were multifaceted and required a holistic approach.

SADC chairperson Malawian President Lazarus Chakwera called for “meaningful and constructive dialogue to consolidate the rule of law, democracy, governance and human rights” in Zimbabwe and said it was only through such exchanges that better appreciation of concerns of all parties could be secured and progress towards their resolution be achieved.”

The ZPP joins other like-minded institutions in reiterating that the challenges in Zimbabwe are deeply rooted in the country’s poor human

rights record, corruption, economic mismanagement and the disregard for the tenets of constitutionalism.

ZPP welcomes SADC’s recognition of this and urges the regional bloc to build onto the current advocacy on rule of law, democracy, good governance and transparency.

Away from the story of sanctions, political activity remained on the high and infractions happened in the process.

One key example is the arrest of war veterans who were protesting against the government’s disregard for their welfare seen by the pittance they received as pension money. Currently, the veterans of the liberation struggle earn ZWL20,000, which is just over USD100.00 at the current parallel exchange rate.

The veterans are currently out on bail. In another incident, police rounded up some MDC Alliance Youth Assembly activists who were conducting a voter registration drive in Chitungwiza. It is alleged that two minors were also arrested.



Provincial Highlights

7.2 Mashonaland Central

The Zanu PF conference held in the capital of Mashonaland Central province, Bindura, was the highlight of the month.

Prior to the conference, there was a surge in cases of civil and political human rights violations as party officials concluded their district and provincial election processes.

In a controversial case which exposes Zanu PF capture of state institutors, on 11 October a police officer stationed in Mt Darwin was hauled before the police tribunal for posting a WhatsApp status in which he was singing along to a gospel song “Munyu Hauchavava”, which directly translates to “the salt is no longer salty” and has been used by some to describe the deteriorating state of affairs in Zimbabwe. Constable Spenser Chitere (+/-35) was accused of displaying materials of political significance in contravention of the Police Act. He was represented by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, of which ZPP is a member. The case is still pending at the courts.

During the run up to the Zanu PF conference, police officers were arrested and taken to court for allegedly disrupting a Zanu PF meeting and assaulting party members in Bindura.

According to the charge sheet, the 15 officers, who were unprovoked, disembarked from their motor vehicles and indiscriminately assaulted the complainants using batons.

The charge sheet further read: “The accused also set the police dogs and released tear smoke on the complainants which caused pandemonium at the business centre. By so doing, the accused forcibly and, to a serious extent, disturbed peace, security or order of the public and violated the rights of the complainants.

The matter is still pending in the courts and ZPP has been informed that some senior police officers in Bindura were transferred to other areas as a result of the case.

According to a leaked police document dated October 11, an officer commanding Mashonaland Central province Commissioner Priscilla Makotose and one Superintendent J

Pauta of police intelligence were transferred from the province.

Home Affairs Minister Kazembe allegedly ordered the police to drop charges against Zanu PF officials who resisted arrest and attacked the same police officers who were arrested.

Makotose was transferred to Manicaland while Pauta was transferred to Midlands and the President is reported to have suspended acting Officer in Charge Bindura Rural for allegedly failing to control police officers who assaulted Zanu PF officials. A female cop identified as Inspector Phiri was allegedly summoned at State House together with Minister of Home Affairs Kazembe and other top cops to explain what happened and it is understood she was verbally suspended.

As part of the run up to the Zanu PF conference, a councillor only identified as Nyanhete reportedly forced villagers to contribute ZWL 50.00 per household towards the conference and threatened that those who did not contribute risked being dropped from the list of beneficiaries of government inputs.



Provincial Highlights

7.3 Mashonaland East

The political atmosphere in Mashonaland East remained volatile in October, marked by intense campaigning by Zanu PF and the targeting of opposition political party supporters.

In rural Mudzi, Murehwa and Marondera, councillors, Zanu PF officials and activists intimidated MDC Alliance activists, with emphasis that by not supporting or being part of Zanu PF, the villagers risked not benefitting from any government assistance programs.

Zanu PF has always used aid as a tool for coercion especially in rural communities where disposable incomes are very low.

