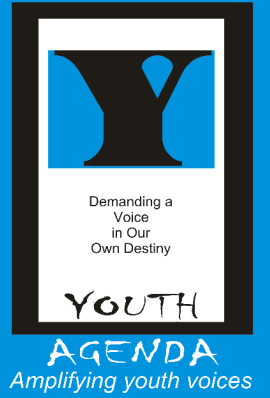


# The New Age Voices

A newsletter published by Youth Agenda Trust website: [www.youthagendazim.org.zw](http://www.youthagendazim.org.zw).



For feedback email The New Age Voices on [newagevoices@gmail.com](mailto:newagevoices@gmail.com)

Issue 18 22-29 July 2011

Cost: Free

## Border Gezi Roars into life

### Youth activists arrested for playing music jingles

**TWO youth activists were arrested by police on Sunday while enjoying themselves at Rusike Growth Point in Goromonzi playing music on their mobile phones that prop up the MDC led by Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai on their way from the "Our Constitution, Our Future" ball games tournament that was organised by Youth Agenda Trust and the local community.**

The youths, Moses Nhau (26) and Pepukai Kwangwari (age not given) were arrested by Goromonzi Police at the growth point and were taken to Goromonzi Police Station where they were immediately detained by Sergeant Marava of the same police station.

The police details were reluctant to lay charges on the two until the Member of Parliament for Goromonzi South Hon. Greenbert Dongo and his councilors confronted the cops who eventually charged them with disrupting business at the growth point and for being a public nuisance.

The youths could not be released on Sunday after Police indicated that they would only be prepared to release them the following morning after payment of admission of guilt fines.

The youths were however released the following day after the intervention of the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights (ZHLR).

The arrests come barely two weeks after Zanu PF apologist Brigadier General Douglas Nyikayaramba said that Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai and his MDC party are not a political threat but a security threat.

It now appears that sentiments from such people as Nyikayaramba will only serve to further polarize the country and increase the intensity of the selective application of the law with which the country's security forces have always been charged with.

Efforts to get a comment from Police Spokesperson Wayne Bvudzijena were fruitless by the time of going to print.

Hon. Dongo said that it was unfortunate that his party's supporters continued to be hauled into police detention on trumped up charges. Zanu PF, which has a stranglehold on the security forces has fiercely rejected calls for security sector reform saying the issue is not debatable.

**THE dreaded National Youth Service training centres also known as Border Gezi have been resurrected under veils of secrecy across the country disguised as places meant to instill discipline and skills development among young people.**

*The New Age Voices* has it on good authority that young people in rural and peri-urban communities are being enrolled into the clandestine training institutions, failure to take part in the programme usually has far reaching consequences which can be aptly summed up as defiance of Zanu PF leadership.

On Monday 18 July, 70 youth converged in Bromley to embark on a militia training concealed as a "youth integrated skills programme" that is meant to intimidate villagers in the area. The training programme is allegedly being spearheaded by three men who could only be identified as Mapiye and Seremani and a war veteran known as Mambodzoukuni.

Last week, Minister of Energy and Power Development, Hon. Elton Mangoma told JOMIC that a youth integrated skills programme that is being conducted at Shenjere primary school in Headlands is meant to intimidate and incite violence among villagers.

Although some Zanu PF members in JOMIC desperately tried to dismiss Mangoma's claims, youth in the area who were interviewed by *The New Age Voices* said that many

youth who are taking part in the programme are doing so out of fear.

JOMIC co-chairperson from Zanu PF, Oppah Muchinguri refuted the claims and said that the programme is necessary for the community.

Minister of Youth, Indigenisation and Empowerment, Saviour Kasukuwere said that the programme is meant to eradicate poverty among the youths through skills development.

Speaking to *The New Age Voices* last year, Deputy Minister of Youth Indigenisation and Empowerment Tongai Matutu said that the youth training programme was put on hold because it was not properly set up.

"There is a problem with the set up of the programme. It should come from someone's heart that he or she wants to join the youth service. The situation of forcing people to join is disastrous," he said.

The National Youth Service was condemned by Parliament 2 years ago after the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Youth visited the training centres and witnessed firsthand how young people were living in inhuman conditions and being subjected to untold abuse.

The latest move by Zanu PF to clandestinely resurrect the notorious training centres behind the back of the Inclusive Government is a clear testimony that the party is not sincere in fulfilling provisions of the GPA.



Honourable Dongo handing over prizes to Surrey farm netball team

(Right) An ecstatic youth celebrates her team's victory

## Young people demand jobs, calls government to action

**YOUNG people have strongly castigated the government for failing to open up employment opportunities for them and blamed the skewed government policies that plunged the country into a decade long economic meltdown for exacerbating the situation.**

Speaking to *The New Age Voices* in Marondera last weekend, the youth said that they were living miserable lives due to the reluctance by the government to create a viable economic environment that attracts foreign direct investment and promote ordinary indigenous Zimbabweans.

