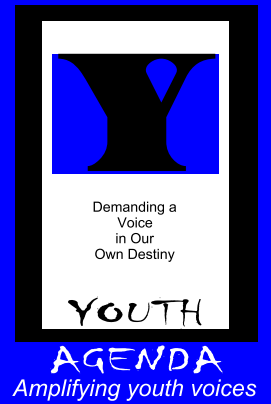


The New Age Voices

A newsletter published by Youth Agenda Trust website: www.youthagendazim.org.zw.



For feedback please email Youth Agenda Trust on youthagenda@gmail.com Issue 8 : 08 Nov - 21 Nov 2010 Cost: Free

Zanu PF in desperate bid to woo young voters

ZANU PF leader and Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe has intensified his efforts to win national elections that he has penciled in for next year by targeting the youths to add an extra impetus to his campaign.

Realizing that the bigger chunk of his supporters is now very old, Mugabe has identified the youth niche as a safe passage for him to gain total control of the country which he had to share with his main rival Morgan Tsvangirai after the latter defeated him in the March 2008 harmonised elections.

Before, Mugabe's party Zanu PF would use youths to rape, maim and kill civilians in various campaign trails that have now become a hall mark of the party's election strategies.

The youths would be rewarded with crates of opaque beer and cigarettes while they would also take the opportunity to feast and make merry with looted livestock and grain that they confiscate from mainly villagers in the rural areas.

Sensing that the terror and intimidation tactic might fail to yield the desired results for him this time around, Mugabe has sought to blend the terror campaign with cautious "friendly"



Losing Winner: Munyaradzi Chidzonga, one of the youth being used by Zanu PF

engagement that would see the party targeting youthful celebrities such as urban grooves artists, actors and so on.

The campaign has started with Mugabe's US\$300 000 golden handshake to Munyaradzi Chidzonga, the losing Big Brother Africa All Stars housemate as reward for failing to win the top prize of US\$200 000.

The Chidzonga windfall came as a direct reaction to another youth, X-Factor star Gamuchirai Nhengu who told emigration officials in the United Kingdom that she cannot go back to Zimbabwe because a firing squad will be waiting for her much to the anger of Zanu PF.

Sources in Zanu PF confirmed to *The New Age Voices* that Mugabe is desperately

trying to clean up his public image in the face of youths so that they identify with his ideology in time for next year's general elections.

In the past, Zanu PF has used urban grooves artists to spruce up its public image through composing songs that exalt Mugabe during election time. Some of the Zanu PF officials that work with these urban grooves artists include former information and publicity minister, Jonathan Moyo and Media Minister Webster Shamu.

Moyo at one time went the extra mile and formed his own band that was known as Pax Afro which was mainly composed of youthful artists and fronted by Yulith Ndlovu with the help of fallen music great Isaac Chirwa.

Among some of Zanu PF's youthful musical recruits was also Tambaoga real name Last Chiyangwa who was used to denigrate the then British Premier Tony Blair with his offending lyrics.

The Zimbabwean airwaves especially the youthful Power FM, formerly Radio 3 are saturated with songs that are being sung by urban grooves artists most of whom have failed to make it in the challenging Zimbabwean music industry.

Matutu in near walkout at youth conference

YOUTH Development, Indigenisation and Empowerment Deputy Minister Tongai Matutu nearly walked out of the Africa Youth Day Festival that was held at Mutare Polytechnic in Mutare last weekend after offending political statements from the visiting Namibian delegation that was also made up of members from the SWAPO political party.

The Namibian delegate who arrived late for the function was immediately hauled to the podium by Zimbabwe Youth Council Director Livingstone Dzikira to deliver a speech during the foreign delegates' session and immediately began to churn Zanu PF slogans much to the amusement of delegates.

The delegate who was clad in revolutionary attire misconstrued the event to a Zanu PF gathering and started saying out slogans that could make Zanu PF functionaries green with envy.

"Pamberi na President Robert Mugabe! Pamberi ne Zanu PF! Forward with the revolution," the Namibian delegate said.

Deputy Minister Matutu immediately walked out of the function in protest of the offending statements which were not supposed to be said at not only a national event but an African event that had drawn delegates from as far as Sudan and Rwanda.

It required the intervention of Youth Development, Indigenization and Empowerment Minister Saviour Kasukuwere who begged Matutu to exercise restraint and allow the programme to continue.

Matutu who had withdrawn himself from the event was only able to return after Kasukuwere pleaded with him to stay and Matutu returned to the podium where he was facilitating the programme and delivered a touching speech that left Zanu PF youths and other Mugabe functionaries at the event bemused.

