

All roads lead to Musina

That the phrase ‘Human rights violations, is only raised when gross violations such as violence or murder occur, is a major cause of concern. Against this backdrop, the Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition has organised the Zimbabwe Human Rights Festival to the South African border town of Musina from.

The concept of the Human Rights arts festival is not understood neither is it openly articulated nor embraced at the organizational or national level. Education systems and propaganda on national media platforms redefine human rights in broad terms that do not readily relate to the reality in the lives of ordinary people. There are no platforms available to the communities that do not readily relate to the reality in the lives of ordinary people. There are no platforms available to the community that define the rights of people or how they can understand them

better and advocate for them.

The festival aims at using art to articulate a human rights discourse that speaks to the everyday living of the migrant Zimbabweans as well as the South Africans who are hosting them. The mass movement of Zimbabweans to South Africa has meant that most of these Zimbabweans are displaced and living in a foreign country they have no way of getting help. The festival therefore aims to empower these Zimbabweans with Information on where to get help should they need it.

Zimbabweans living in South Africa have and are experiencing different types of human rights violations but because of ignorance or lack of knowledge their plight has gone unrecorded and unsolved therefore, the festival is a platform to showcase different organisations that can help them in different situations. The festival is a good way to inform because

it is both entertaining and is informal meaning that it will draw more crowds and the audience embrace it.

Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition is using the Festival as way of showcasing different organisations that are available for Zimbabwean immigrants. It is also being used to honour those individuals who have been steadfast in helping the Zimbabweans and also highlight the human atrocities that the People of Zimbabwe have experienced both within and outside Zimbabwe.

According to Sharon Gwati a child rights activist and Festival coordinator Human rights violations are not limited to the political issues the media portrays. “Lack of access to information regarding to health, education and any information that improves a person’s welfare is a gross violation of one’s human rights. The Zimbabwe Human rights Arts Festival seeks to empower the Zimbabwean

community in Limpopo with such information,” she says.

There are thousands of Zimbabweans that have migrated to South Africa and most of them lack the basic necessities that should be every person’s right, therefore this festival seeks to address, inform and empower these Zimbabweans to where they can seek help.

The Festival will not only be about informing and empowering but also it will be have entertainment on the menu. Different artists from Zimbabwe will be performing like Madiz and Deverangwenya Jazz Band. The success of the Festival will be the emancipation of the Zimbabweans living In Musina and South Africa.

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Julius Malema: ANC’s PR nightmare on Zim



We were at Mbare township’s Netball Complex on Saturday, April 3 2010 for the African National Congress Youth League (ANCYL) president Julius Malema’s much-touted rally. Mbare is Zimbabwe’s oldest suburb and is one of the areas that suffered

tremendously from the Robert Mugabe regime’s shameful Operation Murambatsvina or Operation Get Rid of Filth, which left thousands of Zimbabweans homeless in the winter of 2005. Many Zimbabweans – especially those affected by this operation – actually equated the magnitude of this

exercise to the Asian tsunami of 2004.

The rally was scheduled to start at midday. We should have known better and trusted our instincts. It was not until four hours later that one of the organizers and would-be beneficiary, Saviour Kasukuwere, made an appearance, signalling that at least things were about to start happening. Kasukuwere is minister of Youth Development and Indegenization. His unpopular and controversial regulations on indegenization have once been suspended by cabinet but he remains adamant in his bid to takeover key business entities which are foreign-owned.

The complex just could not get full, despite the presence of clearly bussed-in crowds that ranged from elderly women from a church sect to youths who were evidently just looking for a place to hang out for the afternoon simply because they had nothing better to do. Of course you would also get your ZANU-PF youth proper; a collection of unemployed youngsters who are willing to sing and dance (gather morale, as they call it) for – wait for it – a bucket of opaque beer and free party regalia. You got also young boys joining the party, waving ZANU PF paper flags and completely oblivious to the consequences of what was about to happen.

The atmosphere was made thicker by the presence of ZANU-PF’s paramilitary allies popularly known in Zimbabwe as Green Bombers, clad in their military green fatigues, red berets and dark sunglasses to go with. It was also their show. They were there to showcase the ‘gains’ of the controversial national youth service programme and possibly hint at the ANC Youth League that this too, they needed to adopt for South Africa. One thing about the green bombers, however, is their ability to surprise you in a manner typical warfare strategy. In the run-up to the disputed March 2008 election, they are said to have been the force that instigated much of the violence that accompanied the election. So you still got a sense, sitting in that complex that anything was possible and at anytime, drawing from their unflattering reputation.

