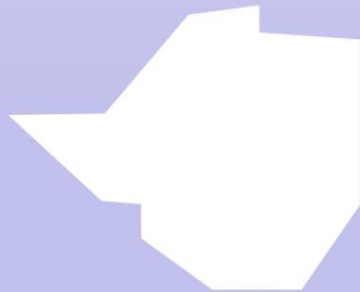




**ZIMBABWE
PEACE
PROJECT**



MONTHLY MONITORING REPORT





ZanuPF Primary Elections: A sign of worse things ahead?

Introduction

Two major events helped to shape the political climate and human rights situation in the country in April. These were the Independence Day celebrations and the ZanuPF primary elections at the end of the month. The Independence Day celebrations resulted in a marked rise in incidents of coercion as ZanuPF officials in different parts of the country forced members of the public to make donations for the celebrations. The ruling party's primary elections on the other hand accounted for a noticeable rise in cases of intraparty squabbling and occasional violence as aspiring candidates competed for nomination. The primaries also accounted for the rise in cases of intimidation and harassment as members of the public were forced to attend ruling party meetings, were forced to go and vote, or as candidates were imposed on them. There was needless loss of life and a compromise of people's rights to health after government failed to deal with the nurses' strike in a constructive manner. Vice President Constantino Chiwenga unexpectedly fired all the nurses on industrial action and this worsened the plight of patients in health facilities. The reason for firing the striking nurses was that there was a political agenda to the whole industrial action. It must have been seen as deepening the factions within Zanu PF and the need to silence G40 elements linked to the former first family. The former president is the patron of the Zimbabwe Nurses Association. This thinking emanates from the marked difference between the doctors and the nurses' strike all protesting for better working conditions and equipment and other sundries to make their quest to deliver better health a reality.

ABOUT ZPP

The organisation was founded in 2000 by church-based and human rights organisations. The current members of ZPP are Evangelical Fellowship of Zimbabwe (EFZ), Zimbabwe Council of Churches (ZCC), Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace in Zimbabwe (CCJPZ), Counselling Services Unit (CSU), Zimbabwe Human Rights Association (ZimRights), Civic Education Network Trust (CIVNET), Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZLHR) and Women's Coalition of Zimbabwe (WCoZ).

ZPP was established with the objective of monitoring, documenting and building peace and promoting the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts. The Zimbabwe Peace Project seeks to foster dialogue and political tolerance through non-partisan peace monitoring activities, mainly through monitors who document the violations of rights in the provinces. The monitors, who at full complement stand at 420, constitute the core pool of volunteers, supported by four Regional Coordinators. The Regional Coordinators relate with the national office headed by the National Director and programme officers in various units.





Observations from the evidence gathered

One hundred and two cases were recorded across the country in April, remaining the same from the previous month (101). Twenty three of the cases related to general intimidation and harassment as members of the public were being forced to attend party meeting, mainly ZanuPF meeting; being threatened not to support the opposition or to attend opposition rallies; or being intimidated into supporting ZanuPF.

Eighteen other cases of intimidation and harassment, associated with the Biometric Voter Registration (BVR) process, were also recorded. In these cases, members of the public were being forced to provide their voter registration particulars to ZanuPF officials. Beyond intimidation the motive remains unclear, and suspicious. A leaked audio between an officer of the police and a ZanuPF official in Buhera, Manicaland where the police officer was stating the illegality of demanding voter registration information demonstrated how some elements in ZanuPF still lived in the past. The ZanuPF official was livid on realising that the police officer did not wish to entertain his standpoint on the demand for voter registration information

Twenty cases of coercion, mainly forced donations for the Independence Day celebrations, and some cases of forced attendances of ZanuPF rallies or forced participation in the party's primary elections, were also recorded. Of concern in the primaries among many incidents was the firing of gunshots by a sitting MP Dexter Nduna in a bid to break a fight between his supporters and those of another contestant at a polling station in Chegutu West and another sitting MP accused of possession of filled in ballot papers in Buhera.¹ Twenty cases of intraparty squabbling and occasional violence, mainly within ZanuPF, were also recorded and, as indicated earlier, could be traced directly to the ruling party's primary elections. By comparison, only 5 cases of interparty violence, mainly pitting ZanuPF and the MDC-T, were recorded.

