

TALKING HARARE

A voice of Harare

Community Radio Harare Newsletter Vol 17 August
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Editorial Comment

New Constitution should empower local authorities

by Givemore Chipere

The current debate on the devolution of power to local councils, as reported elsewhere in this newsletter, comes at a good time when the constitution-making process has just started. For a long time, the great potential that local authorities have in terms of improving service delivery in our councils and towns has not been realized. This can be attributed to the fact that these have not been provided with enough space and resources to diligently exercise their duties.

The present constitutional reform process should come up with a clearly defined product that will recognize local authorities as entities in the constitution and do away with the current situation where local government are administered through Acts of Parliament. The current set-up deters development as only the individual minister of Local Government, Urban and Rural Development is given excessive powers that allows him to disregard public opinion and resolutions. He has got unilateral powers that enable him to make a discretion on which council should benefit from fiscal support. Therefore the Urban Councils Act and Rural Districts Councils Act, hinder the empowerment of communities in decision making and programme implementation and give all the powers to one individual.

A lot of issues have been raised pertaining to multiple shortcomings of these acts and how the nation could take this constitution making opportunity to ensure that local authorities are given responsibilities and powers to make decisions that can develop their areas and be responsive to the needs of the citizens.

Local governance and the role of local authorities should thus be captured in the envisaged new constitution as has been the case in other countries. Even the Zimbabwe Local Government Association (ZILGA) has thrown its weight behind this devolution process as this would enhance service delivery and autonomy for rural and urban authorities. The role of central government, as practised in other countries where power has been successfully decentralized such as Mali, should be that of

setting up national policy and let local councils be responsible for all day-to-day services and local matters.

The role of central government, through the responsible ministers, could also be that of monitoring and ensuring consistent standards to safeguard public health or to protect the rights of individual citizens. The state should be allowed to retain an advisory role in administrative and fiscal matters, and when necessary provide technical support.

Where local authorities have a dispute with the central government, then there could be a parliamentary commission or a court of law that would come in to deal with the situation as has been the case with other local authorities in some countries.

Open up the airwaves – FEBA Radio

By Talking Harare Reporter

FEBA Radio Zimbabwe has called on the government to urgently open up airwaves and allow other players to come into the broadcasting industry in order to enhance development.

Speaking on the 25th of July 2009, at a function to mark the station's 25 years Anniversary, Feba Radio's national director, Kurai Madzonga, said government should act swiftly and allow all the muffled voices to be heard. "At the moment, we are a radio station that is still in the incubator and awaiting delivery. The closed airwaves should be opened so that we will be licenced and start administering programmes that help our society to move forward.

"For example, our station could play a leading role in administering the Word of God and providing spiritual and motivational counseling to many people in the country. As an aspiring national radio station that wants to broadcast hope, we could play a leading role in the transformation of people's lives.

"At the moment, we have been broadcasting our programmes through Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) stations because we are not yet licensed but what we would want is our own license," added Madzongwe.

FEBA Radio is among a host of radio stations, including Community Radio Harare (CORAH FM), that are awaiting a broadcasting licence as the government of

Zimbabwe is yet to open airwaves and allow independent players to come in.

FEBA Radio Zimbabwe in an inter-denominational radio station that broadcasts hope through Christian messages. Part of its wider mission reads, “We communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ through radio and programme follow-up. We desire that individuals and families be reconciled to God through the power of the Holy Spirit and be responsible members of the Church and society.

Under the Global Political Agreement (GPA) signed by the country’s three main political parties last year, the inclusive government was mandated to open up airwaves to allow new broadcasting stations to come in so as to promote media plurality and diversity. However, no single station has been licensed yet.

Fire at Pomona dumping site

Massive fire has broken up at the popular Pomona dumping site in Harare. The fire, which started on 24 July 2009, has rekindled fears of last year’s vast fire that wrecked this Harare City Council owned area for close to three weeks.

It is feared the latests break-up will spread rapidly in the area and cause serious environmental problems. Besides exposing the lives of many people of Pomona to danger, the fire will result in many animals being destroyed along the way. Furthermore, the smoke being emitted will increase global warming. The local authority has been blamed for failing to put up fire-control measures at the place. Last year, the situation was only saved by the intervention of non-governmental organisations that had to pour in about US\$10 000 to put out the fire.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Central government should retain some control

Editor – While I think the new constitution should ensure that some power is given to local authorities, I think that central government should retain much of the power given the fact that most local councilors have got no experience and education necessary to manage councils.

