



Parliamentary Monitor

www.pmtz.org

info@pmtz.org

our parliament

our voice

paramende yedu

izwi redu

Ipalamente yethu

ilizwi lethu



7 November, 2011. Issue 12

Elections Ruling Challenged

Last week the Attorney General's office appealed against a High Court order, compelling the president to call for election in three constituencies. The appeal is premised on a technicality, they are arguing that the President, the 1st respondent cannot call for elections. However, this is very wrong as while it is a legal case, there are moral principles as well as democratic principles which are at stake here. What we expected was not this predictable challenge but something deeper, something that enhances our democracy. We hope the electoral vacancies would be filled as per the constitution.

Inside this issue:

Village Observer	2
MP & ZESA BILLS	2
Virtual Gallery	3
Parly Quotes	4
Cartoons	4
@the back	4

The Bottom-line

It is up to the 'clean' MPs to push for the naming and shaming of the culprits

CDF: Time to **Name & Shame**

This is the third time since we launched the Parliamentary Monitor that we discuss the extent to which the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was used and abused. While there has been very little movement towards fully establishing what happened, there was a glimmer of hope with the news that there are some Members of Parliament who have been identified as having abused the fund. It is said about 12 MPs allegedly abused the fund. This could have been a relief but: mere figure, 12, will not help us much in identifying the culprits. It is important that the 12 be named. Voters need to know who abused the funds and they would then take the necessary steps, of either rewarding or punishing the culprit. It is up to the 'clean' MPs to push for the naming and shaming of the culprits. This will also save them as with the nameless 12, every MP is a suspect and would have a torrid time explaining issues. We have seen the loopholes that come with this noble fund. What are the lessons learnt especially with the alleged and yet to be

proven cases of abuse? If there are no lessons learnt, then we are likely to be discussing the same issue next year this time. Our proposals would be that application for the fund be professionalised. This will entail giving a detailed report say at every critical stage of the implementation of the fund. It is also important that the monitoring of the implementation of the projects be withdrawn from the executive and be given to a body that will be quick to highlight the possible gaps. Lessons can be learnt from what happens in Kenya where a similar fund is operational. The argument that there is no funding for the monitoring/audit, loses its strength when one looks at the benefits that come with effective monitoring. It is also important to look at ways of further expanding the fund so that it benefits the communities. this, we have always been arguing can easily be achieved by making sure that the amounts allocated to CDF are indexed to the national budget. This will enable the fund to grow/shrink in relation to the na-

tional budget and while the total budget could be long now, it will improve with a possible economic rebound and this will also see an increase in the amount allocated to the fund. This is one sure way of tying development to the national budget. In the absence of such indexing, there is nothing that stops the treasury from starving the constituencies. Finally, what has not been said about CDF is the cheap politicking by the MPs who claimed that they had sourced funds for projects. This is a clear sign of the manipulative nature of our politics. It is thus important to have clear information provision mechanisms so that the people know where the funds are coming from. This is one sure way to empower the communities so that they will be able to make demands with regards to allocation of the resources. If we let MPs continuing to lie that they sourced own funds, then there is no platform for the people to engage, question and make suggestion.



Disappointments and Humour—What a long 2 weeks

Disappointed! That's what I was last week when, after submitting my article on time, there was no issue of the Parliamentary Monitor. The apology came on Wednesday, blaming it on IT but I have to be honest, this was unacceptable. Not because I had submitted my piece but mainly because it amounts to taking people for granted. I have developed a serious liking for the PM (Parliamentary Monitor) and would not accept any explanation when I miss it. The Parliamentary Monitoring Trust of Zimbabwe should install a powerful anti-virus or have plan B to avoid the inconvenience. Do they have an efficient IT department? They should tell us what they have as backup. So much for the disappointment. I was reading last week, from a torn old

newspaper that the members of parliament had retreated to the majestic Victoria Falls, for the 2012 budget consultation. That is good news. However, from the vantage point of the village, I would like my local MPs (the House of Assembly rep and the Senator) to explain to me the logic of having an input on the national budget at this very late stage. The national budget is to be presented to Parly very soon and one wonders if the views collected from the holiday resort would be included and with what effect. Is it not time we change this inhibiting approach to public policy formulation and become rather more dynamic and adopt a more robust mechanism. This is an approach we have used and the results are not very pleasing and why not move to more and ongoing consultations than wait to put the icing on the cake. Then another issue that also crops is the effect of such consultations.