Five cases of assault, four of which involved the police or the army, were also recorded in what appears to be growing indiscipline and unruly conduct in the security sector. Two incidents of hate speech were recorded and one case of

¹ZPP is compiling a report on the incidents around the Zanu PF primaries and the cases could change the number of cases noted in this report





murder. The murder case was however entirely of a criminal nature and related to the shooting of a suspected robber.

See diagram below:

Breakdown of the cases recorded in April by Province

	Byo	Hre	Manica.	Mash Cent.	Mash East	Mash West	Masv.	Mat North	Mat South	Midl.	
Assault	*	*		**			*				5
Coercion			****	****	*****	***	***			*	20
Discrimination					*	*	*			*	4
Electoral malpractice										*	1
Hate Speech			*	*							2
Inter-Party squabble/viol.				*	**	*				*	5
Intra-Party violence	*	*****	**	*		****	**		*	****	20
Gen. intimid. & harassment cases	*	*	*****	*****	*	***	*	**	*	****	23
BVR intimid. & harassment cases			**** *****	****	**	*	*	*		*	18
Murder						*					1
Unlawful detention					*						1
	3	6	20	19	12	14	8	3	2	13	102

** A reported case may have a number of human rights violations. 102 cases were recorded, with many of these cases having several human rights violated.

Perpetrators: ZanuPF remained the main culprit, accounting for 60.4 % of the violations. Its perpetrating agents included the party's activists, members and leaders at provincial, district and lower levels; sitting and aspiring councillors; and sitting and aspiring members of parliament. Of note was the involvement of the traditional leaders, including chiefs, headmen and village heads, who were implicated in many cases of coercion, intimidation and harassment in favour of the ruling party. State agents, primarily Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) and Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) officers were also implicated mainly in cases of assault. In two cases, ZNA officers were implicated in public violence to avenge previous beatings of fellow officers in bar fights. In another case, ZNA officers allegedly assaulted a private citizen for failing to stop at a roadblock in time. Yet another case involved the harassment of local fishermen by ZNA officers in Kariba. As





observed earlier, although no less disturbing, these cases appear to be simply a matter of indiscipline within the military.

Cases of abuse by the police on the other hand, although marginal, appeared more partisan and politically motivated. In one of the cases, an MDC-T activist was allegedly assaulted and detained at Bindura police station for sitting on a chair that was reserved for the Mashonaland Central Provincial Affairs Minister during the Independence Day commemorations in the town. In another incident, the police in Goromonzi, it is alleged, unlawfully detained an MDC-T activist on trumped up charges by a ZanuPF councillor. The councillor allegedly broke windows at his house and then framed the MDC-T activist resulting in his arrest. At the same time, the police in Masvingo reportedly failed to contain intraparty violence during ZanuPF primary elections leading the Police Officer Commanding Renco Mine calling the ZanuPF Masvingo provincial chairperson to intervene.

By gender, the perpetrators were predominantly male.

Victims: The victims of the human rights violations recorded largely remained the unsuspecting members of the public who cannot be identified by any political affiliation. Most of the victims, especially the victims of coercion, intimidation and harassment, were rural or farm folk, who have traditionally been the most vulnerable. The victims of intraparty violence on the other hand were predominantly ZanuPF members or supporters involved in the party's primary elections, although several cases of intraparty violence in the MDC over candidature in the upcoming election or along the Chamisa/Khuphe factional divide, were also recorded. The victims of the few cases of interparty violence on the other hands were mainly opposition members, principally the MDC-T, with one case involving Zimbabwe People First (ZimPF) supporters and another National People's Party (NPP) supporters. Only in one instance was a ZanuPF supporter assaulted by MDC-T supporters after provoking them.

