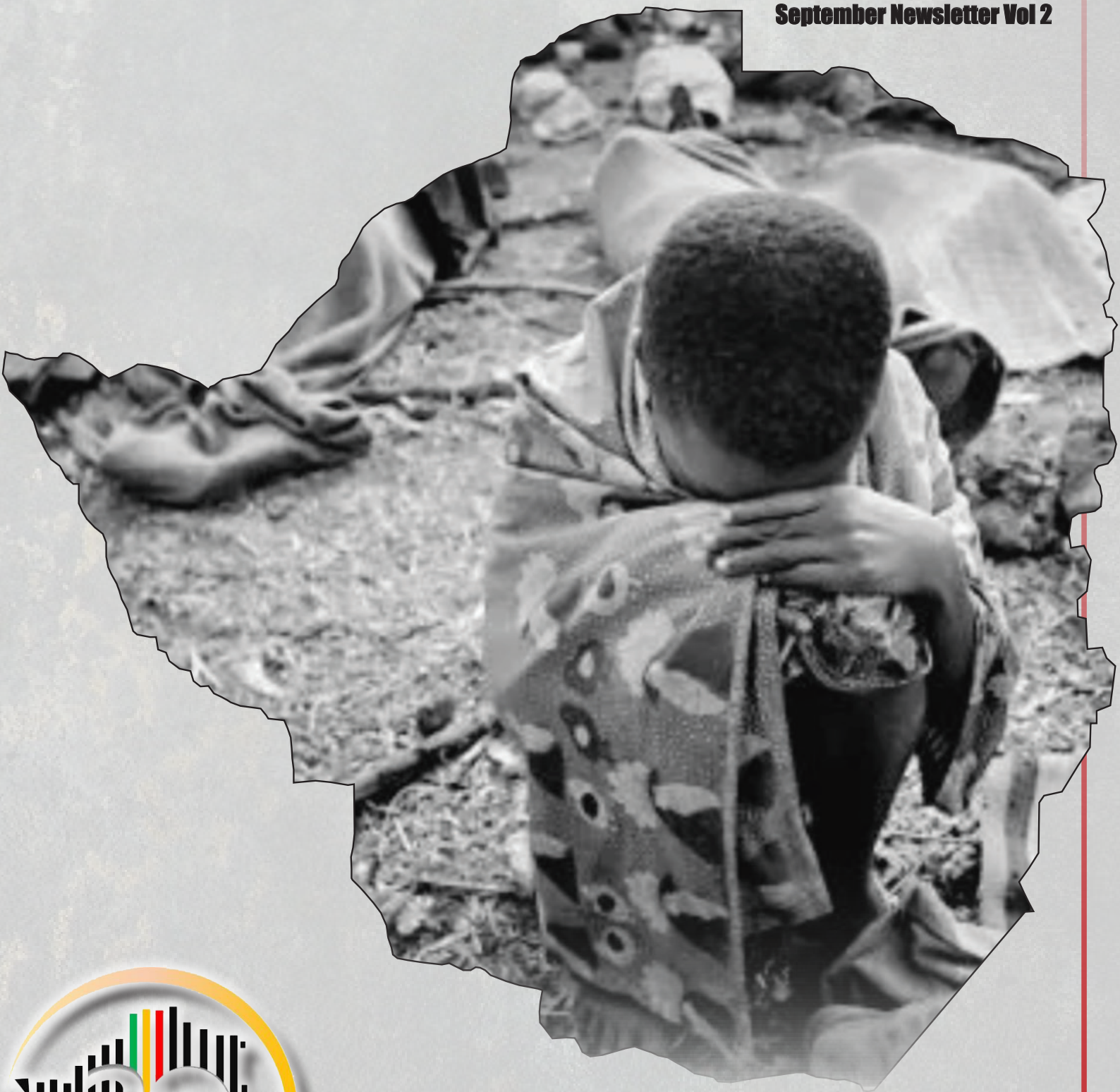


Crisis Report

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ON August 30, 2021, suspected State security agents destroyed a Gukurahundi memorial plaque that had been erected by Bulawayo based pressure group, Ibhetshu LikaZulu in Silobela, the Midlands province, to replace another one that was destroyed in June this year.