"Let us not let some misguided elements at this event disrupt this conference but let us draw strength from the differences that we have so that we can forge ahead as a united front.

"We are gathered here to commemorate an African youth festival, hence we should not allow anything to defeat the cause of which we are gathered here for. Let us have one spirit which is that of having a one united Africa," Matutu said much to the applause of all the delegates who had gathered at the event.

Matutu however told *The New Age Voices* that he was surprised that there were people who were still not able to distinguish between a Zanu PF function and a national event.

"It is very surprising to note that there are still some elements that cannot distinguish between Zanu PF and Zimbabwe in this day and age. I think it is high time that people recognises the platforms that they address otherwise they end up saying wrong things at a wrong platform," Matutu said.



Youth Indigenisation and Empowerment Deputy Minister Tongai Matutu

Where is the money? Youths confront ministers

YOUTHS who gathered for the Africa Youth Day conference that was held last week confronted Youth, Indigenisation and Empowerment Minister Saviour Kasukuwere and his deputy Tongai Matutu about the mystery surrounding the whereabouts of monies that the ministry availed to youths for income generating projects.

The youths from across the political divide took the ministers to task and asked them to explain where all the money that was availed to the youths had gone.

Early this year, the government of Zimbabwe availed US\$750 000 to the youth fund meant to capitalize income generating projects at a function that was officiated by Vice President Joyce Mujuru but youths complain that the money never got to them.

Two Months ago, the ministry of youth availed US\$1 million also to the youth fund but the whereabouts of the money remain a mystery. Youths at the conference interrogated the ministers on the lack of transparency in the disbursement of the funds which they said were ending up in the hands of very few people.

Continued on page 3

Constitution must be apolitical: Junior President

THE new Zimbabwean constitution should reflect the views of the people and should not be owned by anyone be it political or otherwise because it is a national document that should not have demographic boundaries, the president of the Junior Parliament Nigel Gwanzura has said.

Speaking to *The New Age Voices*, Gwanzura took a swipe at politicians who are trying to hijack the constitution making process by imposing their positions on the people saying that such politicians were misguided and must desist from their wayward ways.

“The constitution making exercise should not be political, it should be made by the people, for the people. It is unfortunate that some people want to politicize it,” Gwanzura said.

He said that the government was not doing enough to especially cater for the youths which he said formed the bulk of the populace who remained marginalized in national issues such as that of the constitution making.

“The government is not doing enough to cater for people from all the corners of the country. It should listen to submissions from children right round Zimbabwe, they should do more in this regard,” said Gwanzura.

He however said that he was grateful that the junior parliament was afforded the chance to contribute to the constitution

making process after UNICEF organised a special parliamentary session for the youths which he said would go a long way in reaffirming children's position on the new constitution if their submissions were taken on board.

“We held a special Parliamentary session that was aimed at soliciting views from children where we were given time to express our views which I think was good and we can always improve from there,” he said.

Gwanzura decried the failure by the Constitutional and Parliamentary Select Committee (COPAC) to reach out to all the children in marginalized districts of the country by concentrating on the urban children.

“It is a pity that government is failing to put in place effective information dissemination systems that make sure that youths from marginalized rural areas are accommodated in national processes. It should be a link that connects children in Mudzi and Chipinge to the rest of the country. You will find out that most people in rural areas do not know what COPAC is,” lamented Gwanzura.

He also fired a broadside at the government for continuously paying a blind eye to many petition documents that they have presented before which he said were not being implemented.



Junior President Nigel Gwanzura

“We have submitted countless petition documents to the government but unfortunately they have never implemented anything to that effect. They should not continue treating our petitions as academic, they should take us seriously,” said Gwanzura.

Gwanzura said that there was also need for a junior parliament budget to cater for its programmes which would make it easier for them to plan. He said there must be an act of parliament that should make sure that there is a budget for the junior parliament.

“We must have a budget that is

specifically for us, we cannot continue with such a situation where we do not have a budget. It is not sustainable, we need to plan, but how can you plan when you do not have a budget?” said Gwanzura.

He also castigated government officials especially in the Ministry of Youth for practicing nepotism. He said that it was worrying that loans that are supposed to be received by all the youths are ending up in the hands of the few.

“You find that loans that are supposed to benefit everyone end up in the hands of very few people. Government officials must shun nepotism,” Gwanzura said.

Youth officers partisan: Kasukuwere admits

THE Minister of Youth, Indigenization and Empowerment Saviour Kasukuwere has fired a broadside at ministry's youth officers for being partisan and failing to equitably allocate resources.

