

Zimbabwe Domestic Broadcasting (15 March – 21 March, 2011)

By Zuzia Danielski, MIGS media monitor for Zimbabwe

State-owned Media

“Mt Darwin exhumations warrant ICC attention”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 15 March 2011, in English)

- Observers in Zimbabwe are questioning the silence of the International Criminal Court on the human rights abuses committed by colonial Britain in the former Rhodesia, as exhumations in a Mount Darwin mine are underway.
- The Ian Smith regime symbolized the height of racism, cruelty and total disregard for the black man’s dignity and life, with numerous accounts of massacres. The current exhumations are proof of genocide, explains Charles Moyo.
- Zimbabweans are questioning why when the ICC has been ‘fast to swoop on African leaders who are deemed undemocratic by the west, it has not bothered to act on such open and wanton violation of human rights committed by the Smith regime’.

“Parties jostle for Speaker’s post”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 16 March 2011, in English)

- The House of Assembly is set to resume on March 22 with election of a new speaker, after the Supreme Court ruled MDC-T MP Lovemore Moyo had a flawed poll.
- ZANU-PF and MDC-T account for majority of seats in the house, but the MDC led by Welshman Ncube are vying for the post

“Sanctions were imposed by EU: France”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 17 March 2011, in English)

- France confirmed that it was ‘dragged’ into imposing illegal sanctions on Zimbabwe. France’s Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Francois Ponge who spoke with Vice President Joice Mujuru, said that they were only conforming to EU policies.

“MDC-T rally unsanctioned: Police”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 18 March 2011, in English)

- Police say a proposed MDC-T peace rally for Saturday at the Glamis Arena in Harare is unsanctioned and anyone who defies the order will face consequences.

- Sergeant Chivende said, ‘.....Zimbabwe is enjoying peace, hence there is no need to hold a peace rally....’

“6 provinces face acute food shortages”

(The Herald, government-owned daily, 20 March 2011, in English)

- Six of the country’s 10 provinces are facing severe food shortages, with Masvingo, Manicaland, Midlands and Matabeleland the worst affected.
- The Government has directed the Grain Marketing Board to begin shipping grain to provinces; however an assessment to determine the full impact of the drought is still incomplete.
- The Herald confirmed that the GMB told the government that there was no money for the transportation, but Ministers allege these are only excuses to delay shipment.

“No Speaker election on Tuesday: ZANU-PF”

(Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation, government-owned broadcasting, 21 March 2011, in English)

- The ZANU-PF says election of a Speaker for the House of Assembly cannot take place on Tuesday as the party has only been informed of the vacancy through the media and not through formal channels.
- ZANU-PF Chief Whip Gumbo said that his party was still waiting for the communication of the vacancy, so that they could finalize a candidate.
- MDC-T Chief Whip Innocent Gonese however said their party was ready and their candidate would remain the dethroned Lovemore Moyo.
- MDC Chief Whip Mukosi told ZBC that his party had never discussed the issue and had no candidate.

Private-owned Media

“Cabinet debates arresting Tsvangirai” by Tererai Karimakwenda

(SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 18 March 2011, in English)

- The UK Daily Telegraph reported Thursday that Mugabe was planning to arrest PM Morgan Tsvangirai for contempt of court after he accused senior judges of ‘doing the dirty work for ZANU-PF’.
- Last week when the Supreme Court annulled the election of MDC-T MP Lovemore Moyo, Tsvangirai said, ‘We will not accept the decisions of some ZANU-PF politicians masquerading as judges. ZANU-PF is trying to use the court to subvert and regain what it lost in an election’.
- The newspaper noted that police chief Augustine Chihuri collected a recording of the PM’s statement on Wednesday from the ZBC.

- The Telegraph said the arrest was discussed during a cabinet meeting on Tuesday, as Tsvangirai was out of the country meeting with the Presidents of Zambia and Mozambique.

“AG says removed parliamentary speaker remains MP” by Tererai Karimakwenda (SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 18 March 2011, in English)

- Attorney General Johannes Tomana declared that former parliamentary speaker, Lovemore Moyo, could retain his position as Member of Parliament. Tomana commented this week when asked for his opinion by the Clerk of Parliament.
- Moyo was removed as speaker by the Supreme Court, which found flaws in his election.

“ZANU-PF minister denies barring UN groups from food assessments” by Alex Bell (SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 18 March 2011, in English)

- ZANU-PF Agricultural Minister has denied refusing international agencies and NGO’s from participating in Zimbabwe’s food assessment. IRIN news service quoted Joseph Made this week, saying that UN groups especially were ‘not welcome’ and that the assessment was a national security matter. Made however, says he was misquoted.
- The news prompted fears that ZANU-PF was hiding Zimbabwe’s food situation to use it as a political weapon during the elections.

“Row over fresh Mt Darwin human remains” by Patience Nyangove in Mt Darwin (The Standard, independent weekly, Harare, 20 March 2011, in English)

- The exhumation of an estimated 2,000 bodies from a disused mine in Mount Darwin is arousing suspicions after some have been retrieved while still intact.
- ZANU-PF says the bodies are those of victims of the Rhodesian forces killed approximately 30 years ago.
- However, journalists witnessing the exhumation are shocked to see bodies with hair and clothes intact, while one said a body had fluids dripping. A strong smell is coming from the 15 metre mine shaft where journalists were taken to view the remains.
- A pathologist who spoke with The Standard said that if bodies were dumped three decades ago, as alleged by the government, then there would be no smell and there would be only bones.
- Some speculate that while the mine might hold some victims from the Smith-era, there might also be MDC activists and victims of the Gukurahundi atrocities.

“Zuma acts on GNU crisis” by Kholwani Nyathi (The Standard, independent weekly, Harare, 20 March 2011, in English)

- South African President Zuma's facilitation team will arrive this week in Zimbabwe to ease tension after urging from Tsvangirai.
- The PM spent the past week on a tour of the region, with meetings in Zambia, Mozambique, Swaziland, South African and Botswana to warn about the growing crisis in Zimbabwe.
- The SADC troika meeting on Zimbabwe will be taking place on March 31 in Zambia.

“15 hospitalized as ZPF youths and police disrupt MDC-T rally” by Lance Guma (SW Radio Africa News, independent Zimbabwean radio, London UK, 21 March 2011, in English)

- The MDC-T were forced to postpone a planned rally in Harare after ZANU-PF youth and riot police camped out at the venue and attacked supporters who tried to attend. Approximately 15 people were hospitalized with serious injuries and three are thought to have been abducted.