

Executive Summary

Zimbabwe's political terrain has never remained level since the country gained independence in 1980. During the first post – independence elections in 1985 it is alleged that a number of members of the then opposition party (UANC) members had their properties removed from houses and some destroyed by Zanu PF supporters. There was political violence before and after the elections when people were being attacked for supporting political parties of their choice. This trend seems to have continued up to today.

Today, 23 years later the level of violence in some areas has dropped while it has risen in others. For example in Harare where there were two by-elections, violence increased substantially. In contrast many rural areas received less reports of violence, though the level of political victimisation and intimidation remained high. Most worrying were continued reports of harassment of white commercial farmers at a time when government insists that the land redistribution exercise has ended

Another trend which has been noted during the period under review is the extent of political victimisation of known or suspected members of the opposition by village headmen. In some areas such as in Mashonaland East and central some village heads have allegedly burnt down homesteads of opposition members after expelling them. Indeed the level of political

intolerance in many rural areas has reached extreme levels.

As mentioned above, in spite of pronouncements in the public media to the contrary, white commercial farms in some areas are failing to continue with their farming activities because of on-going harassment by war veterans and other Zanu PF supporters. For example, the white owner of Richardson farm in Mashonaland West ran away from the farm after it was besieged by some Zanu PF supporters who slaughtered four of his cattle and stole his maize. In the same province another farmer was given eight hours to vacate his property by a named war veteran who immediately moved into the farm- house when the owner ran away. In Chiredzi, several white farmers have reportedly been hounded off their properties. On the other hand, farm workers at some white-owned farms are reportedly being harassed and accused of being sell-outs and British puppets.

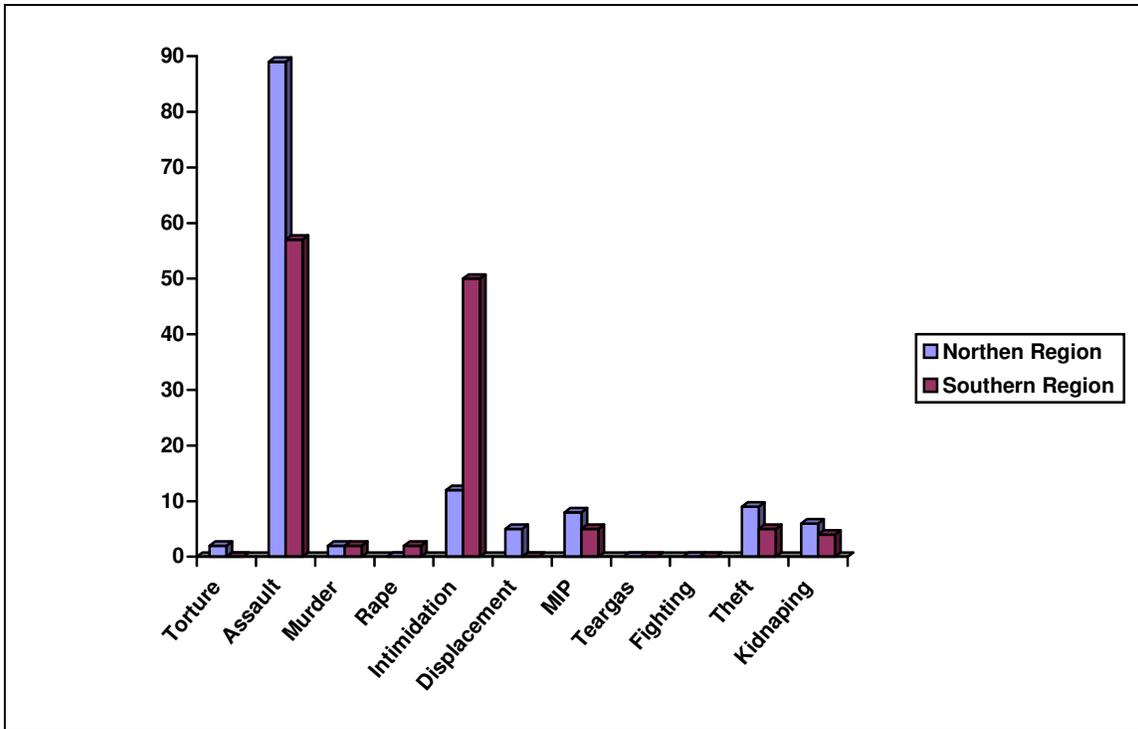
It is also reported that although relief agencies are still trying to feed many hungry families throughout the country their employees are working under very difficult conditions. The ruling party supporters and councilors in a number of rural areas insist on being involved so that they are able to disadvantage their political foes. Employees of relief agencies who insist on non-partisanship distribution are harassed or even forced out. In Mashonaland Central it is reported that some ruling party activists are confiscating food given to opposition

supporters soon after the relief agency providing food leaves.