Davison Chiveza (27) of Rusike phase 2 said that instead of the government to cover up for their mistakes, it went on to sideline young people in government programmes such as the land redistribution exercise thereby putting land in the hands of few politically aligned individuals.

"The government must be pushed to

open up all closed factories through injecting fresh working capital. We want to live better lives, we are tired of false government promises," Davison said.



Davison Chiveza

Mayora Tichafa (24) of Dombotombo also echoed Chiveza's sentiments. Tsitsi Chinyangari (29) of Yellow City said that many

young girls are resorting to prostitution soon after school because they have nothing else to do.

"Most young women here are resorting to either dating married men or prostitution to earn a living because there are no employment opportunities for them when they finish school. At least the government must ensure that youth are absorbed into the formal working system soon after school to avoid social decay," said Tsitsi.

Makanaka Nyamadzawo (20) of Surrey farm said that young people in their farming community were desperate to find jobs but the opportunities are just not there but hoped the Inclusive government would bring solutions to their problems. Chipso Mukwidzwa (26) of Ruwa said young people need a better foundation to launch their careers because they are the future of the country.

Unemployment rate in Zimbabwe is hovering around 90 percent and there are no signs of immediate improvement against the backdrop of the attainment of Millennium Development Goals by 2015.



Tsitsi Chinyangari

# Soccer, netball tourney lift villager's spirits

**THE usually sleepy growth point of Rusike in Goromonzi last weekend came alight after Youth Agenda Trust organised a soccer and netball tournament that is certain to leave lasting memories on the villagers.**

The tournament dubbed "Our Constitution, Our Future" brought together youth in Rusike and in the surrounding Goromonzi area with some of the participants coming from as far as Ruwa and Surrey Farm in Marondera. The tournament was held at St Dominic's Nora Primary school in Rusike.

The event was meant bring together young people in the area who were left polarized by the political climate of June 2008 and also provide them an opportunity to reflect on the on-going constitution making

process being administered by COPAC. The tournament also gave them an opportunity to collectively map out strategies on how to participate in the remaining phases of the constitution making especially the 2<sup>nd</sup> all stakeholders' conference.

The games were filled with a lot of thrills as teams battled to outwit each other to win the coveted prizes that were on offer. The villagers were left seating on the edges following spirited performances from young people who clearly showed signs of relief away from the unpleasant realities of their daily lives.

The youth, who showed great potential lambasted government for failing to set up proper social structures that are easily accessible to young people in the rural communi-

ties. YAT programmes officer Lawrence Mashungu implored youths at the sports gala to actively participate in policy formulation and governance issues such as the constitution making process.

Mashungu also took time to remind the youth of the progress of the COPAC led process and challenged them to participate.

Fortune Nyamande also of YAT urged young people to shun violence and concentrate on nation building through engaging in constructive dialogue.

"Rural youths are always ignored by these politicians. When they plan and budget in parliament, they forget about us young people in the rural areas. We also need proper social services and recreational

facilities," said Betty Tagwira of Rusike.

Meanwhile, in the women's final, Ruwa Queens walloped Surrey Glaziers 34-11 in a match watched by almost 400 ecstatic fans. The battle for supremacy in the men's final saw Gweshe Stars edge Shangure of Rusike 4-3 on penalties, thanks to the outstanding Gweshe goalkeeper.

The tournament confirmed why Pele, the World's greatest footballer ever considers it the World's most beautiful game because it brought young people from all facets of life together.

The sports gala was supported by the Zimbabwe Europe Partnership for Democracy (ZEPAD) and the European Union.

## "We are marginalised"

**MOSES Chiyangwa (23) is a young man who had a lot of expectations in life when he was still at school in Goromonzi. He is the second born in a family of five and is also the breadwinner as well. Moses wanted to become a teacher later in life after attaining his ordinary levels and undergoing teacher training.**

At 'O' Level, Moses obtained 5 subjects and embarked on a sojourn to Harare where he stayed for close to one year until he was booted out by relatives who could not take care of him anymore. His dreams were shattered because for the whole year, he failed to find even a menial job to contend with. He had no option but to return home and face the realities of the life he knew since he was born.

Moses speaks emotionally about life in the rural areas without someone to look up to in the urban areas and says being the head of the house at such an age is a sickening reality. He says that the problem of unemployment in this country is because of the leadership that we have and say he believes a new generation of leaders will pluck people like him out of the woods.

