



Information Alert

12 May 2015

By-elections Constituency Updates

In less than a month there will be by elections in a number of constituencies that were left vacant when 21 MDC Renewal Members of Parliament were expelled from the house. The other constituencies where by elections will be conducted are Headlands and Hurungwe West which remained vacant when the incumbents Didymus Mutasa and Temba Mliswa were also expelled from Parliament. The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) has been getting reports of the situation in the constituencies where by elections are due to take place on June 10, 2015. In some of the constituencies ZPP has noted growing intra party conflicts in both Zanu PF and the MDC-T, the source of conflict for the latter being that some party members have refused to heed the call to boycott the by elections. Tension is higher in constituencies where Zanu PF has been split with others opting to stand as independents. In Hurungwe West as in a few other constituencies ZPP is disturbed by the trend of using schools as venues for political meetings. Schools are meant to be education institutions and having political meetings at schools disrupt the conducting of the business of education.

ZPP is appealing to the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission to take necessary steps to bring sanity in constituencies where by elections are due so as to ensure that the right of the electorate to vote in peace is enforced..

Hurungwe West -Two men suspected to be state security agents arrived at Mashuma primary school on May 9 where they requested to be accommodated first claiming to be government officials and then the next day claiming to be Zimbabwe Electoral Commission officials. Those in the know claim that this is a tactic to intimidate Mashuma, which is known as a stronghold for ousted Member of Parliament Temba Mliswa who is standing as an independent against Zanu PF candidate Keith Guzah. At a recent meeting in ward 17 headmen were ordered to record the names of all those who cast their vote in the last election and all those who had registered to vote. It is reported that headmen were handed books in which they are expected to write the names of all those they would lead on election day.

Headlands -It is reported that there was a Zanu PF campaign rally at Mt. Carmel High School in Headlands on May 9, which was addressed by Vice President Phelekezela Mphoko. The rally was organized to drum up support for Zanu PF candidate Christopher Chingosho. It is reported that hate language was used during the meeting to denounce Didymus Mutasa and candidates of other parties like the National Constitutional Assembly. According to reports 30 tonnes of rice were delivered to the area on 7 May 2015. War veterans Sendekera Musendi and Samanyanga who are part of the Christopher Chingosho campaign team distributed the rice in ward 32.

Harare East -The constituency remains calm although there have been court battles between Terence Mukupe the candidate who won the primary elections against Mavis Gumbo who seems to be a favourite with many Zanu PF leaders.

Kambuzuma- Zanu PF supporters are reported to be removing campaign posters for Independent candidates in the constituency. The Zanu PF candidate for the constituency is Tinashe Maduza.

Lobengula–There is a lot of campaigning going on by the different parties contesting in the by-elections. The electorate has been encouraged to inspect the voters' roll at Nkanyenzi Primary School. The constituency is generally calm.

Pumula – Zanu PF is said to be organizing and convening meetings at night and the party reported to be forcing people to attend the meetings in this peri-urban area. The environment is tense though no reports of violence have been recorded.

TsholotshoNorth– Zanu PF is conducting door to door campaigns 2-3 times a week. The G40 is reported to be running all campaigns. On 6 May 2015, Zanu PF distributed maize to people in Chief Matupula’s area on non-partisan grounds. Minister Jonathan Moyo was seen moving around ward 8 campaigning on May 9, 2015. All the village heads of wards 3-6 have been summoned to attend a meeting to be addressed by Minister Moyo on 15, 16 May 2015 at Chief Matupula’s homestead. On 24 May, Minister Moyo is also set to meet with all church leaders in ward 6. People are also being encouraged to inspect the voter’s roll from 10-14 May 2015.

Highfield West – There are Zanu PF door to door campaigns on a daily basis. They are also forcing women and girls to be part of the campaign teams. Meetings are held every Saturday.

Chikanga/Dangamvura – On May 10 people in Chikanga are reported to have been forced to attend a rally addressed by Vice President Phelekezela Mphoko to drum up support for Esau Mupfumi of Zanu PF. It is also reported that Ruramai Musiiwa has been receiving threats from unknown people who were calling on his mobile phone at night. It is reported that in one of the calls the caller warned him that, “Zvauri kutambanzvo hazvisi zvezera rako, siyana nazvo.” (What you are involving yourself in is not in your league and advice is to get out of the race.) In another call the caller wanted Ruramai to join forces with his party.

END

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Mission: *To work for sustainable peace through monitoring, documentation, advocacy and community peace building interventions with our members and partners*