During the period under review, a number of murders were reported, the highest being that of Chivi where three murders were recorded.

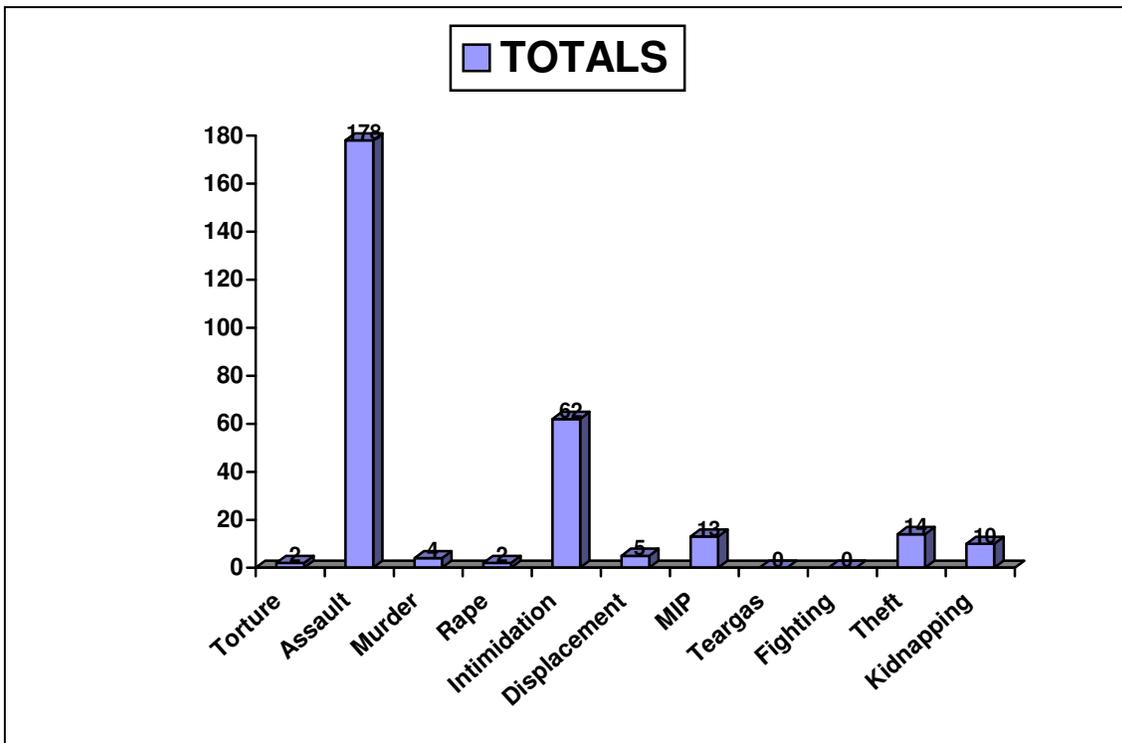
The conduct of the police and army was also a cause of concern, especially in

Harare where there were two by-elections. Many people were reportedly assaulted by members of the police and army. In some instances, the police have allegedly refused to act in cases where perpetrators of violence are known to belong to the ruling party.



1: February/March 2003 Regional Statistics

Figure



February/March 2003 Totals

Figure 2:

NORTHERN REGION

HARARE / CHITUNGWIZA

Reports of violence went up in March 2003 because of the by-election, which was being held in Kuwadzana and Highfield constituencies. Such political

violence is becoming a culture in the political history of Zimbabwe since the first post independence elections in 1985.

Kuwadzana

Of the two constituencies, which had a by-election, more reports of political violence were from Kuwadzana. Zanu PF youth militia are suspected to have set up bases at Kuwadzana 4 and 5 shopping centres, as well as the Whitehouse in Kuwadzana Extension. The youth are alleged to have kidnapped targeted opposition supporters who were assaulted and tortured at the bases. The police are reported to have ignored such activities and complaints, giving credence to the

accusation that they are partisan against the opposition.