"I think this country needs a new leader. We have had enough of this man, Morgan Tsvangirai is the symbol of the new leadership that we have been waiting for. Look at me, I am 23 but I have not had a payslip in my life, I need to work and look after my siblings," says Moses with disappointment written all over his face.

He narrates how other young people in the village are finding it difficult to make ends meet because many of them are already living with the responsibility of bringing food for their families after the death of either their parents or the breadwinners.

"We hopelessly meet at this growth point everyday but we have not seen change in our prospects for a better future. Most of my friends have left the country for South Africa and other neighboring countries through illegal entry points.

Moses says he has been working in Zambia but he could not get formal employment because he is also an illegal cross border and says the day he will obtain a passport is the happiest of his life.

"I have been working in Zambia which has enabled me to bring a few groceries for my family here but the problem is the money is little because I can't get a formal job. I am waiting for the day I will be able to obtain a passport so that I will be able to travel freely and get formal employment in the Zambia. I will be very happy if I get assistance to get this document because our own government has made it so special that poor people like us cannot afford it.

Asked on what he thinks should be done for Zimbabwe to have the kind of leadership he envisages, Moses said that he is going to get registered as a voter and will encourage other young people to follow suit and makes sure that their dreams become a reality.

He says that he could not register because he knew that the result was always predetermined but believes that winning by a higher margin would make it impossible for someone to rig and thinks massive youth participation will make this possible.

Moses also says that voter education is poor in this country saying that he is not aware how to go about it when it is not time for elections.

"I don't know how to do it, I only remember these people (ZEC) coming to our schools just before elections but that is all I know about voter registration," Says a disappointed Moses.

He rallied other young people to get smart and add their voice in the coming elections.

Voter registration in Zimbabwe is an ongoing process that is conducted by the Registrar General's office everyday of the week except weekends.



Moses Chiyangwa says Zimbabwe needs a new leader to pluck youth out of the woods

## News in Brief

### Rowdy youths disrupt Ambassador's meeting

**VIOLENT Zanu PF youths and war veterans disrupted a civic society meeting with the United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe Charles Ray in Kwekwe on Wednesday.**

Information obtained by *The New Age Voices* revealed that at least 100 Zanu PF youth stormed Kwekwe Theatre where the meeting was supposed to be held and violently dispersed the audience that had gathered there waiting for Ambassador Ray to address them.

The youths who had been bused from the nearby gold mining areas were allegedly led by the notorious Owen Ncube also known as Mudha, believed to be a close ally of Defence Minister Emmerson Mnangagwa. Youth Agenda Trust members there had to run for dear life.

One journalist from Newsday was arrested but was later released without charge. Youths who spoke to this paper on condition that they were not named said that the gang is notorious in the area and people were now afraid to conduct civic society activities for fear of being attacked.

### State agents intensify media crackdown

**STATE agents have intensified their resolve to gag journalists through arbitrary arrests that have seen journalists from the private media being detained on wide-ranging allegations.**

A Journalist who spoke to *The New Age Voices* said that they were living in fear of being dragged into detention by State agents and expressed worry over the silence of the recently enacted Zimbabwe Media Commission (ZMC) in protecting journalists from the jaws of the law enforcement agents.

"My friend, we are now afraid to report to our newsrooms for fear of being pounced on by law enforcement agents. It's like we are living in Nazi Germany, it's really frightening," said one journalist who refused to be named for obvious reasons.

In Zimbabwe complaints against journalists are supposed to be channeled through either the Zimbabwe Media Council or the Voluntary Media Council of Zimbabwe who will investigate the conduct of the journalists in question. However, more often than not, the police always take media regulation into their own hands.

Last month, *The Standard*, published by Alpha Media had its Editor Nevanji Madanhire, Human Resources executive Loud Ramakgapola and reporter Patience Nyangove arrested over a story on the case on Minister Jameson Timba from the Prime Minister's office.

Four Journalists were arrested last week in Bulawayo and detained at Ntabazinduna police station but were released without charge. The journalists are Oscar Nkala, Pindai Dube, Nqobani Ndlovu and Pameus Tusu.

Despite provisions by the Inclusive Government for media reform, the country's media landscape remains dangerous and it appears there is a much more determined operation to silence journalists than ever before.

## Youth lack voter education

**THE reason why there is massive voter apathy during elections is because there is no proper voter education on citizens by the relevant authorities youth have said.**

Billy Chawarika (27) said that youth are in the dark on the process of voter registration and the general electoral processes and said something must be done urgently to ensure that voter education is decentralized to the communities so that there is maximum youth participation.

"As long as some electoral body out there does not come to the communities, young people will remain outside the electoral processes of this country," Chawarika said.

Despite the fact that youth constitute over 50 percent of the country's population, their participation has remained low.

## FIRST TIME VOTERS



REGISTER • VOTE • TRANSFORM