If Kasukuwere, dressed in a ZANU-PF t-shirt bearing the clenched fist of Robert Mugabe, blue jeans and a Cuban-style military cap with a red star was meant to portray his appreciation of the liberation struggle in Zimbabwe then Julius Malema’s entrance was meant to speak to his expensive taste and unwittingly expose the neo-colonial trait of comrades who condemn all things Western while they swim in the very same luxuries themselves.

Malema arrived in a Mercedes Benz GL500 SUV. The sleek vehicle bears personalized registration, “Zhuwawo” and belongs to the ZANU PF director of youth and Politburo member, Patrick Zhuwawo who is also president Mugabe’s nephew. Malema’s entourage followed behind in Range Rovers, Land Cruisers and S-Class Mercedes Benz vehicles. Inside the netball complex, the crowd erupted, as it had been begged to do earlier by a ZANU PF official. In came in Malema, wearing a ZANU PF shirt, his fist clenched and waving to the crowd.

He would soon claim that the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) is an agent of the West, established to effect regime change in Zimbabwe. He would suggest it was paramount to ensure ZANU PF’s continued stay in power so as to guarantee the ANC’s position in power in South Africa. “If the imperialists succeed in removing ZANU PF from power, we know they are coming for the ANC next”, he said to thunderous applause.

The visit of Julius Malema tied Zimbabweans who are not aligned with ZANU PF into a knot. The rage that the visit has elicited was quite interesting for one thing: its impotency. Having clearly been outflanked we were now licking our wounds and making some hysterical noises about how Malema was not welcome to our country. We risked becoming that which we condemned.

There is a simple thing that those in civil society and political parties need to learn. That thing is called “discourse” – a very big word for Malema, given

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WikiLeaks Vindicate Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition's Position on Military Reforms

Coordinator's Note



dewaMAVHINGA

WikiLeaks, a controversial whistleblowing website that is releasing what it alleges to be confidential United States diplomatic cables, has revealed in statements attributed to senior Zimbabwe National Army generals, clear vindication of Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition's research findings relating to the extremely partisan nature of senior military figures in Zimbabwe. Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition's findings are contained in a comprehensive, 31page report titled The Military Factor in Zimbabwe's Political and Electoral Affairs published in June 2011.

According to recently released wikileaks files, two army generals - Major-General Fidelis Satuku and Brigadier-General Herbert Chingono, during meetings with US ambassador to Zimbabwe Mr Charles Ray on January 5 and 6 2010, described Zimbabwe Defence Forces Commander General Constantine Chiwenga as a "political general" who lacked the necessary military expertise or experience. One of the generals said although General Chiwenga was hardworking, he was largely a political general.

The veracity of the wikileaks cables has been question while the US government has not confirmed that indeed the cables are authentic and many individuals quoted in the cables have flatly denied ever saying things attributed to them. However, the statements attributed to the two generals are in line with Crisis in Zimbabwe Coalition's own research findings that the leadership of the military is extremely politicized and partisan towards ZANU-PF in ways that fundamentally undermine the independence and professionalism of the military. The research further established that the partisan nature of the military is largely responsible for



blocking Zimbabwe's democratic political transition.

As evidence of direct military interference in electoral affairs through the utterance of partisan public statements, General Chiwenga in March 2008 signaled his readiness to set aside the constitution should ZANU-PF candidate Robert Mugabe be defeated at the polls. General Chiwenga further described Mugabe's opponent, Morgan Tsvangirai as an agent of the west and vowed to instruct the military not to take orders from him.

With such a calibre of military leaders, in the absence of far-reaching, credible reforms, it will be difficult to create an environment in Zimbabwe conducive to the holding of free and fair elections under conditions of free political activity on a level playing field. The central pillar of electoral and democratic reforms therefore, beyond crafting a new constitution and other legislative reforms, is how Zimbabwe's current inclusive government can re-align the military and transform it into a genuinely national and professional institution that defends the interests of all the people of Zimbabwe without serving personal and party interests.

While national, regional and international

ABOVE: President Mugabe (right) with Army Commander Constantine Chiwenga (centre) and Intelligence Chief Happyton Bonyongwe (left).

RIGHT: WikiLeaks founder, Julian Assange.



focus is on the new constitution that is being touted as a milestone towards creating the right conditions for credible, free and fair elections in Zimbabwe leading to the establishment of a legitimate government, I wish to caution that focus should be on putting in place mechanisms to completely separate the military from political and electoral affairs and ensuring that state security agents are not used as instruments of violence and intimidation who campaign for ZANU-PF or any other political interest ahead of elections.

