

Mugabe's three decades of murder and mayhem

By a Special Correspondent

Last week's publication of a report: Cries from Goromonzi: Inside Zimbabwe's Torture Chambers by the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition is set to open a floodgate of similar records of harrowing tales from thousands who fell prey to marauding bands of Zanu PF hoodlums who inflicted untold suffering to this nation during the past 30 years of Mugabe's dictatorship.



Victim of Zanu PF brutality

Torture survivors are all over Zimbabwe. Their memories are still very clear. They know what happened to them, to their neighbours, to their loved ones, and to their communities. Collectively, the entire nation is united about what should never be repeated by any regime in their name. To declare a war on innocent civilians under the guise of protecting Zimbabwe's "sovereignty", or to fight "sanctions" and Western imperialism shall never be an excuse for any politician on our soil.

The latest report and numerous others still being compiled look set to complete a damning dossier exposing the ruse our former liberators used to deny us the realisation of an ideal: freedom from colonialism. Our liberation struggle was a national project. We all participated in one form or the other to rid our land of the colonial menace and racial discrimination. But those we asked to lead us into a new era soon turned on us in pursuit of greed and political avarice.

We were surprised to see this happen so soon after Independence in 1980. Mugabe turned onto Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands. The entire nation responded slowly, thinking the moment of madness – as Mugabe later put it – was a genuinely regrettable mistake. But when he offered the dispersed Ndebeles no public apology or an opportunity to tell their own stories, we found his actions completely unacceptable.

When we formed the MDC, Mugabe and Zanu PF paid dearly: the entire region sent him a clear message. They rejected Zanu PF.

While our security forces and Zanu PF militias had a field day in western Zimbabwe trying to force a people to "love" Mugabe, he never rested. In October 1983, close to 6 000 innocent women were rounded up in urban

areas across the country, accused of prostitution and taken to a bush military camp at Mushumbi Pools and other parts of the remote Zambezi Valley for "re-education". Upon their release, their lives have never been the same. The result: the formation of the Women's Action Group (WAG).

After WAG, dozens of other women's pro-democracy organisations came to life – each with a set of grievances against Mugabe's dictatorship. The people of Matabeleland and the majority of Zimbabwean women were the first to see the insincerity of Mugabe and Zanu PF. They made up their minds and still await the day they shall be able to tell their stories.

After Mugabe and Zanu PF lost the February 2000 referendum, they turned to everybody: the MDC, civil society, white farmers, urban workers, farm workers, peasants and students. We persevered in the forlorn hope that they had learnt a bitter lesson from Matabeleland and the Midlands, considering that this was happening a few years after the publication of the report on the 1980s disturbances. But that was not to be.

For eight years, we went through a terrible time. Thanks to technology, this time we managed to document a significant chunk of the brute's actions. The climax came after the entire country united against Mugabe and Zanu PF in March 2008.

The entire country could no longer stomach the pain or accept the official explanation that Mugabe's war on us was for our long term good. We rejected Zanu PF and Mugabe. We openly told them so.

But not to be outdone, Mugabe refused to go. He deployed the military, the Zanu PF militia and the CIO to take us on in our homes. We were defenceless, like in all previous attacks. We simply watched and buried our kith and kin; as we nursed our wounds; and as we prayed in our besieged homes for divine intervention – which we finally received.

We gave Mugabe another chance; we invited him to work with us once more in the sincere hope that he had seen the folly of his ways. But what are we getting today? Yesterday, we were provoked in Epworth; there are pockets of mayhem in the rural areas; we continue to receive hate messages in the public media; our ministers are denied space to work; and the framework for national healing has hardly taken off. So what options remain on the table?


Without a cogent message, Mugabe and Zanu PF want to have another go at us. Under the cover of "indigenization and sanctions" there is yet another attempt to mount a serious assault on us. There is simply no willingness on the part of Mugabe and Zanu PF for Zimbabwe to make a meaningful move.