The plaque had been erected in memory of 11 victims of the Gukurahundi massacres.

During the Gukurahundi massacres, an estimated 20 000 civilians lost their lives at the hands of the North Korea-trained Fifth Brigade.

The government of Zimbabwe has been making cosmetic approaches towards bringing closure to the Gukurahundi issue and pressure groups have accused the ruling party, Zanu PF of lacking sincerity in addressing the 1980s massacres.

In Matabeleland South, a plaque that had been erected in memory of Gukurahundi victims was destroyed in May (2021).

Speaking to the **Crisis Report** on the latest development, Ibhetshu Likazulu leader Mbuso Fuzwayo said the State has shown lack of sincerity on healing and reconciliation.

"What has been demonstrated by this behaviour is that the state is not committed to a genuine process that will result in healing, reconciliation and closure. This is a direct attack on any process that seeks to resolve the Gukurahundi genocide on the basis of truth and justice," he said.

"Secondly, it also demonstrates lack of sincerity on the part of the state. The State is not committed to resolve this matter the way it is supposed to be resolved. So the State is

State making concerted efforts to sweep Gukurahundi under the carpet

saying we are committed but events on the ground are telling they are not committed at all."

Fuzwayo said it was unfortunate that victims of Gukurahundi continued to bear scars of the Gukurahundi massacres due to machinations by the state to sweep the issue under the carpet.

"The implication of all this is that it will continue to widen the gap between the perpetrator and the survivors. Sur-

vivors want a genuine, independent process and on the other hand, the State wants a process that it controls and manipulates," he said.

"As Ibhetshu Likazulu, we are determined to stand with victims and survivors and to oppose all forms of manipulation by the state and we will continue to put the memorial plaques in honour of victims of Gukurahundi until this matter is resolved in a way that meets international standards and norms."



SENIOR members of the Zimbabwe National Army are on record declaring that the opposition as well as individuals without liberation war credentials are not fit to lead the country.

The sentiments have also been amplified by senior officials of the ruling Zanu PF party.

During past elections, which have largely failed the credibility test, there has been heavy involvement of the army in the electoral processes and this has been in brazen violation of the country's supreme law.

When Zimbabweans protested against electoral theft in August 2018, the army, after helping President Emmerson Mnangagwa ascend to power through a military coup in November 2017, was deployed against civilians and six people were shot dead in cold blood.

The army was to later on clamp down on opposition and civic society activists and cases of rights violations in the form of torture, abductions as well as rape were reported. After Mnangagwa was declared winner of the controversial 2018 elections, what followed was militarisation of key State institutions and the militarisation drive has continued ever since.

In an interview with the **Crisis Report**, Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition deputy youth committee chairperson and director of Youth Forum, Ashton Bumhira, said it was unfortunate that from time immemorial, the military has operated as an appendage of the ruling party, Zanu PF, against the dictates of the Constitution.

He said the military involvement in politics had created an uneven playing field during election periods.

Crisis Coalition members on military involvement in politics

"The military and ruling politicians in Zimbabwe are inseparable. History has shown us that the military is used as an extension of the ruling party. Zanu PF has used the military to instil fear while threatening voters as well as political opponents and to create an uneven playing field in our politics. It is going to be very difficult to have democratic change in Zimbabwe as long as the security sector is not a national establishment," he said.

"It's a tragedy for our democracy when you have military generals coming live on national television saying they will not accept a leader without war credentials like they did in 2002. We continue to hear from authoritative voices like George Charamba (Deputy Chief Secretary, Presidential Communications) that the army will never allow the opposition to lead Zimbabwe and what is most unfortunate is the fact that the military keeps mum about it and never issues a statement to the contrary."

The Zimbabwe National Students Union gender-secretary, Nancy Njenge, said it was unfortunate that the army was among the perpetrators of rights violations in their defence of the ruling party, Zanu PF.

She also attributed the closure of the democratic space in Zimbabwe to the heavy involvement of the army in Zimbabwe's political affairs.

Zimbabwe Divine Destiny leader Bishop Ancelimo Maga-

ya said events that unfolded during the bloody 2008 elections proved that the army has been a huge obstacle towards a democratic transition in Zimbabwe.