According to a Unicef report, in Zimbabwe, an estimated 6.8 million people, including 2.8 million children, are in urgent need of humanitarian assistance in 2021 due to multiple hazards, including COVID- 19 and the economic crisis.

It is this vulnerability that the ruling party has continued to exploit, using food aid as a political weapon to coerce people to gain political support.

Far from the intimidation over aid, there were numerous incidents of intra-party violence, especially in Uzumba, where Zanu PF activists were

using all means, often brutal, to position themselves as the party prepares for an elective congress in 2022 and general elections in 2023.

Traditional leaders remained part of the political matrix, and abused their roles by being partisan, in contravention of the Constitution, which clearly states that traditional leaders are supposed to be apolitical.

As government rolled out its Pfumvudza agricultural inputs scheme, councillors colluded with Zanu PF ward chairpersons to discriminate opposition political party supporters and the trend was observed across the entire province.



Provincial Highlights

7.4 Mashonaland West

In, Mashonaland West, the political environment was marked by increased political activities by Zanu PF and the MDC Alliance.

Within Zanu PF, there were violent skirmishes involving party activists and one example is an incident in Chinhoyi, where Zvimba East Legislator Tawanda Tungamirai reportedly assaulted a fellow party member for denigrating him on social media. This happened during the party's restructuring exercise.

There were also numerous cases of the violation of political rights as Zanu PF activists forced villagers to attend party meetings and those who failed to attend were labelled opposition activists who did not deserve to receive any government aid

The MDC Alliance leader Nelson Chamisa toured the province and Zanu PF activists attempted to disrupt the tour in Hurungwe, Chegutu and Kadoma, and in some instances, MDC Alliance supporters sustained injuries.

For example, on 29 October as MDC Alliance supporters travelled to meet

Chamisa in Chegutu, Zanu PF supporters attacked them in Kadoma. After confiscating vehicle keys belonging to an MDC Alliance activist, the Zanu PF supporters assaulted the opposition supporters, leaving some of them badly injured.

Over 100 people at Waterloo farm in Hurungwe North are homeless after police torched their homes and dumped them at a roadside. The families are in need of food, water and provisional shelter. One Vincent Chowder is allegedly behind the evictions.

7.5 Manicaland

In Manicaland Province, the major highlight was Zanu PF's attempts to stop MDC Alliance leader Nelson Chamisa from going ahead with his countrywide tour to galvanise support.

Chamisa started his tour, dubbed the citizens community interface, where the party leader was meeting with various stakeholders including traditional leaders across the province.

In one incident in Mutare Central, the MDC Alliance President Nelson Chamisa's convoy was confronted by armed men who allegedly fired shots, damaging the vehicle in which Chamisa

was travelling.

The MDC Alliance has called this an attempt on the life of Chamisa.

In other incidents in the province, Zanu PF supporters lay siege on major roads in Chimanimani and Birchenough with the aim of stopping Chamisa's tour.

To this date, no arrests have been made in connection with the incidents

7.6 Midlands

Just as with other provinces, Midlands experienced intra-party squabbles within Zanu PF.

This is the home province of President Emmerson Mnangagwa and other senior party officials like the State Security minister Owen Ncube and Local Government and National Housing

minister July Moyo.

In preparation for the party's congress next year, Zanu PF activists were caught up in incidents of violence with Ncube and the incumbent party chairperson for Midlands, Daniel Mackenzie Ncube battling for party leadership.

The party's Central Committee member Wellington Magura allegedly assaulted Zanu PF Gweru district secretary for

administration Slemeni Kwidini at a restaurant in the Midlands capital Gweru. Kwidini was rallying behind Mudha Ncube while Magura is in the Mackenzie Ncube faction.

The matter was reported at Gweru Central Police station under CR number 88/10/2021.

7.7 Masvingo

Monday 11 October was a fresh low in Zimbabwe's politics following the unprecedented attack on opposition MDC Alliance leader Nelson Chamisa as he was making the first trip of his national campaign trail to Masvingo.

The incident, in which Zanu PF supporters ambushed and stoned Chamisa's convoy leaving five injured, immediately became the highlight of the province.

By the end of the day, videos and pictures shared by the MDC Alliance showed a damaged vehicle and dozens of people carrying placards denouncing "sanctions" could be seen blocking a rural dirt road.