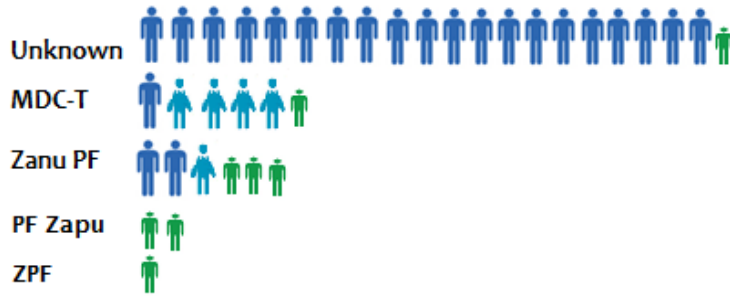
By gender, the victims remained predominantly male



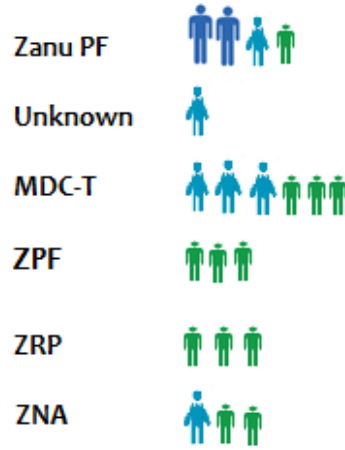


Dashboard of Incidents

Victims by Affiliation



Perpetrators by Affiliation



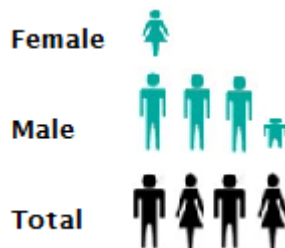
Key

- 100 persons
- 20 persons
- 5 persons

Victims by Gender



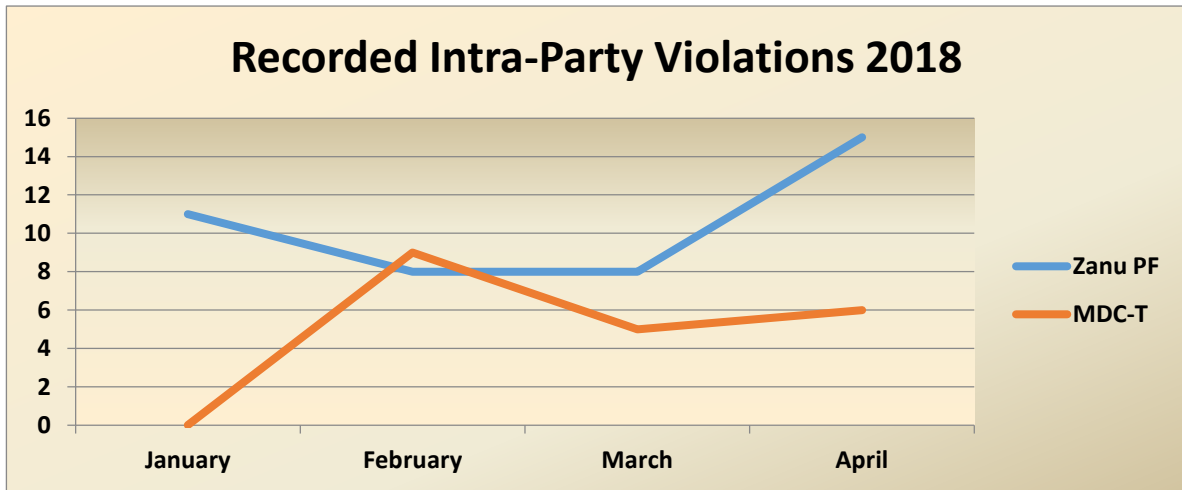
Perpetrators by Gender



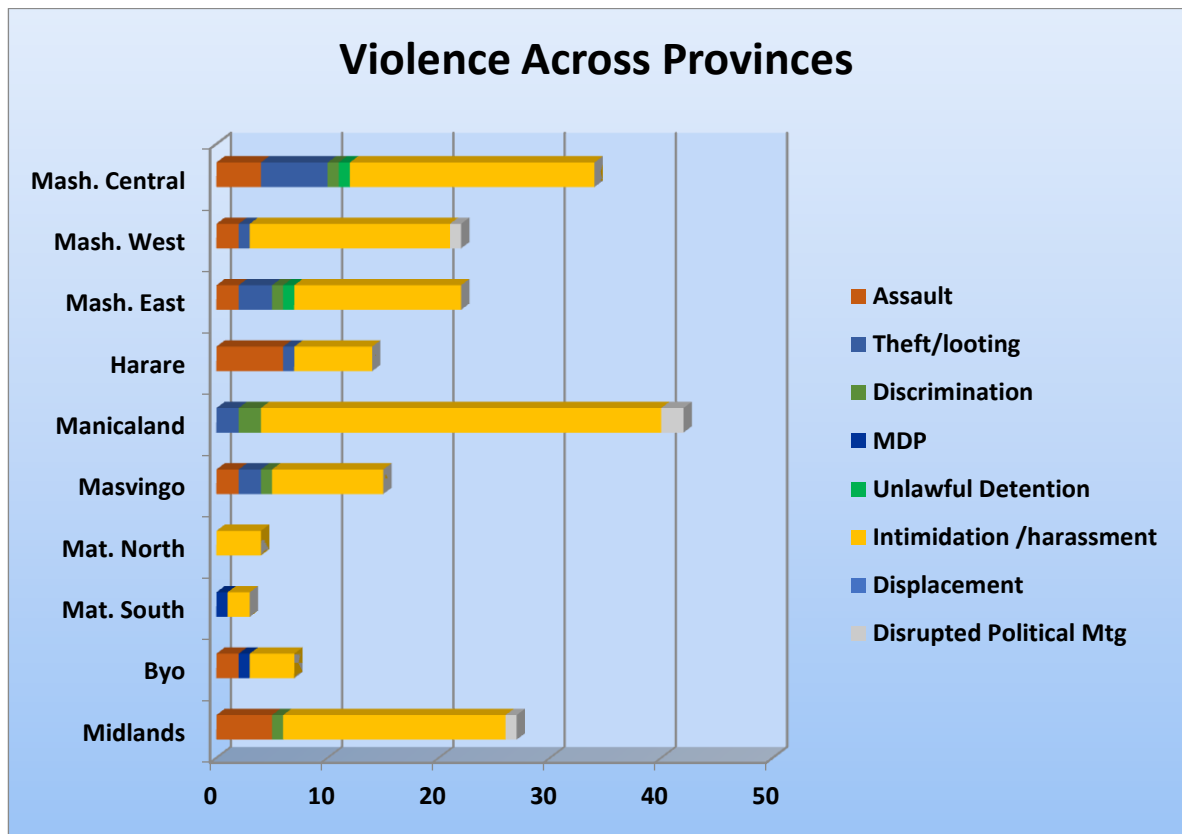
Key

- 100 Females
- 100 Males
- 50 persons





21 intra party violations were recorded for April, the majority within the Zanu PF (15 cases) and 6 recorded for MDC-T

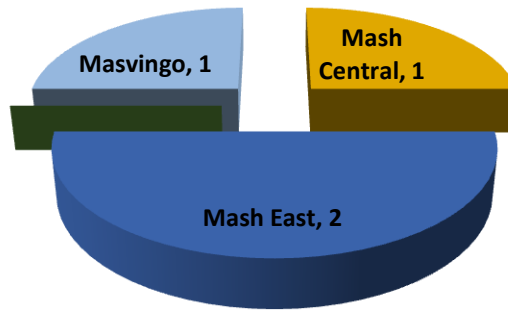


April recorded an increase in harassment and Intimidation to 138 recorded violations, followed by a slight decrease in assault to 23 violations, then theft/looting with 15, and a marked decrease in discrimination to 6. Manicaland had the highest recorded violations for April with 42, followed by Mashonaland Central with 35, and Midlands with 27.