At a discussion forum that was held on the sidelines of the Africa youth festival that was held in Mutare last week, Kasukuwere took a swipe at youth officers across the country whom he said were scuttling youth development by denying youths an equal opportunity of accessing indigenization and empowerment funds.

He said that his office was informed that some overzealous youth officers were denying youths the opportunity to access loans that were availed by the ministry for income generating projects on the basis of political affiliation.

“I am very disappointed that most youth officers are not playing their roles of facilitating contact between the ministry and the youths. They are being partisan, they are giving out loans on the basis of political affiliation. We do not accept that, it must stop,” Kasukuwere said.

However, Kasukuwere left the delegates stunned when he unequivocally stated that the ministry was not a loan shark

which can give youths any amounts that they desired but said that the ministry had the capacity to continue giving out loans at the present rate.

“We are not loan sharks, do not expect us to do things out of the ordinary. We are trying by all means possible to avail loans that must be adequate to all. We do not want to deprive anyone but we must be holistic, the funds that we have are not adequate to get to everyone,” Kasukuwere said.

Kasukuwere said that youths should not be intimidated by anyone saying that regardless of political affiliation all youths should be able to access the loans which he said did not require any security.

He challenged youths to come forward with their proposals so that they can be able to benefit from the loan scheme and said it was the government's commitment to empower them.

“Youths should come forward and tell us what they want. Do they want funding in terms of mining? If yes let them come and we discuss. But let them bear in mind that they should come up with sustainable proposals, you cannot be a youth forever,” Kasukuwere said.

Munya got indigenisation funds?

THE losing Big Brother Africa All stars housemate from Zimbabwe Munyaradzi Chidzonga who had the last laugh two weeks ago after he received US\$100 000 more than the BBA winner, Uti Nwanchukwu from Nigeria who took home US\$200 000, received the money from the indigenization fund, *The New Age Voices* has learnt.

After suffering a last minute heartbreak of failing to land the whooping cash prize, Chidzonga returned home only to receive the shock of his life when Zanu PF leader Robert Mugabe presented him with a fat CBZ account loaded with US\$300 000 as a reward for his failure to win.

However, sources told *The New Age Voices* that the money was withdrawn from the indigenization fund, an account that Zanu PF intends to tap on to aid its election strategy as their election strategy gains momentum.

Munyaradzi Chidzonga is son to former Cabinet Minister and Mugabe relative Marvis Chidzonga who is also former Mhondoro West Member of Parliament.

The Indigenisation board falls under the Ministry of Youth Indigenization and Empowerment that is headed by Zanu PF member Saviour Kasukuwere.

It was reported in the press that the money

was sourced by controversial businessman Phillip Chiyangwa but sources close to the scandal revealed that the presence of David Chapfika, who is also the Chairman of the indigenization board was a clear confirmation that the money has been swindled from the fund.

Zanu PF sources told *The New Age Voices* that the party's strategy is to win the hearts and minds of the youths before election time in order for them to tilt the vote in their favour come the 2011 elections that have been declared by Mugabe.

In the past, Zanu PF has capitalized on the impoverished urban grooves artists whom it gives pocket money to compose and sing songs that prop up the Mugabe regime while at the same time denigrating its opponents.

The youthful urban grooves artists are normally bussed to Zanu PF functions such as the so called national galas where they take turns to sing for their supper.

The Chidzonga windfall comes at a time when youth across the country are complaining that they are not receiving funds from the ministry despite several press pronouncements that funds have been released for income generating projects.

Zimbabwe Youth Council: Recruiting agency for beleaguered Zanu PF

THE Zimbabwe Youth Council will have to pull all the stops of best practice if it fancies any chances of gaining credibility from youths, civic society organisations among others, the just ended Africa Day Youth Conference has just proved.

The New Age Voices was among the delegates at the event which turned out to be a Zanu PF function with some invited delegates churning out slogans in support of Zanu PF leader Robert Mugabe.

What was supposed to be a weekend that would unite youths from different backgrounds and mapping a common way forward degenerated into chaos with Zanu PF youths who thronged the venue in droves booing some participants who were addressing delegates.

Among those that were incessantly booed by the Zanu PF youths are Deputy Minister of Youth, Indigenization and Empowerment Tongai Matutu, National Youth Development Trust representative Njabulo Moyo and Zimbabwe Youth Council Board Member Abraham Mateta.

A Namibian delegate who is no longer a youth from the SWAPO political party surprised delegates when he turned the conference into a Zanu PF rally and started chanting Zanu PF revolutionary slogans and castigating the Movement for Democratic Change.