The Zanu PF candidate Mr. Mutasa was getting grain directly from the Grain Marketing Board for milling and selling to people as a way of attracting voters since the country is facing severe grain shortages.

Complaints have been received that some Zanu PF supporters have allegedly visited households compiling a register, taking note of people's names and identity numbers.

Highfield

Even before he was confirmed as the ruling party candidate in the election, Joseph Chinotimba was accused of allegedly forcing people to attend his meetings. It is alleged that he could bring bread and maize meal to

designated points in the constituency and sell only to those who would have attended the meeting and produced a Zanu PF membership card. It is reported that he trained his own youths who were harassing people, especially at food queues.

Mbare

The ruling party Zanu PF office close to Bata shop at Mbare Musika has become notorious as people are taken there for beatings and 'politicisation'. Zanu PF militia as well as some police

details man the office. It is reported that anyone taken there can not report the case anywhere because the police are reluctant to confront and arrest anyone linked with activities taking place at this base. It is believed that a number of

people have been falsely accused of supporting the opposition and tortured at

the base.

Food Situation

The food situation remains critical, with most scarce commodities only available on the parallel (black) market. Food queues are still being controlled by the police and Green Bombers have

been accused of assaulting people and acquiring the scarce commodities through the back door, disadvantaging the majority of consumers, are still controlling food queue.

MANICALAND

Political violence between Zanu PF and the MDC supporters continue in the province. It is reported that this violence is affecting the operation of

civic organizations and relief food agencies. It is alleged that in most cases these workers have been assaulted and intimidated.

Buhera South

Villagers in Begedhe are allegedly traumatized and living under fear after war veterans burnt eight houses in Nyashanu area. What is more traumatizing for these people is that it is alleged that the perpetrators are known Zanu PF supporters and no reprimand is

taking place. No arrests are made. Two students were allegedly beaten and abducted for reading The Daily News. War veteran Chimutsa assaulted NCA members whilst Christian Care workers were victimized by a soldier at gunpoint for refusing Zanu PF members who were not registered for food aid.

Buhera North

The violence reported in the constituency is mainly amongst Zanu PF factions during food aid distribution and unfair distribution of

proceeds from the previous elections. It is also alleged that soldiers and war veterans in the area are looting food supplies from GMB.

Mutare West

It is reported that one Brian Magumise was, allegedly axed to death by known Zanu PF members Potyo and Masiyakurima. Magumise a well-known MDC activist was suspected of cattle rustling in the area. The political

situation in the area is so tense that politics is now being dragged into other social and civic matters. There are also reports that members of the opposition are denied access to food aid.

Mutasa

Mr. Matangire, a war veteran, is reported to have barred all suspected MDC members from using a local dip tank although these people paid the money stipulated for using the

facility. It is also alleged that the same war veteran accompanied by Zanu PF youths went to St Columbus and forced the school head to enrol their relatives into form five regardless of their poor 'O' level results.

Mutare North and Central

Police at the last minute stopped a rally, which was organized by the MDC for Sakubva Stadium. The police invaded the ground as early as 6.00 am and dispersed and beat people coming for the rally. It is also alleged that Zanu

PF militia threatened a Mrs Sithole from operating in the flea market after she talked to the MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai who was in town on a meet the people tour. It is reported that the militia even went to her house querying why she had talked to Tsvangirai.

Mutare South

Zanu PF youths and war veterans are reported to have victimized and barred the MDC MP from using the UNESCO information centre in the area.

This place was going to be used as a constituency office but it is alleged Marko Madiro of Zanu PF is barring the MP from using the facility.

Nyanga

Mushroom fields at one farm where allegedly destroyed by one Farai Gonzo and Amos Kavheya who accused the farmer of not planting maize. It was

also reported that a soldier shot dead five people using his service gun. The people killed included a child, wife and mother-in-law.

Chimanimani

Joseph Mwale, a CIO operative is reported to be allegedly intimidating and harassing suspected MDC supporters in the area. Also Stanley Muyambo is alleged to have axed a Zanu PF youth who wanted to burn his house.

Mupfumi Buses are reported to have been banned by Joseph Mwale from ferrying The Daily News to the constituency. It is alleged that he ordered the bus company to stop or risked having its permit cancelled.

Makoni North

Soldiers are reported to have gone on a rampage assaulting people avenging on behalf of their workmate a Mr. Sibanda who had been beaten at a

beer hall. Zanu PF members are alleged to be fighting among themselves for a position left vacant after the death of Clever Makahamadze.