An example is the case in which the government has had to constantly intervene so as to save the situation. Most elected councilors have got the tendency to be corrupt as they come into power thinking that they would acquire wealth and property. And when they realize that it would be difficult for such things to happen, they end up resorting to corruption and other ills in order to make a living.

The results for all such things are bare for us to see all. Chitungwiza is a good example where the incumbent mayor is embroiled in corruption allegations over the issue of stands that he is said to have allocated to himself and business associates. Such situations make it important for central government to play a leading oversight role to ensure that local authorities are kept at bay. In fact, it is important that the local authorities should be answerable to both the local communities and the central government. ***Tendai Shoko, St Mary's, Chitungwiza***

Councilors should have qualifications and experience

Editor – The current debate going on in Harare on whether there should be some entry qualifications for prospective local councilors makes important reading. Whilst it is a democratic right for anyone to participate in any public election, I think that there should be some entry requirements because this is such an important office that requires level-headed and mature people who can lead the community.

We can not have a situation whereby people with no capacity to manage public affairs are given such important roles without making sure that they have got the capacity to deliver.

We need to ensure that councilors should have at least 5 ‘O’ levels so that they will at least have the academic strength necessary to come up with solutions necessary to our local problems. The current new constitution making process should come up with a system that will give power to provincial and local communities, but we should ensure that such people to be given the power to administer our communities have got some benchmark qualifications and work experience. • ***Kumbirai Marere, Kambuzuma***

More power for local authorities

Editor – The current constitution must ensure that local authorities are given enough power to deliver and be answerable to the people and not one individual minister. We do not want a situation where people's will is vetoed by one individual. ***Edna Mlanga, Glen Norah***

Limit presidential term

Editor – The new constitution must limit the term of the presidency to only two-5 year terms. We have all seen what leaders are capable of doing once they get power. They want to stay forever! *Winnet Moyo, Harare Polytechnic*

Shame on those who tried to disrupt constitutional conference

Editor – The chaos that ensued at the all-stakeholders constitutional conference in July was a big shame. Surely, some people are never ashamed.

How could anyone in his or her right sense want to disrupt such a noble cause? It is obvious that those who tried to disrupt the event are beneficiaries of the current constitution which has given political and economic powers to a small club in our country. *Amos Jiri, Avondale*

MDC and ZANU (PF) the same

Editor – I think politicians are just but the same. The fact that the MDC agreed with ZANU (PF) to craft the Kariba Draft raises much questions. *Brian Mafaka, Braeside*

Constitution – making process a farce

Editor – I do not think we are going anywhere with this new constitution making thing. The process is very flawed and will never get the people's support. The issue is being given peripheral coverage in the mainstream media and so we wonder what is the agenda of political leaders. *Tabeth Matiza, Mbare*

Our leaders are the problem

Editor – I think our country's problem is beyond that of a constitutional crisis. It is of our current crop of leaders who do not want to respect the rights of citizens and would do anything to ensure people's views are undermined. *John Hove, Epworth*

Why did the MDC sign Kariba Draft

Editor – Why did the MDC agree to sign the Kariba Draft in 2007. Was it because they believed they were going to win the 2008 elections, which they did anywhere? If the MDC had gone into power last year, it is obvious they would have been

supporting the imposition of the Kariba Draft because it simply favors them as politicians ***Tendai Mareva***

New constitution should address people's needs

Editor - Bumbiro remutemo wenyika ndiwo hwaro hunoburitsa pachena kuti nyika inozotungamirwa sei. Mitemo yose inozogadzirwa inofanira kunge ichitungamirwa neBumbiro remutemo or National Constitution. Nyika inogona kubudirira chete kana paine bumbiro remitemo rinochengetedza kodzero dzeveruzhinji uye hutungamiri hunoremekedza zvido zvevanhu. Kodzero idzi dzinosanganisira health, education, shelter, food, protection e.t.c so we want a new constitution that addresses these issues. ***Maria Jani, Tafara***

Leaders shortchanging the people

Editor - I would like to express my anger towards leaders who are back-biting each other, all this has resulted in many of us doubting the Global Political Agreement. I do not see the reason why some leaders should denounce other leaders whilst on the other hand they claim to be purely working together. The media is also playing a significant role in the destruction of the GPA as different politicians get different coverage and respect in accordance to which party they belong to. ***Webster Chara, Harare***

Give us a chance please!