A trained 5 year old girl took to the podium and started reciting a poem that

glossed Mugabe and denigrated his rivals and other SADC countries particularly Botswana much to the ululation of Zanu PF youths who were present. "Gushungo batsirai vana venyu, tarisai Botswana yamera sora...." "President Mugabe please help your children, look at Botswana it has degenerated into chaos" went part of the poem.

Botswana delegates jumped with excitement at hearing the piece but that was not before they got the translation of the poem in English that they got angry and expressed disappointment at the girl's utterances.

"We are not happy at what these people have done to us. We thought that this gathering was meant to celebrate togetherness as African youths. We must not politicize these events," said one Botswana delegate who refused to be named.

The young girl was rewarded with US\$20 by Youth, Indigenisation and Empowerment minister, Saviour Kasukuwere for her efforts.

Other dissenting voices at the conference called for the clipping of ZYC secretariat's wings saying that they were acting outside the boundaries of their duties.

Many participants said that the conference was a big flop owing to glaring organizational shortcomings that only left foreign delegates at the function dumbfounded.

The conference that was organised by the Zimbabwe Youth Council (ZYC) turned out to be a huge farce after some of the events that had been organised failed to take place due to organizational boos.

ZYC Secretariat is headed by Livingstone Dzikira who is the Director whom some youth at the conference said needed to have his wings clipped.

Among some of the events that were lined up but failed to take place was the tour of Chimoio burial site that failed to take off much to the amusement of delegates who had thronged the function from across the African continent.

The Zimbabwe Youth Council also

failed to avail T-shirts and caps for the event to all the foreign dignitaries who told *The New Age Voices* that they were surprised that the Zimbabwean government would invite delegates to a programme that they did not have funds to host.

Civil Society organizations have always castigated the Zimbabwe Youth Council for being a partisan institution besides the fact that it is a statutory body formed through an Act of Parliament. The just ended festival confirmed most of these allegations as it is now clear that the ZYC is far from reforming and it remains a recruiting agency for the beleaguered Zanu PF party.



ZYC Director Livingstone Dzikira

Junior Parliament lash out at media coverage

THE Junior Parliament has castigated media houses in the country for deliberately portraying children in bad light by concentrating on covering negative issues about them.

In an interview with *The New Age Voices* last week, members of the junior parliament spoke out about the negative publicity that children get from the country's media houses.

The Deputy Minister of Media Collins Shava attacked the media saying that it deliberately ignored children's achievements. "The general feeling among us as children is that the media has let us down. The media is concerned with issues such as girl so and so was raped among other negative stories but when it comes to our successes, they pay a blind eye, and they do not put it in the papers.

"You will be surprised even to hear that most sections of the media do not even know what the junior parliament is. They do not talk to us, they do not know what we want. They should come to us," Shava said.

Other parliamentarians castigated the government for neglecting them saying that their concerns were not being adequately addressed but are only covered in empty speeches that are never implemented.

Deputy Prime Minister Nicole Piano said that people in positions of power were not doing enough to cater for the needs of children.

"My concern is that we are being ignored by the country's leaders who always promise things that they will never fulfill. The government is reluctant to empower us but instead they give us programmes such as the vocational training centres that train carpentry, dressmaking and so on. But how much will you make under this environment where people choose to go to Pelhams to buy?" Piano said.

Senate President Nkosana Ncube called on the Zimbabwe Youth Council to decentralize operations in order for them to reach out to everyone.

"The ZYC must decentralize. It must be located closer to people to make information dissemination easier.

It must have offices in Bulawayo and other remote parts of the provinces so that children can access them," Ncube said.

Foreign Affairs Minister Theophilous Kombe called for transparency in the election of junior parliamentarians so that all parts of the country are represented.

"Elections for junior parliamentarians must be

transparent because you find that most schools in rural areas are always left out. They do not even know about the junior parliament and how to get elected. Parliamentarians should not be appointed like what is done in other corrupt prone areas that we know. Children should participate in the election of junior parliamentarians,' Kombe said.



Members of Junior Parliament who expressed dismay over the negative publicity they get from the media

Where is the money?

Continued from Page 1

"I just want one of us here to come out and say I managed to get these monies. I have tried to get the money but all my efforts have been in vain, these politicians must come out clean and explain to us where this money went. We are sick and tired of reading about these fund allocations in the press all the time but when we want the money, we are faced with a lot of bureaucracy," said a Zanu PF delegate who could not hide his anger.

Matutu said that proper mechanisms would have to be put in place to ensure that everyone benefits from the fund.

"Yes we have had the concerns but we will soon move in to rectify the problems, I have heard quite a number of youths complaining about it," Matutu said.

Kasukuwere said that he was also not pleased with the manner in which youth officers were conducting themselves

saying that there was a lot of nepotism where some were getting loans because of political affiliation.