I believe the principle behind these consultations is to say that the MPs have a very good position to make an input as they are with the people. One thing we have realised here in the village is that we are not much aware of what a budget is and the MPs are also at bay with regards to the subject matter. The result: garbage in garbage out. And to prove my point. Let us take what Honourable Makhosini Hlongwane proposed. No Zesa Bills for honourable members. OUT OF ORDER. I do not know what got to him. How could he say something like that? The argument is that their salaries are so low that they cannot afford the erroneous bill. What about the pensioners, students and the unemployed. Maybe the honourable member had had too much of the serenity of the resort and should have driven to his constituency than utter rubbish.

NO ZESA BILLS FOR MPs??????

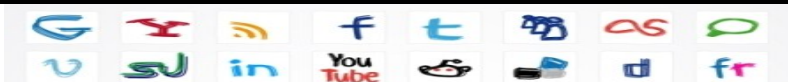
IN a clear testimony of the extravagancy and selfishness that has gripped parliamentarians, one of the members of the august house proposed that they be exempted from paying ZESA Bills. Mberengwa East Member of the House of Assembly, Makhosini Hlongwane (Zanu PF), making a contribution during the pre-budget consultative meeting held in the resort town of Victoria Falls made the proposal. Honourable Hlongwane who is one of the younger members of the legislature and in his maiden parliament said: "Can MPs have an exemption, even a par-

tial exemption from paying (for) electricity? If that is not done, most of them might suffer the embarrassment of having their power disconnected." The Members of Parliament have been accused of lining their own pockets at the expense of developmental issues. Statement by Honourable Hlongwane go to show the extent to which MPs have gone trying to line their own pockets. While the MPs may think, for one reason or the other, that they are now well paid, then they should look at what the people from their own constituencies are earning. The call to be exempt could open

floodgates as the majority of the people are earning by far less than what the MPs get. The MPs also have multiple allowances they get and they have also received some vehicles and get fuel to serve the constituencies. It is also clear that the utterances show most likely an urban dweller representing villagers. It is important to ask the honourable member how many people in his constituency have access to electricity and also how many of these are able to pay for the power. This also shows how MPs trivialise issues. They concentrate on personal not national issues.



Virtual Public Gallery



Using Social Media to Monitor Parly

PMTZ's facebook group Parliamentary Monitor is an interactive virtual public gallery where instead of being spectators, citizens raise issues and seek solutions. As part of the integration of the social media platform and this e-newsletter, we take excerpts of some of the posts on the facebook group and share with others.

Nyamutatanga Makombe The price to pay for democracy! A Zimbabwe Election Commission budget for the next elections requires upwards of US\$230 million. This is close to 5th of the national budget. Are we ready for the elections, given the price we are to pay for democracy? Are there any other alternatives, to reduce the cost/ share it? Should we wait until a time we are able to make it? Which comes first, Democracy or Economic Development? Like · · Unfollow post · 23 October at 23:14 · Addmore Makunura likes this.