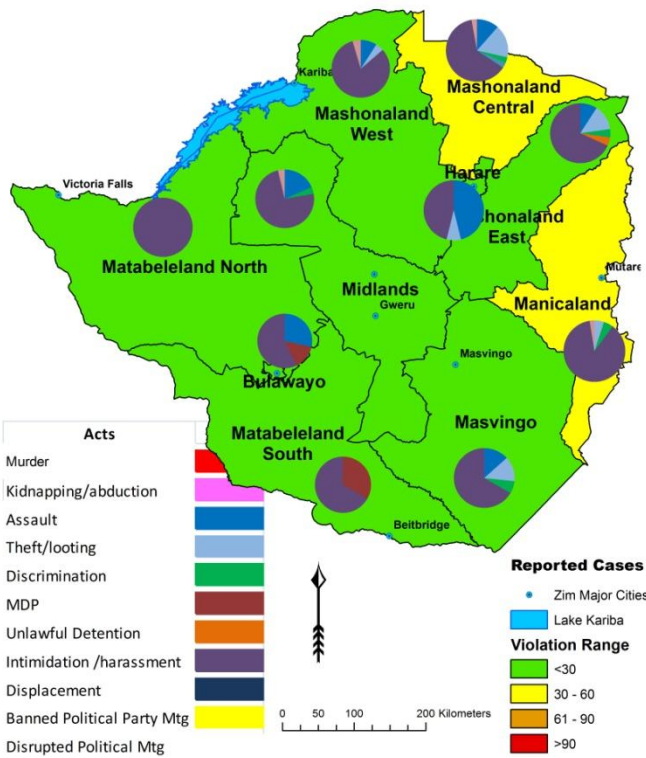




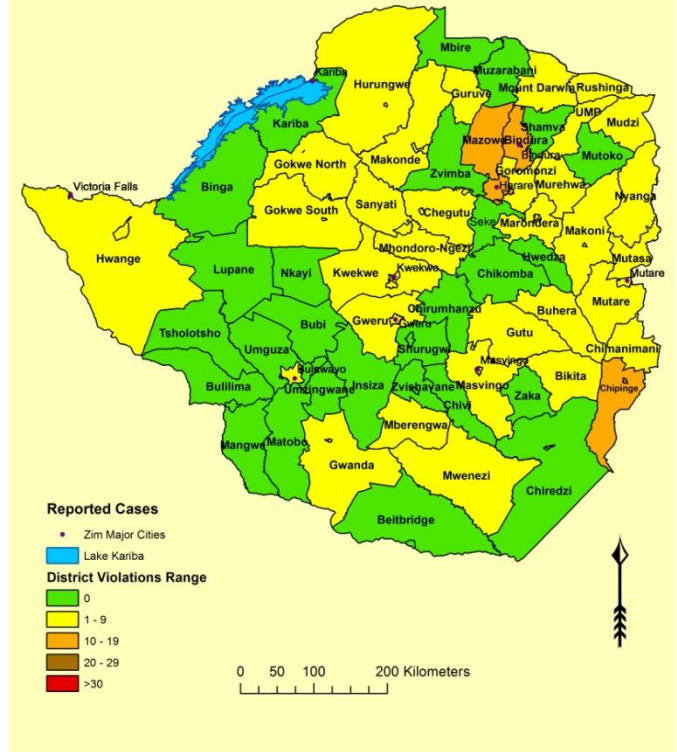
Recorded Food Violations



April 2018 Provincial Violations Map



April 2018 District Violations Map





Interpretive analysis

There was a slight increase of violations in the month of April (March recorded 188 violations, whilst April had 191). The human rights violations are directly related to the political events of the day. Just like the high cases of discrimination in the previous months were directly linked to the rainy season when the government rolls out the free agricultural inputs scheme, which was then manipulated by the ruling party, the Independence Day celebrations gave rise to an increase in extortion cases while the ZanuPF primaries gave rise to factional fighting, voter intimidation and harassment. The upcoming general election in July therefore portends more violations, including violence. Already there are several worrying signs, which are noted below.