During the 2008 election run-off, the army, Zanu PF militia and war veterans unleashed violence against opposition supporters and eventually, the then opposition leader, Morgan Tsvangirai had to pull out of the run off election.

The run-off came after the then Zanu PF leader, the late Robert Mugabe had refused to concede defeat to the opposition Movement for Democratic Change. Mugabe was to later on admit during a Zanu PF function that Tsvangirai had won the election by amassing 73% of the total votes cast.

Said Bishop Magaya: "The 2008 elections were clear evidence that the military is an obstacle to democratic change. It is in 2008 (post the Tsvangirai victory) that the military interfered with the announcement of the results and up to now have become part of the shareholders in the power dynamics."

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition spokesperson, Marvellous Khumalo highlighted that the military involvement in the politics of the country was unconstitutional.

He added that non-adherence to the Constitution by the military and the ruling party had worsened the Zimbabwean crisis.

CRISIS in Zimbabwe Coalition member, Darlington Madzonga, is among the victims of persecution by prosecution having been arrested on numerous occasions as the state continues to clampdown on dissent.

Below, we publish his trials and tribulations and the hands of the State:

1. July 12, 2017 — There was a demonstration on electoral reforms in Harare's central business district.

Darlington Madzonga was arrested at the corner of Jason Moyo and Chinhoyi street at around 1400 hours.

He was subsequently assaulted heavily by members of the police reaction unit before being detained at Harare Central Police Station.

2. July 14, 2017 — After spending two nights in custody at Harare Central Prison, Darlington Madzonga appeared for initial remand at the Harare Magistrates' Court facing two charges, the first one being of malicious damage to property and the other one being murder of a police officer.

For the malicious damage to property charge, bail ruling was reserved to Monday July 17, which was granted.

On initial appearance, a complaint of assault was raised and the court ordered an investigation.

On the murder charge, he was advised to make that application at the High Court.

He was remanded in custody at Harare Central Prison.

3. July 26, 2017 — High Court judge Priscilla Chigumba denied Darlington Madzonga bail and did not give rea-

The trials and tribulations of human rights defender, Darlington Madzonga

sons for denying the bail.

4. September 20 2017 — After spending 70 days in detention at Harare Central Pris-

on, bail was finally granted on changed circumstances by Justice Emmy Tsanga.

The bail conditions were to



Darlington Madzonga

report at Glen View Police Station three times a week, deposit \$200 with the Clerk of Court, surrender passport to the Clerk of Court and not to interfere with witnesses.

5. November 9-10, 2017 — Darlington Madzonga appeared before an investigating committee that comprised Officers in Charge of Mbare, Matapi and Stoddart police stations.

Despite the investigating committee having interviewed Madzonga in order to compile a report of assault, the report was never produced in court.

Trial for malicious damage to property charges failed to kick off after the State failed to submit a report in court.

6. November 14, 2017 — Madzonga made a report of assault against two police officers who had arrested him in July 2017.

Harare Central Police Station officers failed to act on the report regardless of the fact that he had submitted a self recorded statement and a reference number issued under (IR110921)

7. May 14, 2018 — High Court judge Justice Tsanga granted an application for variation of bail conditions, meaning Darlington Madzonga was now reporting once a month on the last Friday of each month at Glen View Police Station.

8. March 4, 2019 — A refusal of remand was granted by a Harare magistrate on the malicious damage to property case. The State was ordered to proceed by way of summons.

After the order, a total of six summonses were issued with the court insisting on the State to submit a report on complaints against the police which was ordered on July 14, 2017.

9. August 15, 2020 — After several attempts to have the murder case removed from remand or indicted to the High Court for trial, a Harare magistrate finally removed the matter from remand and the State was advised to proceed by way of summons on the case.

10. Of the two charges, none of them reached even the trial stage, a clear case that the investigations were shoddy and half-done. The arresting officers acted outside the Constitution.

There is nothing much to celebrate about the State granting Madzonga's application of removal from remand since he was not supposed to have been on remand in the first place.

Removal from remand does not mean the end of the case since the State can proceed by way of summons.

Madzonga is a victim of persecution by prosecution and indeed a prisoner of conscience.