Makoni West

It is alleged that Kudzanayi Sarutambi a suspected thief was murdered by a group of Zanu PF militia on 4 March. It

is reported that he was beaten to death after being found with an MDC card. This happened at Miller farm, now a resettlement area.

MASHONALAND WEST

Cases of political violence and assault were received this month. During this period under review a number of

people were assaulted by mainly members of the police and Zanu PF activists.

Chinhoyi

People were assaulted by police when they became violent protesting against other members of the police who were buying large quantities of sugar ahead of the members of the public, some of whom had slept in the queue at OK.

An international women's day celebration arranged by ZCTU women was disrupted by police the despite the fact that they had been given permission to commemorate the day. It is alleged that women were assaulted by riot police and all men present were detained. Also it is reported that an MDC strategic meeting was disrupted at a local hotel.

Mhondoro

At Matanha school suspected MDC

supporters were denied food relief because they belonged to the opposition.

Makonde

Like in most rural constituencies people are allegedly forced to attend Zanu PF rallies. Those who do not are

assaulted or forced to attend. Zanu PF youths continue to harass people seen reading the Daily News.

Hurungwe West

One Nomusa was assaulted for wearing a t-shirt written, “your vote is your right” by Zanu PF youths. He was forced to attend a rally at Matau School. It is reported that some people

invaded Richardson farm and slaughtered four cows, took maize and left after three days. The owner who was not there came later and decided to move his property out of the farm.

Hurungwe East

A local businessman who wanted to contest in the council election as an independent had all the tyres of his lorry deflated by the chairman of the council assisted by Zanu PF youths. It is alleged the gang even attacked his house and warned him not to stand in the elections.

diesel at one service station. One of the attendants was assaulted when they told him that it was illegal to put the scarce fuel into containers. The police came and ordered the attendants to give Mliswa the fuel.

It is also alleged that Temba Mliswa demanded that his drum be filled with

One war veteran Ngoro invaded Parker farm, gave the owner eight hours to leave the house and he took over the house.

Zvimba North

Workers on the white commercial farms are being victimized and harassed by newly resettled people.

They are being blamed of being too close to whites.

Zvimba South

A suspected MDC supporter was assaulted and stoned by Zanu PF

members. Police are alleged to have refused to investigate the case.

MASHONALAND CENTRAL

The province is well known as a Zanu PF dominated stronghold. Other parties operate under cover and all

suspected members of the opposition are forced out the province, assaulted or abducted and tortured.

Guruve South

Reports show that several people have been punished for allegedly

supporting the MDC. It is also alleged that people were fighting over food being donated by Christian Care.

Mt Darwin North

All suspected MDC members who would have received food aid from organisation like World Vision are losing the stuff to Zanu PF supporters afterward. It is reported that when the

donors leave the area, Zanu PF supporters move door-to-door collecting the food aid from suspected MDC supporters.

Mt Darwin South

The issue of trying to force out people who originated from other provinces is continuing in this area. It is also alleged that the police Chief and the Education Officer in the area were recruiting employees with the help of

Border Gezi youths. It is reported that only Zanu PF people were recruited.

Women with husbands working in towns and suspected to be MDC members were also being assaulted. One headman was dethroned after it was discovered that an MDC youth was staying in his village.

Rushinga

War veterans were vetting all prospective workers in the area. All suspected MDC supporters were being refused jobs in the district. Zanu

PF is also alleged to be trying to control Christian Care food distribution.

Shamva

Only Zanu PF supporters were allowed to pan for gold without any

problems. One has to produce a Zanu Pf card to be allowed to do gold panning.

Bindura

The period under review witnessed continued fighting between Zanu PF and MDC youths in the town. It is alleged that one MDC activist died in police custody and that Zanu PF women and youths are controlling prices in the area.

Some Tel-One workers who were transferred from Kadoma are allegedly being harassed and accused of being MDC supporters since Kadoma Constituency was won by MDC in the last parliamentary elections.

MASHONALAND EAST

Besides the political harassment, some people in the province had their house burnt and some items looted. The perpetrators were mainly village

heads that have been politicised and war veterans.

Chikomba

The period under review record one case of assault, while suspected

MDC members were still being denied access to food relief.

Goromonzi

War veteran in the area are alleged to have chased one member of the Unite Party who had been allocated land in the district. Christian Care withdrew from Mwanza ward after war veterans

wanted to take over the distribution of food aid. Two case of politically motivated assaulted were recorded.