The theory that we are against indigenisation, equal opportunity and wealth creation within a global and universal work ethic baffles us.

What we are against is the rape and plunder of the little that should give us a starting point to regain our self-esteem. The markets are in jitters. Capital, timid as it always is, has begun to fly away. There has been a resurgence of political violence. Farm invasions continue unabated.

It might also be wise to let Mugabe take everything that is left and distribute it to his cronies, after all. We resolved way back that we want to start afresh. We want a new Zimbabwe. Our message has been well received by our battered nation.

But a word of caution to Mugabe and Zanu PF. Removing the travel ban does not bar Jestina Mukoko, Adela Chiminya, Rutendo Munengami, Rosy Mupfawa and thousands of others – as individuals - from asking the courts in the Western world to issue warrants of arrest against you the minute you enter into those capitals for your belated shopping sprees. That could be a better route to take.

Only time will tell. 

Violence flares up again

From Page 1

He told the gatherings that he will soon dispatch the co-ministers of Home Affairs to the troubled spots to investigate and deal with the rogue elements.

"We have declared zero tolerance to the use of violence as a tool to intimidate the people. We signed the Global Political Agreement (GPA) to end violence. Perpetrators must be locked up. It's embarrassing for some people to be still stuck in the past where we used to fight. As Principals we meet every Monday to plan and discuss developments in the country. This inclusivity at the leadership level must cascade to the ground level," he said.

In Zimunya, one Mapuranga, a rogue war veteran and former soldier, has been named as harassing the villagers. Mapuranga who is armed with an AK47 and is masquerading as an education officer, was leading the Zanu PF militia who terrorised villagers during the violent 2008 elections.

"War veterans fought for the liberation of this country not to take us into another form of bondage. They fought to defend the people's rights and therefore must respect the people. What does it mean then if the same war veterans are abusing human rights? War veterans should let people debate issues objectively," said President Tsvangirai.

In some cases, it was discovered that police and army officers were at the forefront of the terror activities.

"Give us names of police and army officers who are perpetrating violence and we will deal with them. Security establishments should not abuse people and this will be dealt with in the Security Council," he said.

Meanwhile, an MDC activist Sarudzai Taodzera, had her house gutted down in an arson attack by Zanu PF supporters at Nehumba village in Murehwa West constituency, Mashonaland East province last week.

Speaking to *The Changing Times* in Murehwa on Sunday, Taodzera said a gang of known Zanu PF thugs in the area attacked her homestead last Thursday night razing her thatched two bed - roomed house to the ground.

She lost all the property inside the house, which included two beds, a television set, a radio and two chairs. She also lost her family's clothes, grain and fertiliser.

A report was made at the nearby Kadzere police station but no arrests have been made although the culprits have been identified.

"We were lucky that no-one was injured since we were not sleeping in the house. It was the hand of God that saved us," said a distraught Taodzera.

MDC secretary-general, Hon. Tendai Biti who also visited the homestead on Sunday, said the act was barbaric and showed how weak Zanu-PF was and how they wanted to destabilise a peaceful community in Murehwa.


"Violence is evidence of lack of thinking. Because we are gathering support in their so-called stronghold in Mashonaland East, Zanu PF targets those MDC members who are said to be influential, and they attack them. But this year, they won't succeed. They can not frustrate the people of Zimbabwe any longer," Hon. Biti said.

Still on Zanu PF's violence, reports from Masvingo province show that the opposition Zanu PF is lining up militia bases in some parts of the province ahead of the Constitution-making process.

In Zimuto, Masvingo North, Zanu PF has set-up a militia base near Zimuto Siding business centre with local villagers saying the Zanu PF terror machine is in place to block alternative views from those of Zanu PF during the Constitution-making process.

"There is a base near Zimuto Siding Business Centre and Zanu PF militia gangs are seen frequenting the place singing Zanu PF songs. We have a problem in Zimuto. The police must immediately dismantle the base," said one villager, Tichafara Manase.