ZIMBABWE has held a series of elections that have largely failed the credibility test owing to a number of factors.

The country goes to the polls in 2023 amid calls for eligible voters to register and turn out in their numbers on voting day and ensure they defend their vote.

According to the Election Resource Centre (ERC) the following issues must be addressed as a panacea to free, fair and credible polls.

1. Public Broadcaster and Media Coverage: All political parties must be granted equal media coverage by the public broadcasters and publishers.

This ensures that citizens have access to information on all political parties and candidates contesting in elections as supported by the electoral laws.

The media plays an important role in helping citizens to hold elected officials accountable, thus access to information by voters and equal access to the electorate by parties and candidates is important and must be objective.

2. The Conduct of Traditional Leaders: As per the dictates of the Constitution of the Republic of Zimbabwe, Traditional leaders must not further the interests of any political party or candidate or in any way participate in partisan politics.

Compliance with the law is of paramount importance in order to ensure a balanced political and electoral environment.

Traditional leaders should, instead, facilitate equitable access to communities by all parties canvassing for support and ensure that the voter has access to information neces-

Register to vote and demand electoral reforms for free, fair and credible elections

sary to make an informed decision at the polls.

3. Independence of the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC): In administering its constitutional mandate to oversee elections, ZEC must be impartial and independent. ZEC's activities, decisions and roles MUST not be influenced by anyone.

Moreso, there ought to be transparency and accountability (responsibility to justify actions or decisions) to citizens, political parties and independent observers.

Ensuring verifiability (demonstration of accuracy beyond reasonable doubt) and inclusivity (providing equal access) of processes will enhance public confidence in the Commission.

These processes extend to voter mobilisation and education, ballot printing, results transmission and political parties and civil society engagement.

4. Conduct of The Security Services: Security services must be professional, respect the rule of law and ensure that the electoral and political environment remains conducive for free and fair elections.

The security services must

respect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all persons and be non-partisan, national in character, patriotic, professional and subordinate to the civilian authority as established by the Constitution, (Constitution 211 (3)).

5. Election Dispute Resolution (Mechanisms): There is a need to create accessible and functional mechanisms that ensure that electoral disputes are resolved, strengthening confidence and ensuring the credibility of electoral processes.

ZEC, the Zimbabwe Republic Police and the Zimbabwe Human Rights Commission must ensure compliance with criminal and electoral justice systems including fair investigation and immediate redress of complaints and reports of violence.

The mechanism of Multi-Party Liaison Committees must be decentralised to lower levels from the current national and provincial tiers.

Conclusively, voter registration should be complemented with the implementation of electoral reforms.

DESPITE numerous promises to revamp the country's education sector and improve the welfare of teaching staff, government has proved a lack of commitment towards its pledge and continues to make unilateral decisions that have a negative bearing on the education sector.

Amalgamated Rural Teachers Union of Zimbabwe (ARTUZ) president Obert Masaraure in an interview with the **Crisis Report** blasted government for making pronouncements on issues related to the education sector without input from key stakeholders.

On August 25, 2021 government announced new opening dates for schools in a move that caught most parents off guard.

'Govt insincere on revamping education sector'

The move to reopen schools was part of resolutions of a Cabinet meeting.

"The announcement (to open schools) was backed by a claim that preparations for schools had been done extensively. The vague claim of preparations does not speak to teacher preparedness to teach, learner preparedness to learn, parents' prepared-

ness to fund education and schools' preparedness for safety in face of COVID 19," Masaraure said.

ARTUZ and government have been at loggerheads since 2019, with the teachers' union demanding a living wage.

Masaraure bemoaned the plight of rural teachers saying it has not yet been addressed despite government's strong will to open schools.

"In 2020 the Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare, Professor Paul Mavi-ma pronounced that by January 2021, government would have produced a roadmap towards restoration of pre-October 2018 salaries for teachers. To date no roadmap has been shared," he said.

Masaraure also accused government of giving teachers' salaries a cosmetic uplift in light of the hyper inflationary environment.

"Government has only resorted to adjusting salaries in line with inflation. The same value of low salaries has been maintained under the guise of increments. Teachers, therefore, remain severely incapacitated. Teachers can't afford to pay tuition fees for their own children let alone travel back to work," he said.