A new constitution therefore, while it may very well be presented as a major step towards democratization, is not the key to free and fair elections. The key to opening up democratic space in Zimbabwe lies in the inclusive government's ability to recall

and confine to their barracks all soldiers currently deployed across the country and in ensuring that military leaders, whether speaking for their institution or in their private capacity, refrain from all manner of interference in civilian and political affairs. Practical measures to transform the military into a professional outfit loyal to the constitution and the people of Zimbabwe in a non-partisan manner obviously include steps to retire and replace the current political leadership of the military that has blatantly demonstrated partisanship towards ZANU-PF unless there are clear guarantees that the current leadership is willing and ready to serve the interests of Zimbabwe which go beyond ZANU-PF party interests.

Political leaders should not make the

mistake of celebrating piece-meal, sideshow reforms that do not significantly alter the political terrain while leaving the critical matter of security sector realignment untouched.

The danger there is that Zimbabwe may be dragged to elections on the basis of those minor, cosmetic reforms and after elections ZANU-PF will point to those very reforms as evidence that the political field had supposedly been leveled and push for acceptance of an illegitimate outcome on that basis. In developing the elections roadmap with SADC's assistance, the big issue that must feature prominently is how to deal with political generals who view themselves as active political players.

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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES:

- > Zimbabwe Human Rights Arts Festival; Musina, South Africa (9-11 September)
- > United Nations Human Rights Council session & Zimbabwe UPR; Geneva, Switzerland (15 September - 20 October)

Government’s New Inclusiveness in Land Rover Discovery Vehicles

I do not know what goes on in the Cabinet meetings of our inclusive government. Save for video clips of government ministers awarding themselves computers on state television. In any event, it is now public knowledge that the Ministry of Media, Information and Publicity issued what can only be considered a ‘threat’ to all editors who publish ‘leaked’ information about cabinet proceedings. Even though I am not an editor, and I have no ‘cabinet sources’ I am personally persuaded that that there must have been some cabinet decision to purchase luxury vehicles for ministers. Whether it was by consensus, vote or decree, we might never know.

But we can at least verify the purchase of these ‘beasts of the road’ by seeing our erstwhile ministers riding around in them (especially the doubting Thomases). Their true cost to the government, the nature of the awarding of the tender to supply them is probably something protected from publication under the Official Secrets Act, though the fact that they are being driven is not so ‘secret’.

Neither is the fact that there has been no official explanation as to why the vehicles were purchased in the first place ever since the story appeared in the media. The Minister of Finance, Tendai Biti was reported to have told a journalist from the Daily News that he should ask the Minister of Transport and Communications, Nicholas Goche about the cars. And then he was reported later to have said that in fact, money to purchase government cars was within the 2010 budget allocation. This money comes to a total of US\$1,5 million but was not utilized in the same period. He did not however explain the cost and source of funds for the vehicles that our ministers are now utilizing, assumedly for government business. Now because I do not have ‘sources’ in Cabinet, I do not know why the procurement component of government opted to not re-allocate the money to other essential services of our national economy particularly health and education. In fact the money might could have been simply added to this year’s allocation for the Basic Education Assistance Model (BEAM). But the government probably feels this is not a priority even though it’s a priority for many of our country’s poor.

I also assume that perhaps the lack of an official statement from Cabinet on this issue might be indicative of government’s assumption that any expressions



The Land Rover Discovery 4

of concern over this unnecessary expenditure will probably fizzle out from public debate or mainstream media. Well, I know thatLandrover Discovery vehicles do not just fizzle out. In fact, they are extremely durable and so is their status symbol. Indeed the official descprition of these ‘beasts of the road’ from the manufacturer states:

The Discovery 4 GS is the perfect combination of style and capability, equipped with seating for up to seven adults, four-corner air suspension and Land Rover’s unique Terrain Response® as standard. Other advanced features include automatic climate control, a harman/kardon® nine-speaker audio system and Bluetooth® telephone connectivity. There is a superb 3.0 litre, 180kW diesel engine with technically advanced parallel sequential turbochargers and six-speed adaptive automatic transmission.

Now if this descprition does not fit that of a vehicle for the wealthy of an already wealthy society, I do not know what else will. Except that Zimbabwe is a poor country, with poor people. A country saddled with a government that treats its ministers like multinational company corporate executives and its people like muted audiences in the theater of opulence.

And should you take the individual ministers to task on this matter you might be accused of undermining the inclusive government. God forbid that you are not charged with treason by Cabinet itself for daring to ask for a comparison between their luxurious vehicles and their performance in government. But then again, I wonder if anyone is watching their performance? Civil society remains muted, with only one organization, the Committee of the Peoples Charter asking questions of these distasteful spending sprees by the inclusive government.

Even though the government thinks this will go away, or at least not be a public issue for a prolonged period of time, at least it has been said. And when the Ministers drive or are driven in their vehicles, they should at least know that the people are watching. Some with envy, but the majority with serious disappointment at this display of the ‘politics of the belly’.