In Mwenzei East, terror camps have been reported near Neshuro growth point and it is widely suspected Zanu PF is eager to intimidate villagers across the province.

In Gutu West, there is a base in Eastdale ranch estate and it is understood Zanu PF is planning to launch yet another reign of terror against Zimbabweans. 

Zuma pressures Mugabe

From Page 1

The unilateral ministerial mandate reconfiguration by Mugabe piles on a catalogue of a long list of outstanding issues.

While observers are confident the inclusive government will not collapse, they say unending bickering caused by Mugabe's intransigence is crippling the administration and rendering it ineffective.

Mugabe is flouting the global political agreement that gave birth to the unity government will nilly, refusing to rescind his unilateral appointment of two of his allies to the key posts of central bank governor and attorney general. The GPA prescribes that consensus candidates must be installed to man these posts.


Mugabe has also refused to swear in MDC treasurer-general Roy Bennett as deputy

agriculture minister and to appoint five MDC provincial governors as the pact recommends.

It is hoped Zuma will pressure Mugabe to stick to terms of the political agreement.

Tsvangirai defeated Mugabe in a first-round presidential vote in March 2008, when the MDC also forced Zanu PF into the minority in parliament for the first time since it took power on independence in 1980.

But the MDC leader pulled out of the blood-soaked run-off in June, 2008, after the regime coordinated a brutal campaign of violence that had left more than 500 MDC supporters dead.

The protracted political feuding caused by Mugabe's stubbornness has dimmed the hopes of ordinary Zimbabweans, who had believed the inclusive government would lift the country's economic fortunes. 

Letters to the Editor

Diaspora must vote

Dear Editor,

I believe there are four million Zimbabweans in South Africa. The challenge is how do we get these people to register and be able to go home and vote? What is the MDC doing as a party to make sure that these people get to vote and ultimately go back home when Zimbabwe is a free country again?

Please MDC fight for us so that we have real change in Zimbabwe.

Bornwell Madambi

South Africa

Free and fair elections now

Dear Editor,

I would like to urge the MDC not go into any election without the

supervision of SADC, AU and UN. If the elections monitoring and supervision is in the hands of Robert Mugabe and Patrick Chinamasa people will be beaten by Zanu Pf thugs and the elections will be rigged.

Zanu PF should go and it is time that we have free and fair elections in a peaceful environment

Langton Chivende

Harare

Endurance saluted

Dear Editor,

There are two things that I respect the MDC President and the Prime Minister of Zimbabwe for, namely, endurance and patience.

As we commemorate the 11 March 2007 attack by the police in Highfield, Harare, President Morgan Tsvangirai has endured unbearable pain and has been so patient, even to the extent of dealing with Robert Mugabe, who was

responsible for his incarceration and beatings at the hands of State agents!

Bravo we pray for President Tsvangirai all the time. Zimbabwe is almost there so please never give up or tire!

F Munyoro

Harare 

MDC Constitutional principles on Elections

1. ELECTIONS

1.1 Electoral System

1.1.1 House of Assembly- elections to the House of Assembly should be done on a first-past-the-post electoral system provided the principle of gender balance is adhered to.

1.1.2 Senate- elections to the Senate should be based on a proportional representation electoral system. The principle of gender should also be adhered to.

1.1.3 Local Government- election of Mayor, Rural District Councils and Ward Councillors should be based on a first-past-the-post electoral system provided the principle of gender is adhered to.

1.2 Election Dates

1.2.1 Election dates must be defined in the Constitution, for example, in the United States of America, every individual knows the dates for Presidential and Senatorial elections to be the second week of November every fourth year.

1.2.2 Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government elections should be harmonised.