Editor- It is quite disheartening to learn how the Global Political Agreement has been violated. There is still no peace in our country as witnessed by reports that political bases are now being revived especially in rural areas. This makes us wonder what really our political leaders want to achieve. You can not preach peace and practice violence. This is not good; it hurts us as a nation to be still engaged in violence at this point of modern world. ***Chareka Chareka, Dzivarasekwa***

Mashambanzou and Mavambo doing great work

Editor - It is my pleasure to thank Mashambanzou and Mavambo for the role they are playing in our community. They care, feed and support vulnerable families and children with food and school fees. The two have a team of volunteers who assist in identifying those in need. They also help ferry pupils to various schools. ***Resident, Mabvuku***

Words of the Wiseman

“Wait on the Lord, and keep His way, And He shall exalt you to inherit the land; when the wicked are cut off you shall see it.

I have seen the wicked in great power and spreading himself like a native green tree.

Yet he passed away, and behold he was no more; indeed I sought him, but he could not be found.”

Psalms 37vs34-36

Opinion Page

It is no longer time for imagination

By Patience Pitori

An imagination is dead without action behind it. It makes no use to keep imagining things when one does not act to make that imagination a reality. One could imagine how Zimbabwe would be like in a situation of ZANU PF and MDC-T joining together. This did not end as an imagination; both parties took an action into an inclusive government and suddenly we were hopeful things were to work out.

Inflation in Zimbabwe had become immeasurable with frightening figures being announced. Each day passed with the depreciation in the buying power of the Zimbabwean dollar. This resulted in many people in the business sector adopting the use of foreign currency and gradually businesses were given licenses to sell their products in foreign currency.

A better solution was later adopted to lessen hyper inflation and this was through the use of multiple currencies which helped to stabilize the economy. Before, one could rarely come across a 2kg packet of sugar in the shop thus it had become an imagination but through the use of multiple currencies, the imagination came true as shelves were quickly filled with products in both retail and wholesale shops.

But the most important issue in this article is not to merely choke ourselves with these past achievements but to look at areas that we still need to do something especially at this moment of constitution making. In Shona they even say, ‘Matakadyakare haanyaradzi mwana’ - (you can not stop a child from crying by reminding him/her the past good experiences). A lot has been said around Harare and Zimbabwe about education, particularly the exorbitant fees levied in schools and universities. Many children have withdrawn from schools because their parents or guardians can not afford to pay. Many articles showing the plight of students have been written by individuals, journalists and student associations like the Students Solidarity Trust (SST) but nothing has been done. Instead the situation with respect to access to quality education has proved to be a system

where we are moving towards a capitalist society of only the few and rich getting access to education.

Theorists like Chomsky and Gramsci have conducted studies of such kind of situations with the poor get poorer and the rich get richer.

Zimbabwe can be best described in terms of the capitalist society, because we have the rich being the dominant group of the society. Proper quality education has become a privilege of the rich only as these are the people who can afford to send their children to institutions with proper learning resources locally and internationally.

Furthermore, the situation is more painful especially when we commemorate days like the Day of the African Child that we celebrated on the 16th of June this year. We celebrated this day at a time when children's rights to education are not being respected. On that day it was painful to realise that the celebrations in Harare were not attended by many children from high density suburbs. It is abundantly clear that such children were not even aware of that important event. So, who is going to remember the difficulty in having access to education the children of Dzivarasekwa are having?

Having mentioned the above, it is now food for thought for every Zimbabwean to participate in the constitutional making process and realize what is to be addressed and included concerning the plight of children and the issue of human rights as part of the major thematic issues.

Mabvuku Soccer fans starved of PSL action

...as Portland Stadium lie idle

By Zimbabwean standards, Portland stadium in Mabvuku deserves to be a home for premier soccer league matches as do Rimuka, Mucheke and Sakubva, yet the arena is lying idle, seemingly unattended, writes *Tadius Manyepo* from Mabvuku.

The potential that lies with this stadium reminds most of us, as Mabvuku and Tafara football fans, who braved that chilly-drizzling March day of 2001, when in our large numbers packed Portland stadium to capacity. On that day, the then newly PSL promoted side Circle United, based in our area was to lock horns against a super-charged Highlanders outfit in a PSL season opener.

It was a match many football fans can hardly forget as controversy, tragedy, comedy and excitement combined formidably well to just coin it, 'a moment of totality in an action packed encounter'.

This was the day, the now Botswana based former Warriors pacey striker, Sageby Sandaka heralded his fancy footwork, the now late Uzuman Misi, showed the world how football is made to look very ordinary and important. He showed his undoubted immaculate defensive display for Circle United.

On the other hand, Bosso captain Thulani 'Biya' Ncube played as if he was possessed and provided reason for Zimbabwe to believe that the nation could produce such rock-solid and roving defenders as Italy's Alessandro Nesta and England's John Terry.