Pmt Zimbabwe There is no price greater than democracy itself so resources should be made available and at the same time ensure that basic services are available 23 October at 23:44 · Like · 1

Godwell Gwavava I see a lot of sense in what Makombe says . We cannot simply say there is no price greater than democracy without putting into consideration the economic environment under which elections take place. What Makombe is saying is IS IT WISE TO USE US\$230million TO RUN AN ELECTION IN ZIMBABWE NOW....CONSIDERING THE CURRENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS. 24 October at 11:47 · Like

Daison Ngirazi Elections will help us have a culture of good governance which will ensure accountability of resources assuming you get the right people into office! So I think we have resources to have an election if the GNU places its priorities right-e.g. sell all discovery 48, account for Marange and other such mines...24 October at 12:00 · Like · 1

Desiree Chikede @Nyamatutanga you posed some very good and interesting questions. Your last question: 'Which comes first, Democracy or Economic Development' is almost similar although I am going to twist it a little bit to a 19th

Century economic problem Economists had to solve and even current students of Economics have to explore - The Diamond-Water Paradox or the Paradox of Value. The paradox asserts Water is more useful than diamonds and yet its value is underestimated. Now, considering our position as a country, what is the utility value of elections over US\$230 MILLION? Again, what is the total utility value of USD\$230 MILLION over Elections? As a country where are we when considering our Marginal Utility and Total Utility? Going back to the above paradox if say u are thirsty to the point of death and are given a choice between water and diamonds considering their astronomic value over water on the market what would you take? Now, Zimbabweans have to ask themselves the true value of the two, Elections or US\$230 MILLION. PERSONALLY I THINK WE NEED ELECTIONS FIRST NO MATTER AT WHAT COST. Elections prepares a true and workable foundation for better future Economic Development. Considering the topsy-turvy state of our current political institutions which are so devoid of accountability and sense of purpose except looting and money laundering it would be false economy to relegate that amount of money to these people for the purpose of economic development which will never happen. Spending it on elections is better value. One author once said, when you find yourself in a chronically leaking boat efforts spend on building a new boat is value effort than mending the leaking one. This is why in Engineering when a house has two many cracks and fissures the only workable solution is to destroy it and built a strong structure. In politics you destroy structures by way of elections. Its costly but its a lasting solution which can at least give hope for robust and true Economic Development not the facade we are currently witnessing . I RECKON, NEED ELECTIONS! 24 October at 12:02 · Like · 3

Daison Ngirazi Well put chikede 24 October at 16:17 · Like

Addmore Makunura Can't they raise US\$230 million from the Marange diamonds field???Or the platinum reserves all over the country. There is no price too dear to pay for democratic freedom, ingawani the comrades paid with their lives for the independence we have today, try putting a price on that sacrifice??? 24 October at 16:48 · Like · 1

Ruzvidzo G Manyika A voted Deputy Prime Minister will not fly to RSA weekly as he will have an electorate and parliament to be accountable to, right now who can stop Mutambara's wasteful expenditure except himself ? 230million is nothing compared to the high price we are paying neimba yemapoto iyi called GNU. 24 October at 17:23 via Mobile ·

Chirangano Chedu democracy first with the governance of the day u cant economically move. 24 October at 17:57 via Mobile ·

Admirre Rubaya cdes democracy is the apex of everything and bitu shld look for the money to finance these elections as long as all other reforms have been attended to so that there will be free and fair elections..as for economic development it will just flow the moment there is a democratically elected government whose mandate is not challenged by any of the participants and the world has confidence in the process culminating into one party being the ruling party.

Desiree Chikede @Rubaya: Although I don't believe in the theory of democracy u have a point. Having elections is not the same as having democracy. There is a great chasm between the two.

Feedback? info@pmtz.org



Parliament quotes

Every government is a parliament of whores. The trouble is, in a democracy, the whores are us." P. J. O'Rourke quotes (American political commentator, Journalist, Writer and Humorist, b.1947)

"We ourselves of the present age, chose our common law, and consented to the most ancient Acts of Parliament, for we lived in our ancestors 1,000 years ago, and those ancestors are still living in us" Robert Atkyns

"A Parliament is nothing less than a big meeting of more or less idle people." Walter Bagehot quotes (British political Analyst, Economist and Editor, one of the most influential journalists of the mid-Victorian period. 1826-1877)

"It wasn't long before people discovered the final horrors of letting an urchin into Parliament." Bernadette Devlin quotes (Irish Politician She was elected as the youngest member of the British House of Commons (1969-1974), b.1947)

"Some politicians hold that the only way to make a revolutionary safe is to give him a seat in Parliament."