1.2.3 Head of State- after every five years.

1.2.4 Parliamentary- after every five years

1.2.5 Local Government- after every five years

1.3 Voter Registration

1.3.1 Voter registration and inspection of the voters' roll should be continuous.

1.4 Elections Funding

1.4.1 Treasury through a budgetary allocation should fund all elections.

1.5 Electoral Vacancies

1.5.1 President – 90 days

1.5.2 Parliamentary – 90 days

1.5.3 Local Government 90 days

1.6 Qualifications to register as a Voter

1.6.1 Zimbabwean aged 18 and above

1.7 Counting and announcement of results

1.7.1 Counting should be done at the polling station.

1.7.2 Initial announcement should be at the polling station.

1.7.3 The final announcement should be done by the Independent Electoral Commission.

1.7.4 Announcement of Presidential, Parliamentary and Local Government elections results should be within 48 hours from the casting of the last ballot.

1.8 Election Monitoring

1.8.1 Participating political parties and candidates

1.8.2 Civic organizations provided they register with the Independent Electoral Commission.

1.9 Election Supervision

1.9.1 The Independent Electoral Commission is responsible for election supervision.

1.10 Election Observation

1.10.1 regional organizations

1.10.2 international organizations

1.10.3 regional parliaments

1.10.4 any organization upon obtaining the permission to do so from the Independent Electoral Commission.

1.11 Postal Votes

1.11.1 All Zimbabweans are entitled to their right to vote.

1.11.2 The IEC should put relevant mechanisms to ensure that Zimbabweans residing outside the borders exercise their right to vote.

1.12 Role of the Security

1.12.1 Security agents should ensure that peace and tranquillity

prevail towards, during and after elections.

1.12.2 Security should not have a direct role in the administration of elections

1.13 The role of the media

1.13.1 All contesting candidates and parties should have equal access to public media

1.14 Electoral Disputes

1.14.1 Electoral disputes arising before the date of polling should be finalised 14 days before the day of polling.

1.14.2 Electoral disputes arising after the election should be heard in the High Court no later than 30 days after the day of polling.

1.15 Voter Education

1.15.1 Voter education is the mandate of the State therefore it should be provided by the IEC

1.15.2 Any organizations upon obtaining permission from the IEC

Local Government Forum

Ruwa – a town of excellence

RUWA – Ruwa Town Council is undertaking a major re-branding exercise that will turn around the town into a major industrial and residential area, the chairperson for the town council, Councillor Piniyas Rabson Mushayavanhu has predicted.

Speaking in a wide-ranging interview with The Changing Times this week, Clr Mushayavanhu said the people of Ruwa and surrounding areas would see a remarkable change emerging in Ruwa.

Clr Mushayavanhu is the head of nine MDC councillors in the town. All the nine councillors who were voted into office in March 2008 are MDC.

The MDC is also in charge of all but one of the urban councils and has the majority of councillors in rural councils countrywide.

To show how serious the Ruwa council is in turning around the fortunes of the town, last week the town commissioned seven vehicles worth over US\$50 000 for use in various council departments.

The town has about 200 000 people and it is located some 28km east of Harare.

“As council, we have decided to think outside the box and come out with various projects that will see Ruwa turning into a world class location,” the optimistic Clr Mushayavanhu said.

“Ruwa Town Council inherited a graveyard of unserviceable vehicles which were disposed of to council’s best advantage. We had perennial water shortages, power outages, no refuse collection, and a poor road network, but we are working on making sure that Ruwa works again and in the process make it attractive and

friendly for business investors and residents,” Clr Mushayavanhu said during the interview.

The vehicles purchased by the council include a five tonne truck, a minibus, a ceremonial car for the chairperson, two tractors and two motor bikes, which were all sourced from Japan.

“We are however, still in the process of acquiring a refuse truck, an ambulance and a fire engine truck,” he said.

Clr Mushayavanhu said the purchasing of the vehicles would go a long way in improving service delivery in the town, after the current councillors inherited a dilapidated town following years of neglect by the then Zanu PF led council.

Ruwa has about 260 companies and four suburbs, Zimre Park, Windsor Park, Damofalls and Runyararo and five operational departments, engineering, housing and community services, health, treasury and administrative. The five departments have a staff of 180 employees.

Ruwa Town Council was established in October 1990 in terms of the Urban Councils Act and is located along the busy Harare – Mutare highway. It is also easily accessible by rail.