The match, of course ended on a 2-1 score line in favor of the visitors. Although their team was defeated, Mabvuku and Tafara residents chanted alive with the song, 'Mafero anoda bhora', being composed and this culminated to the sudden nicknaming of the Circle United team as, 'Mafero Mafero'.

The fans thought this was the dawn of a new era where they could just afford to walk and watch PSL action at this stadium over weekends but to their surprise and pain, Mafero Mafero got relegated the same year amid in-house squabbles in the part of the scheme. This meant that their team was to play the less popular division one football for the rest of 2002 and to add insult to the fans' injury, the team crumbled and became dysfunctional.

Now, seven years down the line Mefero Mafero no longer exists, but Portland stadium is still there, a football pitch almost of the same standard with Sakubva! Yet the Mabvuku and Tafara football fanatics are not given space to watch even division one in this turf.

Wringster F.C , a division one side once used the stadium in 2005 but their relationship with the Circle Cement management went into the black book and they abandoned it.

Then came 2008 when newly promoted club, Gunners (chando kupisa) promised these starved fans of bringing back PSL action at Portland but before the season even started, Gunners were singing the opposite tune and to this, Wellington Mpandare – managed side now prefer using Rimuka Stadium in Kadoma.

Is it a case of the Circle Cement management's unwillingness to cooperate with football teams that want to use that stadium or it is something else? Portland stadium now lies idle and yet it has got the potential to be used as one of the PSL match venues in addition to being utilized as a base for junior football development.

It is high time that interested PSL clubs negotiate a deal with Circle Cement that will see us getting PSL games here.

After all Mabvuku is the home of so many renowned footballers like the Mugeyi brothers, Cephas and Elton Chimedza, David Kutyaauripo, Robson Masauso, Laison Ntalika and many others.

POETRY SECTION

Shepherd to his love

There will we sit upon the rock
And see the shepherds feed their flocks
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals

There will I make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies
A cap of flower and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle

A gown made of the finest wood
Which from our pretty lambs we pull
Fair lined slippers for the cold
With buckles of the purest gold

A belt of straw and ivy buds
Which coral clasps and amber studs
And if thee pleasures may thee move
Come live with me and my love

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May –morning
If these delight thy mind may move
Then live with me and be my love

By Charmaine Kumpeu, Tafara

New Constitution

New Constitution where are you
I am waiting for you
Please do not let me down
I want you to give me freedom

Some people do not even know you
Come and show them your true colors
I am ready to preach about you
From all borders of Zimbabwe

To me you are heaven and earth
Since 1980 i have been searching for you
Knowing that you are the liberator

Come and free us all

By Mary Chimala, Dzivarasekwa

It cost our lives

They told us it was mild
But we all saw it was wild
They claimed it was under control
Yet it was on the roll
Yes, it all cost our lives

By the time they declared it a national disaster
It had already claimed my nice sister
Still in every street in every corner
Sewerage floats without shame
It cost our lives

In every household under every roof
Wailings abide at all the doorsteps
For the little ones it is just another sad day at home
They can't help but play with the inimical waters
A result of a delapidated service delivery system
It cost our lives

An iceberg of everything gone awfully wrong
Yet someone from the angelous of power
Unshamefully barked that even that Cholera
The cholera that claimed many lives
The cholera whose death toll figures we battled to rig, It is a fact, it cost our lives
By Nomore Mbombera, University of Zimbabwe

The pain of death

When the last victim has been buried
The last tear shed
The last shovel thrown
Death has again worn the crown
But for us the living
It's just the first step to discovery
Discovery of a way of life constructed
By orligarchy, gerontocracy and anarchy
For whatever business that will ensure tonight
The only groins we will hear are of something else
Rather than hunger or poverty
The graveyard next to the one we dug yesterday will be yours
By Patience Pitori

AIMS and Objectives of Community Radio Harare

- To provide a channel of communication and promote development, democracy and good governance.
- To promote social development issues through airing participatory programmes which are aimed at improving the quality of life in the Harare community.
- To ensure that there is free market of ideas in our society, where all voices can be heard equally and fairly.
- Promotion of local artists through identifying and nurturing their talents.
 - To create a bank of ideas and views useful to society for the achievement of progressive social change.
- To promote freedom of speech, expression and eliminate the culture of fear.
- To keep the public aware of current affairs reported in a balanced and unbiased manner.
- To give the people at the grassroots levels a voice and an avenue for their ideas and creativity.
- To promote Zimbabwean values and instill a sense of patriotism and cultural awareness.

TALKING HARARE is published as an internal newsletter for all members and friends of

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