Masaraure urged government to channel part of the funds from the much hyped budget surplus towards the education sector.



ARTUZ president Obert Masaraure

BY ZLHR

MUTARE High Court judge Justice Isaac Muzenda has stopped the arbitrary eviction of five families, including the demolition of their homesteads after prohibiting Makoni Rural District Council from interfering with their settlement.

The villagers, who are unemployed and are subsistence farmers, settled in Nemaire Village 24 in Makoni District, Manicaland province, in 2011, where they built their homesteads and are all descendants of former farm workers, having become homeless after Bingaguru Farm was compulsorily acquired by government.

The villagers namely Milton Juma, Joshua Msindo, Angeline Mariko, Markington Mupazi and Tinashe Musha-

ZLHR stops arbitrary eviction of villagers

maenza sought land in Nemaire village and were given some plots and integrated into the village by Village Head Amandos Kariyo with the consent of Chief Makoni in terms of the Traditional Leaders Act.

But authorities at Makoni Rural District Council, who entered into a partnership with Sports Leaders Institute of Zimbabwe, sought to evict them from their homesteads as it intended to erect a boundary fence and a fireguard and accused them of illegally settling themselves in the area.

This compelled Juma, Msin-

do, Mariko, Mupazi and Mushamaenza, who were assisted by Peggy Tavagadza of Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, to file an urgent chamber application at Mutare High Court, where they protested against the actions of Makoni Rural District Council in seeking to deprive them of shelter.

In his ruling, Justice Muzenda, said Makoni Rural District Council should be a law abiding local authority and prohibited it from evicting the five villagers and not to demolish their homes without obtaining a valid court order.



Some of the villagers stranded in the bush after being evicted [Pic: Costa Nkomo via 263Chat]

THE Institute for Young Women Development (IYWD) on August 31, 2021 launched a documentary titled "**Prisoners of Conscience**" which narrates the stories of female activists and political leaders.

The documentary is based on the lived realities of young women and women leaders who have shattered the glass ceiling by participating in politics.

They tell their stories as young women and women leaders focusing on what motivates them to participate in politics, the threats and dangers they have faced, coping

IYWD advocates for safer spaces for young women and women political leaders

mechanisms employed and how best society can support young women and women

leaders.

Based on real life stories, the documentary highlights the arrests, the fear, the guns, the incarceration, the anxiety and everything about being prisoners of the conscience.

In the documentary, the women who were incarcerated for their political beliefs also narrate their experience at the hands of state security agents when they were subjected to torture and ill treatment during their days in prison.

The objective of the reflections is provoke the thinking and actions of all progressive people, organisations and movements on how best to contribute towards safer environments for young women to exercise their constitutional rights of participating in civic and political processes.



Glanis Changachirere [Pic: IYWD]

THE Zimbabwe National Students Union (ZINASU) has expressed concern over the move by institutions of higher learning to bar students who are yet to be vaccinated from accessing campus premises.

ZINASU secretary-general Tapiwanashe Chiriga said that inasmuch as they appreciate the current vaccination drive, it was a violation of students' rights to bar them from learning institutions on the basis that they are not yet vaccinated.

"It should be stated that at the present moment, there is no law that makes access to education the preserve of persons who have been vaccinated," he said.

"On the contrary, we take refuge in the Constitution of the Republic which clearly outlines a number of fundamental rights that will be violated should this persist.

"Section 68 of the Constitution for instance, requires all administrative conduct to be lawful, reasonable and substantially fair. We thus find measures taken by institutions of higher learning to be drastic, unfair and illegal."

Chiriga said that ZINASU has carried out campaigns to encourage students and the general citizenry to get vaccinated and also appreciates government efforts in the vaccination drive but added that "it is still government position that vaccination is not compulsory".

"We equally would like to believe that based on available data, the government is yet to acquire enough vaccines to have the entire population vaccinated by now. The right to access education cannot be abrogated on the basis of one's speed to access vaccines," he said.

ZINASU concerned over barring of unvaccinated students from colleges



Tapiwanashe Chiriga [Pic: Twitter]