Last year the town council also scored a first by being the first urban council to launch a website – www.ruwatown.org.

“The website shows that the town is re-branding in line with international trends in order to attract new investors as through the website, they will be able to know more about the town and what it has to offer to an investor,” said Clr Mushayavanhu who is also the councillor for Ward 7, which covers Windsor Park.

“We are trying to improve the brand image of Ruwa by creating within the minds of the people all the information and expectations associated with Ruwa Town. Our theme for Ruwa is; ‘Building the Ruwa we want’”.

“If the town manages to get its brand recognised, it shall build up to a point where the town will enjoy a critical mass of positive sentiment in the market place as well as attract investment thereby improving the livelihoods of the community and the surrounding areas,” he said.

Also last year, the town managed to hold the inaugural the Ruwa Show and Community Fun Day that saw hundreds of residents attending the colourful showcase.

Through its investment drive, the council has also come up with a strategy of interacting more with residents and businesses in order to provide a better service delivery and having better channels of communication in the town.

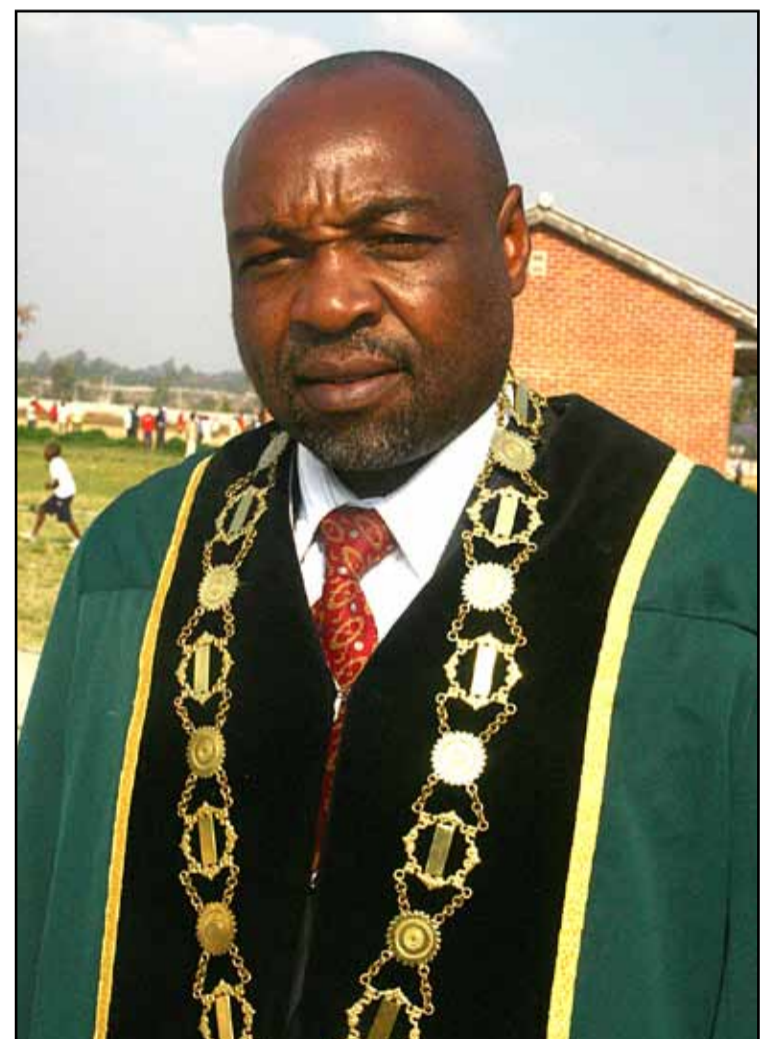
“We have met with the residents and the business community and have formed a think tank group. They advise us on problems facing the town and their expectations from us. The project is based on the assumption that with the assistance of the ratepayer, the town can solve most of the problems being faced,” he said.