ZPP has since established that in exchange for a token, Zanu PF supporters were hired from as far as Ward 6 Summerton and Ward 15 in King Mine area to barricade the roads

and throw stones at Chamisa's convoy. Some of the leaders of the violent attack are one Nhamo Chivanhu Nemanwa and a Mrs Chapwanya.

There were allegations that this attack was coordinated by Masvingo West legislator who is also the Masvingo Minister of Provincial Affairs and Devolution Ezra Chadzamira.

According to the details established by the ZPP, the hired crowd was bussed from Summerton and King Mine areas on the morning of 11 October 2021 and they were ordered not to wear their Zanu PF regalia so that they could not be associated with the Zanu PF party.

Government spokesperson Nick Mangagwa denied that they were Zanu PF supporters, but that was just before the party's Acting Political Commissar Patrick Chinamasa admitted that the attack had been orchestrated and executed by Zanu PF members who 'did not want Chamisa to address them as he had forced himself on them'.

In what exposes the unconstitutional

collusion between the State and the ruling party, state security agents allegedly continued to hound Chamisa's convoy as he toured other areas like Masvingo, Chivi, Ngundu, Mwenezi, Triangle, Chiredzi, Zaka and Gutu.

Assistant Commissioner Florence Marume, who up to now has not arrested any of the alleged perpetrators is said to be a high ranking member of Zanu PF, which raises questions on her impartiality as a civil servant who is supposed to serve the interest of all Zimbabweans. She is the secretary for Legal Affairs in Masvingo Province.

The incidents of violence were worrying considering that Zanu PF has a well-documented history of political violence against the opposition.

If these incidents continue unaddressed by the responsible authorities at these early stages, Zimbabwe is likely to erupt into a politically volatile environment as the country heads towards 2023.

7.8 Bulawayo

The highlight of the province was the hate speech and tribal conflict between national and regional political party supporters.

For example, Mthwakazi Liberation party supporters assaulted each other while squabbling about the relevance of the MDC Alliance president, Nelson Chamisa to Zimbabwean politics.

In another incident, a Zanu PF member, Natiou Dube, got assaulted at Makhokhoba Bus rank over his praises for President Emmerson Mnangagwa.

One of the perpetrators allegedly said, in reference to Dube 'It is only a stupid and foolish Ndebele that can shower praises on Mnangagwa who killed thousands of Ndebeles.'

Mnangagwa has been accused of having played a significant role in the Gukurahundi massacres of the 1980s, where over 20,000 people in

Matebelaland and Midlands were killed by a North Korean trained Fifth Brigade of the Zimbabwe National Army.

Mnangagwa was the State Security minister at the time.

There has been a lot of hate speech in the ZAPU party following the election process where son to nationalist Joshua Nkomo, Sibangilizwe won. Other party members, denounced Nkomo as a fool, a mafikizolo (new comer) who rides on the fame of his father.

7.9 Matebeleland South

In the quiet province of Matabeleland North, Chief Saba of Binga North ward 9 has continued to be in the limelight for the wrong reasons instructing village heads to report any MDC Alliance gatherings.

In Binga North and Tsholotsho

South. This has led to villagers desisting from attending MDC Alliance meetings for fear of being removed from beneficiary lists of food aid programs. Saba also advised community heads to report any NGOs that will come and operate in his area.

Zanu PF activists have been threatening villagers in communities that the party has a mechanism of

finding out who did not vote for Zanu PF in the 2023 elections.

One Fani Tshuma in Tsholotsho promised loan benefits, inputs and food aid programs for those that will vote for Zanu PF, whereas, another Zanu PF activist Silozwana promised violence for those that do not vote for the party.

to the police.

7.10 Matebeleland South

In Matabeleland South, Zanu PF activists are going around door to door, intimidating villagers and coercing them to support the ruling party ahead of the

2023 elections and villagers who resist get threats and intimidation.

Opposition political parties in the province have continued to fight for space with the most prominent one being the turf battle between the MDC Alliance

and Mthwakazi Republic Party.

In one of the incidents, MDC Alliance supporters ganged up and assaulted a Mthwakazi party member after he was found tearing MDC Alliance regalia. The matter was reported to the police.



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