- ❖ The cases of coercion, intimidation and harassment recorded in April, mainly by the ruling party, suggest that there is an institutionalised machinery that includes local party leaders and traditional leaders, which could easily be deployed and will more likely be deployed towards the general election. This machinery will most likely employ the same old tactics of coercion, intimidation and harassment. Perhaps with even greater force as the enemy would now be external (the opposition) and the stakes much higher (the Presidency, Parliamentary and Senatorial seats and council seats).
- ❖ The cases of intimidation and harassment associated with the BVR process on the other hand also continue to be a cause for concern and are also likely to persist into the general election. Originally justified as a drive to encourage voter registration, the practice of forcing registered voters to disclose their voter registration details to ruling party officials for recording, has surprisingly continued unabated despite the closing of the voter registration process, with one village head in Gutu reportedly telling villagers to ignore media reports that the practice is illegal and local ZanuPF leaders in Bindura telling victims that the information was required by the party's national office in Harare. This, coupled with the prevalence of the practice and its tacit encouragement by different ruling party officials, suggests that this practice is not random. It appears to be part of a policy by the ruling party for a motive that is not yet clear but is increasingly suspicious. As such, unless expressly, publicly and consistently denounced by senior ruling party officials, the practice is likely to persist into the general election. Perhaps with greater force.





- ❖ Also likely to continue and escalate into the general election are incidents of political violence. Mainly intraparty so far, once the electoral candidates for the upcoming general election are settled, the intraparty violence observed so far will naturally mutate into interparty violence and escalate. Already, there is a palpable streak of violence in both the two dominant political parties, ZanuPF and the MDC-T, and it is just a matter of time before the two parties face off. For now they have been preoccupied with the primaries and have mainly been crossing swords among themselves.
- ❖ On a promising note however, the incidents violence observed so far are mainly localised and do not seem to emanate from a central source. They do not appear to be coordinated or centrally sponsored and should therefore be easier to contain with the concerted efforts of the national leaders of the respective parties and the law enforcement agents among others.
- ❖ The conduct of the police is especially critical, as they could easily exacerbate the situation, even unwittingly. The police force should endeavour to act in a decisive and impartial manner if it is to stay on top of the situation as well as regain public trust. As seen in Masvingo, where one local officer in charge reportedly failed to contain factional fighting during ZanuPF primary elections and ended up seeking the intervention of the ruling party's provincial leader, some members of the force still appear hesitant to come down strong on the ruling party. More engagement with the police will therefore be required, including open dialogue between the police and all the political parties. Electoral training of the police, perhaps with the help of civic organisations, would also be helpful.
- ❖ Equally worrying and potentially spelling doom as we go to the general election is the wayward conduct of some elements in the army, who, as observed earlier, are taking the law into their own hands. While their conduct, though no less deplorable, has so far not been politically motivated, it could easily become so if it continues unchecked. More so, given the noticeable involvement of senior military personnel in politics since the ouster of President Robert Mugabe. It is therefore important to closely monitor the conduct of military officers and to report any wayward conduct to army superiors. At the same time, going to the election, there is need to





engage the military to ensure that it is politically neutral and can be seen to be politically neutral. Villagers in Magunje, for instance, are reportedly living in fear after ZNA Officers were deployed at Maumbe Business Centre. Open dialogue and transparency on the part of the military will help allay fears such as these.

Conclusion

Going into the general election, greater vigilance and more engagement will be required as human rights violations are likely to increase. ZPP will therefore continue to monitor the situation closely, with a view to anticipating any potential violations, especially political violence, and engage the necessary government agencies, including the police and Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC), as well as other civil society organisations, as it has been doing.