This has resulted in the business community assisting in the road maintenance, which has seen potholes being filled up and having a better road network within the town.

However, Clr Mushayavanhu said the Ruwa Town Council was still facing some challenges that were affecting the day-to-day lives of the people and the businesses.

“Although we took over the operations of water supplies from the Zimbabwe National Water Supply Authority (Zinwa) and from the Harare City Council, we are failing to provide adequate water supplies as our plant is limited,” he said.

Clr Mushayavanhu said the water plant was only providing two megalitres per day when the town needs at least seven megalitres.



Ruwa Chairman Councillor Piniyas Rabson Mushayavanhu

“As a result the residents and the industries are seriously affected by the water rationing that we have to undertake. However, we are doing our best to ensure that we get a better water treatment plant that will result in better water supplies,” he said.

Because of the water rationing in the town, Clr Mushayavanhu said the health department remained on high alert that no disease outbreaks especially cholera broke out.

“We are ever ready for any outbreak of disease in the town,” he said.

Clr Mushayavanhu said the other problem that was affecting the Ruwa Town was the continuous power cuts and hoped that the Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority (ZESA) would do something urgently to rectify the situation

Moyo fails to overturn historic Speaker election

HARARE – It never rains but pours for Jonathan Nathaniel Moyo.

His attempt to fight the people's Speaker hit a brickwall when High Court judge, Justice Bharat Patel last week dismissed with costs an application by him and three other MPs, who were seeking to nullify the August 2008 democratic election of Hon. Lovemore Moyo as the Speaker of Parliament.

Hon. Moyo, who is also the MDC national chairman, was elected Speaker on August 25, 2008 after beating Paul Themba Nyathi who was being supported by Zanu PF. The MDC national chairman polled 110 votes to Nyathi's 98 votes.

However, Jonathan Moyo filed an application at the High Court seeking to nullify the Speaker's appointment saying the voting was not done by secret ballot.

Jonathan Moyo was supported in the court challenge by Moses Mzila Ndlovu, Siyabonga Ncube and Patrick Dube from Arthur Mutambara's party.

In his judgment last Tuesday, Justice Patel said: "It's clear that all members marked their ballot papers in secrecy and none were coerced to vote for any candidate."

"The applicants have failed to establish any justification, either as regards the general conduct of the impugned election or with respect to the secrecy of the votes cast or otherwise, for setting aside or nullifying the election of the Speaker of the House of Assembly. The application is dismissed," the judge said.

Hon. Moyo became the first Speaker of Parliament since independence in 1980 from outside Zanu PF after the MDC won the March 2008 harmonised elections.

Justice Patel said he agreed with the Speaker who wrote in his opposing affidavit that Parliament's business should not be interfered with, in line with the doctrine of separation of powers except when it violated the country's Constitution.

"Parliament is generally at large to regulate its own proceedings without external interference," said Justice Patel.

"As a rule, the courts should be loath to interfere with the internal proceedings of Parliament unless there is a failure to comply with Constitutional strictures.

"In the instant case, I do not perceive any such failure and am unable to find any other basis for setting aside the election of the Speaker."

Justice Patel said the alleged chaos claimed by Jonathan Moyo was merely

a result of the increased membership of the House of Assembly from 150 to 210 MPs and the MDC becoming the majority party in Parliament for the first time.

He said this contributed to the "exuberance of the atmosphere and affected the dynamics of the election".

The celebrated political harlot, Jonathan Moyo, who was hoping to curry favour with Zanu PF through the case, is planning to appeal against the ruling at the Supreme Court.

As soon as Justice Patel had passed his verdict, Jonathan Moyo, who wore a pensive expression as the judgment was being read, immediately bolted out of the court room with his lawyer. The two artfully dodged the journalists who were eagerly waiting to get a comment from the former media hangman.



Speaker of House of Assembly Lovemore Moyo

Bail ruling for MDC councillors today

CHINHOYI – The bail hearing in the case of two Banket councillors, Emmanuel Chinanzvavana and Fani Tembo, who are facing false charges of murdering a Zanu PF special councillor in January, will be held today at the High Court.