By Takura Zhangazha, a political analyst. This article appear on his blog at: <http://takura-zhangazha.blogspot.com/2011/08/governments-new-inclusiveness-in.html>

Julius Malema: ANC’s PR nightmare on Zim

From Front Page

his academic challenges but one which he understands very well in practice.

The discourse of the liberation movements is identical – if you did not fight the struggle on our side and with us, then you have no right to speak. It is ZANU PF’s mantra. It is now becoming the ANC mantra and Malema is being consistent on this. The schizophrenia of the ANC on Zimbabwe is a mild one – their sympathies seem to lie with ZANU PF. The Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) represents an unknown to them - a potential Third Force that “imperialists” have imposed on Zimbabwe.

Now, the rules of discourse are simple: to paraphrase, Michel Foucault, the French philosopher, discourse rules in and rules out. What is ruled out are those voices on the margins – the powerless. What is ruled in is the voice of power. ZANU PF is in power, albeit with less of it in the aftermath of GPA. The ANC is in power. Whilst we may all have our little centres of power, those are the real big centres of power. To re-shape the debate that Malema stoked we have to challenge the liberation movements’ blasphemous declaration of immortality.

Of course, Malema went back to Johannesburg to be met by harsh criticism from the ANC for doing something

that did not constitute the party’s foreign policy agenda, especially when president Jacob Zuma was desperately trying to find a lasting solution to the Zimbabwe crisis. Whilst this action from both Luthuli House and the Presidency was welcome in so many quarters, it has taken yet another foreign policy gaffe by the ANCYL for the ANC to take critical action. Although later withdrawn, Malema’s call for regime change in Botswana sounded more like hollow attempts at parroting the ZANU PF mantra on Ian Khama’s regime.

As the ANCYL disciplinary hearing continues, more caution and sanction may be needed in dealing with this rabid

politician who just refuses to stay on his. Julius Malema is a rather misguided missile that will need more than one press conference and a few statements to deactivate, secure and put back in its correct storage. That, at least for as long as the Zimbabwe issue is on the SADC agenda and especially if South Africa is the match referee between the uninspiring game being played by both MDC and ZANU PF.

Beyond castigating the fellow for his breathtaking exhibition of political immaturity, we need to demand from our politics a heightened sense of dignity, unprecedented level-headedness and a genuine commitment to improving the livelihoods of ordinary citizens via the encouragemnet of robust debate and progressive policy formulation.

At 5:27pm Julius Malema left the netball complex and jumped straight into the Mercedes Benz waiting for him. The crowds were still cheering, even more so when the convoy of luxury cars carrying their leaders sped off, lifting a tremendous amount of dust behind them and – sadly – no clue whatsoever how they also, could be able to afford such luxuries some day. Strangely, the same scene played itself happened on the Tuesday that Malema’s hearing began at Luthuli House.

For the youth in Zimbabwe and South Africa, so much time may have passed after liberation but it seems sweetness is only the reserve of selected comrades.

This is an edited version of two articles that has previously appeared on the Zimbabwe in Pictures website. They can be found at: <http://drupal.zimbabweinpictures.com/search/node/Malema>

InBRIEF

Mugabe calls for elections in 2012

President Robert Mugabe has declared end of March 2012 to be the deadline for holding elections in Zimbabwe, whether the new constitution has been put in place or not. SADC has been learning hard on Mugabe to hold off elections until the referendum has been put in place. Mugabe has moved from insisting that the elections be held end of this year to early next year in March. Mugabe believes that MDC is using the constitution as a belaying tactic in a bid to delay elections. Mugabe is more concerned on when the elections are to be held while Morgan Tsvangirai is not so much concerned about the date but more about reforming the elec-

toral and political systems of Zimbabwe.

According to reports in the Herald, Mugabe who is the candidate for the next elections is adamant on the month to hold the elections. The elections are supposed to be held in 2013 but Mugabe believes that the inclusive government has served its time and its time for elections. Critics however believe that Mugabe’s health is the reason behind the early elections.

Mugabe Dying of Prostate Cancer

Meanwhile, according to a diplomatic cable Central Bank Governor, Gideon Gono is said to have told the country’s US ambassador that Mugabe has three to five years to live because of Prostrate Cancer. Mugabe’s

health has been in question for a while now. The State newspaper, the Herald has reported Mugabe’s failing health, stating that Mugabe” trips to Singapore was for Cataract treatment and follow up treatments.

Gono has denied the allegations and the spokesperson for US embassy in South Africa, Elizabeth Trudeau has said that the US department does not comment on “any allegedly leaked documents. The Leaks come at a time when Mugabe is adamant on holding the elections next year while the Opposition party led by MDC’ s Morgan Tsvangirai is opposed to the move until the country has a new constitution.