Youth organizations have also castigated the Ministry of Youth for politicizing the Youth Fund. Arnold Chamunogwa, the coordinator of Youth Agenda Trust lambasted the Ministry in an interview with *The New Age Voices* saying that Zanu PF is using the Youth Fund to further entrench its clientilistic politics.

"It is quite clear that Zanu PF is a web of patronage. On its own standing it cannot appeal to any young person so to maintain its strangle on a few youth apologists it has to dish out money and various material gifts. Thus Zanu PF has seen an opportunity to oil its repressive machinery comprised of youth militias by giving them USD1000 from the Youth Fund. We however encourage youths not to sell their birth right and future for a paltry USD1000," Chamunogwa said.

Adjust Youth Policy in line with changing times: NYDT

THE Government should adjust the National Youth Policy in line with the changing political landscape and must review it periodically to enable it to maintain relevance, the National Youth Development Trust (NYDT) has said.

Speaking to delegates who gathered at Mutare Polytechnic College last weekend, NYDT official Njabulo Moyo said that there was need for flexibility if the national youth policy was to gain relevance given the vastly changed political landscape in the country.

"We have to face the reality that the political landscape has changed. There is need for a policy document that reflects these changes. It is also important that the document is reviewed periodically so that it remains relevant in this ever changing environment," Moyo said.

He said that the implementation of the National Youth Service should not be partisan but should be a platform to empower young people.

"I would like to task you as a ministry to revise the national youth service because it is not inclusive as it is. It should be able to

reach out to all citizenry in Lupane, Mberengwa and so on," he said.

Moyo said that the national youth policy should adopt best practices, so that it remains professionally run in a manner in which all youths regardless of affiliation are proud of.

"There should be accountability in the policy and holistic citizenry participation. There is no sense in having something that no one wants to be held responsible, there must be accountability and people should be able to participate without fear, it must be for the people," Moyo said.

He called on the government to enact an Act of Parliament that governs the policy so that it becomes a legal instrument otherwise it remains a legal nullity.

"It is vanity that the national youth policy is not an Act, this means it is a legal nullity. It should be formalized by an Act of Parliament," he said.

He said that the youth policy should be a platform for young people to participate saying that any overtures to sideline the

youth would end up as a self fulfilling prophecy.

"If young people do not participate, the document becomes a borrowed piece of paper. This policy should involve us. The youths should be involved in the formulation and implementation of the youth policy, they should be in charge," Moyo said.



Njabulo Moyo of NYDT stressing a point at the Youth Conference

Youth Policy must ensure youth rule: ZYC Board Member

THE national youth policy should ensure that youths are placed in positions of power because they are the majority hence they must be afforded the opportunity to rule. This was said by Zimbabwe Youth Council Board member, legal practitioner and disability activist Abraham Mateta at the just ended Africa Day Youth conference in Mutare.

Mateta said that it was disappointing to note that the youths had the least if any representation at national level despite the fact that they represented more than half of the country's population.

He also called for the meaningful involvement and participation of youths in national processes and not be summoned to

rubberstamp decisions already made by national leaders.

"Youths must be allowed to rule, they are the majority so it only makes sense to have them in charge of the country's leadership. We also want meaningful involvement of these youths at all levels of national planning and decision making," Mateta said.

He also said that it was imperative that youths from across the political divide acknowledge diversity of views and should be united by that diversity.

"We want youths who are tolerant of each other, people who agree to disagree, and people who appreciate the diversity of the country. We should be united by that

diversity, he said.

He also told delegates that youths were subjected to abuse mainly because they are not empowered and called on the government to capacitate them through real empowerment.

"Youths should get a meaningful stake out of the indigenisation drive so that they are empowered economically. You cannot use a youth who has been empowered, who has his own resources by buying him scuds.

"The youth fund must be accessible and realistic and the youth policy must look at areas such as education because they need attention, we need a policy that prioritises ICTs, HIV and Aids prevention and

treatment and behavior change programmes," said Mateta.

Mateta also called for the mainstreaming of gender in the national youth policy to ensure equal participation between males and females. He also called for the need for the policy to mainstream disability.

"We see disability as cross cutting. About 10 percent of the country's population is disabled so these people must be accommodated to ensure that they participate. As the board we need to step up our efforts in ensuring meaningful participation of people with disability.

Africa Youth Day Festival In Pictures



RARE SIGHT:MDC T's Tongai Matutu shares a joke with Zanu PF's Saviour Kasukuwere



ZIMBABWE'S FUTURE:Members of the Junior Parliament who were present at the Festival