Last Thursday, the two and their co-accused, Givemore Hodzi had their application for refusal of further remand rejected at the Chinhoyi magistrates' court in Mashonaland West province.

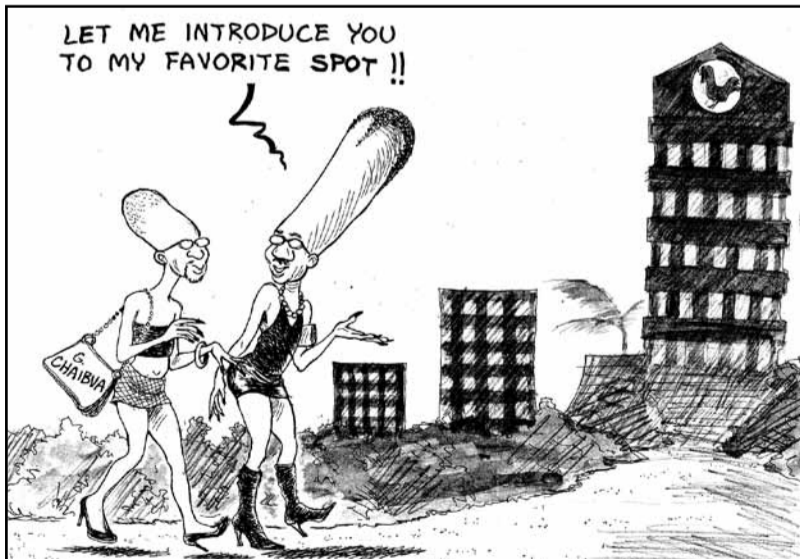
They were arrested in January on spurious charges of murdering a Zanu PF councillor, Lancelot Zvirongwe and have been in remand prison since then.

The MDC has no doubt that the councillors are innocent and that their arrest is simply a perpetuation of the persecution strategy employed by the partisan Attorney-General to harass members of the MDC.

In 2008, Chinanzvavana and Tembo were among over 30 MDC and civil

society activists including then two year Nigel Mutemagau who were abducted by State security agents on allegations that they were recruiting MDC youths for training at military bases in neighbouring Botswana in order to overthrow the Zanu PF regime.

However, the charges were dismissed by the SADC leaders as baseless. The abductees were later released after spending more than four months detained at Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison.



The MDC as a people's project, values your opinions. Please feel free to send news, alerts or letters expressing your views and comments to MDC Information and Publicity Department or email: mdcnewsbrief@gmail.com

MP invites residents to bid for Constituency Development Fund

HARARE - Kuwadzana East MP Hon Nelson Chamisa has urged residents to come up with projects that will be bankrolled through the Constituency Development Fund.

The Fund, announced through the 2010 national budget, will see US\$50,000 disbursed to all of the country's 210 constituencies to help empower people and develop the country.

Hon Chamisa told thousands of Kuwadzana residents at a constituency feedback meeting at Kuwadzana 4 shopping centre on Saturday that he been advised by Finance minister Tendai Biti that the cash would be available at the end of April.

Hon Chamisa urged residents to come up with project proposals, and said there would be a Constituency Development Fund Board to oversee the management of the money.

"There must be plans first," he said. "It will benefit you and all those who

HARARE - Zimbabweans from all walks of life on Thursday commemorated the disturbances of 11 March 2007, when armed riot police officers disrupted a peaceful prayer rally at Zimbabwe Grounds in Highfield, Harare and brutally attacked and arrested hundreds of innocent people including President Morgan Tsvangirai.

The attack also led to the death of MDC activist, Gift Tandare, who was shot and killed in cold blood by armed riot police.

Speaking during an occasion to mark the event in Harare, President Tsvangirai, who is also Zimbabwe's Prime Minister, said the commemoration was evidence that the Zanu PF regime had failed to suppress dissent and the fight for democracy in Zimbabwe.