Hwedza

Four cases of assaults were recorded. These were all politically motivated. It is alleged that one MDC supporter was forced to buy a Zanu PF card at a price

of \$500, when the card costs less. Zanu PF member are the only ones accessing food easily from GMB.

Marondera East

A Zanu PF Women's League member was not approved to stand in the Council elections because of her involvement in CCJP activities. It is also alleged that Zanu PF officials were

barring people from inspecting the voter's roll. Maize meal was still being distributed through Zanu PF Councillors who would make sure no member of the opposition benefit.

Marondera West

Four cases of assault were recorded in the area. The perpetrators were

Zanu PF supporters and their victims are suspected members of the opposition.

Murehwa North

It is reported that one Headman was hoarding grain from the GMB whilst

villages were starving. Zanu PF officials have ordered the relief food marked ‘MDC’ not to be distributed in the area.

Murehwa South

One head is alleged to have denied suspected MDC members food relief and later invited them to weed his

fields for their allocation. Cases of assaults on suspected MDC members were also recorded in the district.

Mutoko South

It is reported that World Vision is distributing food in the district. Most of the cases of assault are centred on

food distribution where issues of political parties arise as a way of disadvantaging other people.

UMP

Two cases of assault were recorded against suspected MDC members.

All case were reported to police but no action was taken as the perpetrator were Zanu PF members.

SOUTHERN REGION

MASVINGO

Cases of political violence were still being recorded in the province although they seem less during the period under review. The main

problems this month were the effects of Cyclone Japhet, which left many people homeless, high level corruption and domestic disputes.

Masvingo Urban

The MDC president Morgan Tsvangirai visited the town and met members of the public. His visit came a

day after the party rally, which was peaceful.

Chivi

The constituency recorded the highest number of cases of murder. It is alleged that the head of a person who just disappeared was found in a

refrigerator in the shop of a businessman. It is also reported that two people, Munyaradzi Chisenga and Julias Mapiye, were allegedly murdered in the area.

Bikita

Reports received allege that a Zanu PF Coordinator in the area was threatening all the people suspected to be members of the opposition. It is also alleged that the Ministry of Youth, Gender and Employment Creation in the

area was forcing all recruitments to be done through their office. This includes even the employment of people in private shops and bottle stores.

Zaka

The police and members of the army in the constituency are alleged to be causing a lot of unrest among members

of the public. People were being assaulted by a group of police support Unit deployed in the area.

Gutu

The local MP Shuvai Mahofa is alleged to be corruptly involved in the sale of grain, which is in short

supply. She has also been reported to be leading in the grabbing of farm properties left by evicted while commercial farmers.

Chiredzi

War veterans and Zanu PF youths were allegedly continuing to harass white farms. The majority of

these white farmers are reported to have fled to Chiredzi town leaving their properties.

MIDLANDS

The ruling Zanu PF party is reported to be intensifying its war against the opposition. Cases of intimidation, assaults, kidnapping, harassment and torture are on the increase. It is alleged that the support for the ruling party seem to be going down and the party has

adapted terror tactics to revive its support base. We have received reports of suspected opposition party members being threatened with death or being removed from their homes if they do not rejoin Zanu PF.

Gweru Urban/Mkoba

The Green Bombers are alleged to have abducted and assaulted the MDC secretary of youth. It is also reported that the Zanu PF militia assaulted an MDC member forcing him to reveal the party candidate in the council elections. The political atmosphere is reported to be tense in the

two constituencies as both MDC and Zanu PF prepare for the urban council elections due in August 2003, war veterans, Border Gezi youths and soldiers are terrorizing residents at night accusing them of siding with the MDC.

Shurugwi

Political problems are rife in rural Shurugwi where traditional leaders are alleged to be harassing their subjects who are suspected to be MDC members.

A number of people have been chased away after being “convicted” of supporting the opposition. Such cases have been reported in chief Mazivisa area.

Zvishavane

It is reported that youths being trained at Dadaya Border Gezi training centre are a menace in the constituency. They are alleged to be raping women and beating people at will.

Most cases are not reported to the police, as people are afraid of reprisals and cases of rape, kidnap, torture and assault are on the increase and continue unreported.

Mberengwa

Suspected members of the opposition are declared “unwanted” in some parts of the constituency. Suspected MDC members are summoned to the traditional court and some fined for not supporting the ruling party. It is alleged that one kraal head, Zimi near Chegato, fined one woman \$500 and was

threatened with eviction if she continues to support the MDC.