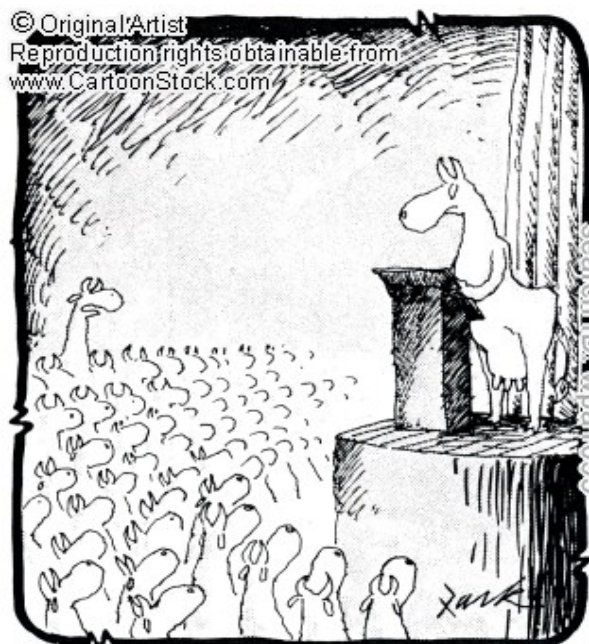
NCTNHAC.S. Lewis quotes (British Scholar and Novelist. 1898-1963)

"Parliament will train you to talk; and above all things to hear, with patience, unlimited quantities of foolish talk" Thomas Carlyle quotes (Scottish Historian and Essayist, leading figure in the Victorian era. 1795-1881)

"That a parliament, especially a Parliament with Newspaper Reporters firmly established in it, is an entity which by its very nature cannot do work, but can do talk only" Thomas Carlyle quotes (Scottish Historian and Essayist, leading figure in the Victorian era. 1795-1881)



...and @ the back!



Martin Chinyanga Da William > Parliamentary Monitor whats wrong with this platform, why is our coments being deleted. 24 October · Like · Follow post

Desiree Chikede @Martin the platform has no problem however your comments are a problem. You don't walk into a church and start to sing beer hall songs. The church congregation will throw you away like a millipede which has gotten in the house. If the church were to fail to clean such unwanted sons of the kingdom whose influence and noise has no bearing whatsoever to church business and the Kingdom message then the church would have dismally failed to live to its VALUES, AIMS, OBJECTIVES and MISSION. I applaud Parliamentary Monitor. 24 October · Unlike · Photo · Remove

Martin Chinyanga Da William SILLY, I WILL LEAVE THIS GROUP, ZANU-PF THUGZ 30 October · Like ·

Edmore Maisvoveva ibva wakanyarara 30 October · Like · Photo · Remove

Desiree Chikede @Chinyanga we shall miss you because SOME of your contributions were positive and in line with the VISION of Parl Group, I guess. However, we need to turn this platform into a professional group whereby even the HEAD OF STATE and our MPs would freely contribute and engage with all of us from the comfort of their offices. I know it sounds a far-fetched but very much possible. Now, if this noble idea turns you off like turd smell, then personally I wish you all the best wherever you go. You see, insults like ZANU PF this ZANU PF that don't help. After all, ZANU PF is party you can not wish away no matter how strong or derogatory your insults are. But by positively engaging with such a party and get to know its psych you might get a better outcome. This is exactly what this group, I guess, is trying to do here. Its not too late to change your mind!

PMT Zimbabwe promotes openness, active participation, debate, engagement and respects divergence of views. In view of this, PMT Zimbabwe encourages the posting of stories, commentaries, reports, documents and links (embedded or otherwise) on its site and facebook page. However, these postings do not in any way, shape or form, implied or otherwise, necessarily express or suggest endorsement or support of any of such posted material or parts therein. In some extreme circumstances, our monitoring team may be compelled to pull down or delete offending postings. www.pmtz.org/ / info@pmtz.org/

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/parlymonitor>