"The fact that we are here today is evidence that they failed to silence us and although we have not yet reached our true democratic destination, we will never stop marching towards the Zimbabwe that the people demand and deserve," President Tsvangirai said.

"A key part of building a society that embraces all its citizens and allows them to live in a society that welcomes diversity and dissent and promotes freedoms and prosperity is facing the brutal reality of our own history and actions of our fellow citizens."

He said there was need to remove the veneer of normalcy which covered the uglier side of our nature in order that we can face the truth, deal with the reality and heal in order for the nation to move forward as one.

"There can be no real forgiveness without knowledge and acceptance of what transpired and why - and there can be no real forgiveness without justice. And without forgiveness there can be no healing," he said.

President Tsvangirai explained that the inclusive government had made little progress or democratic reforms although this was the main reason for entering into the new administration in February last year.

"The progress that we have made over the past 12 months is threatened by unilateral actions and a failure to accept the reality of the people's wishes that will

ultimately guide the destiny of our nation.

"In that respect, it is very obvious that the first year of this government has not produced the level of profound change and progress that the people of Zimbabwe demand and deserve. It has not been through a lack of commitment or energy on my part or of my close colleagues," he said.

The president said the inclusive government was a transitional mechanism to ensure that Zimbabwe emerged from the crisis into which it had been plunged.

"As Prime Minister, I remain as committed as ever to ensuring that the process towards true democracy, genuine empowerment and freedom continues. For the moment, we are not progressing at the pace that any of us would choose, but we are progressing nevertheless.

"Over the past year we have seen a deliberate strategy of chipping away at the GPA (Global Political Agreement) and trying to roll back commitment to reforms upon which it is based. Some of these actions have been more blatant than others but this has been a pattern of attrition that we have faced week after week" he said.

On 11 March 2007 hundreds of MDC leaders and supporters, civic society members under the banner Save Zimbabwe were severely attacked and arrested by armed riot police who were barring them from assembling for the peaceful occasion.

In a statement to mark March 11, the MDC's Information and Publicity Department said the party believed that the State should not neglect its duty of protecting the citizens.

"Never again should an armed few be a threat to the deafening din of the defenceless voices whose simple demands are hope, freedom, security, prosperity and dignity," the department said in the statement.

Some of the officials who were injured and arrested on the day are; the MDC secretary-general, Hon. Tendai Biti, the MDC information and publicity secretary, Hon. Nelson Chamisa, Chizhanje senator, Hon. Sekai Holland and a senior MDC official, Grace Kwinje.

want to do projects. It is non partisan and it will benefit both MDC and Zanu PF supporters in Kuwadzana. Kana uri MP chenga ose manhanga hapana risina mhodzi, rimwe rinogona kukupa nhopi inonaka (MPs are supposed to look after everyone in the constituency including Zanu PF supporters)," he said.

Zimbabwe's Constituency Development Fund is one of the ingenious innovations of the colation government.

Unlike other development funds that filter from the central government through larger and more layers of administrative organs and bureaucracies, funds under this program go directly to local levels and thus provide people at the grassroots the opportunity to make expenditure decisions that maximize their welfare consistent with the theoretical predictions of decentralization theory.

Increasingly, however, concerns about the utilization of funds under

this program are emerging, but Hon Chamisa said there would be adequate safeguards to ensure the money was not abused.

Meanwhile, Kuwadzana residents expressed concern over the prolonged power outages in the area and the exorbitant ZESA bills. An official from ZESA was heckled by angry residents over the astronomical electricity bills when most of the time the constituency would be blacked out. Hon Chamisa has repaired all transformers in his constituency and is overseeing the installation of pylons but electricity shortages are scuttling his best efforts.

He is also overseeing a massive project at the kuwadzana Library, which he said would be functional by June. Residents also expressed worry over the muggings happening in maize fields. The MP is in a quandary, whether to ban urban agriculture, or allow the maize crop, now haven to criminals, to continue thriving.