It is alleged also that suspected members of the MDC are not given any food aid that comes and Zanu PF is involved in the distribution.

Chirumanzu

Reports show that Mr. Shumba, a miller in the area, was given instruction to sell maize meal only to

members of the ruling party. It is alleged he was told not to give any of the product to Ndebeles who should get it from Tsvangirai.

Kwekwe

State security agencies are reported to be harassing members of the public in the urban area. Suspected opposition party members in Chivundura ‘B’ resettlement area had their houses burnt down and property looted and destroyed by suspected members of the CIO, army and police. Cases of alleged kidnapping

and assault by members of the CIO are also on the increase.

Suspected members of the MDC have been given notices of eviction at the Munyati Power Station compound so that they make way for the Zanu PF sympathizers.

Silobela

Like in other constituencies suspected MDC members are either assaulted or harassed. It is reported that people are being assaulted or threatened if seen talking to the local MP who is from the MDC.

On 10 March 2003 the MP was assaulted by Zanu PF militia at a petrol queue in Kwekwe. The MP was rescued by one well wisher who took him to hospital.

Gokwe

It is alleged that Zanu PF has declared the constituency a Zanu PF zone and suspected members of the opposition are not tolerated in the area. The period under review has witnessed a high

number of assaults and intimidation all suspected to be MDC members. It is reported that a local GMB employee was assaulted for wearing an MDC t-shirt and was later accused of having stolen maize.

BULAWAYO

Political tension is rising in Bulawayo ahead of the council elections due in August. The Green Bombers, war veterans and other Zanu PF members continue to assault, intimidate and victimize residents.

More problems were created by the unexpected visit to Bulawayo by the MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai. Suspected Zanu PF members held a meeting afterwards where it is alleged that people agreed to hunt down all those who were with Tsvangirai or who had talked to him.

Lobengula-Magwegwe

The Zanu PF district chairperson assaulted other members of her party who are alleged to have asked her

to step down. She was being accused of having bought her daughter an MDC card.

Pumula-Luveve

Some Zanu PF and MDC youths clashed after the sudden visit by the MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai. It is alleged that two were injured and hospitalised whilst some were arrested.

Because of the council elections coming in August, it is reported that Zanu PF activists have already started moving door-to-door asking for their party cards. Those without the cards are harassed.

Bulawayo North-east

It is reported that suspected Zanu PF members' victimized MDC members in Cowdray Park. It is alleged that one woman was barred from selling her

wares in the area because she is suspected to be a member of the opposition.

MATEBELELAND NORTH

Cases of political violence have continued unabated compounded by lack of tolerance toward different opinions by politicians. The visit by the President to the province brought misery to some people who were

assaulted for supporting the opposition. It is also alleged that suspected members of the opposition were evicted from their homes in Kamativi and civilians continue to be harassed by members of the police and army.

Tsholotsho

The police officers in the area have ignored and turned away one Zimbabwe National Army Captain who wanted to report a case of his allegedly assault and attempted kidnap by war veterans and suspected Zanu PF youths.

It was reported that the police had instead referred him to the war veterans Chairperson in the area. Reports from the district allege that traditional leader like kraal heads had been stopped from carrying out their duties for allegedly supporting the MDC. At least five kraal heads had been dethroned and all replaced by Zanu PF cadres.

Hwange West

It is alleged that people queuing for scarce commodities were assaulted by soldiers and ordered to disperse since the

president was visiting the area. It is claimed that the soldiers alleged that they would be an eyesore to the state president

Kamativi

Residents of the town were evicted to give way to the Border Gezi youths. It is also alleged that on March 9 2003 Zanu PF support disrupted a church

service and ordered all people to attend a rally. The Catholic priest Father Pasch confronted the Zanu PF official who later apologised.

Binga

After the Zanu PF rally addressed by Minister Elliot Monika, Zanu PF militia harassed two MDC Councillors in the area. It is alleged that the two

Councillors were ordered to go up a tree and chant Zanu PF slogans. They are reported to have been assaulted but no arrests were made.

Hwange East

The MDC Women's demonstration, which was arranged to mark the International Women's Day, did not succeed due to police intimidation and harassment.

The MDC's Women's League Chairperson was allegedly warned of being arrested if the demonstration was to go ahead. As a result of this intimidation, only a few women came up to the venue wearing black ribbons to mark the death of democracy in Zimbabwe.