

Ordinary Voices

Xtra - ordinary Impact

MPs have said Government should consider buying cotton to ensure farmers get meaningful returns. Do they know how the crop was funded and what other countries are doing to cushion farmers in light of falling lint prices on the international markets? It seems the crop of legislators that we have in our House of Assembly are completely divorced from what is going on. Ngatingwarei panext election - Martin Kadzere

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The Bottomline

Taking the tests will in the long run serve to encourage testing. The fight against AIDS has to be waged from all sides.

20 MPS Take HIV Test Thank You



Twenty Members of Parliament, took HIV Tests this week, in a move that will help put the issue of testing on the fore. This comes at a time when some members of the august house were making statements viewed as reversing the gains realised in the fight against the disease. We say to those who took the tests; WELL DONE!

Village Observer

We all called him Jemu. This was an obvious corruption of James. We always said about him: Anga ari mukomuredhika uyu. He was a freedom fighter. Walwa impi yenkhululeko. Until 1997, he was an ordinary villager. We were together in all our struggles for survival in the village especially after 1990. With the implementation of ESAP. Worse in 1992, with that drought which up to now is a fertile ground for research on how a country can be food secure. However, Jemu's life changed in 1997, after he received his huge payout like anyone else, who had fought for the country. We held no grudge. At least we thought it was worth it. He had all scars to show for the war. Physical and emotional scars. Which to some extent explained his temper. After the \$50 000 had fizzled out, Jemu "came back" to the village. Literally that is. He joined us every time we went for a beer drink. No one held any grudge that when his things were well, he literally abandoned the village for the city and all its woes. Then Jemu passed away in 2007. No one knows how his family fairs. I am told that he had lots of them. Compare Jemu's story to that of a liberation hero, declared a hero. His/her children can seamlessly walk in corridors of power, cutting dealing, getting favours because the father/mother was in the bush with those now powerful. Jemu's children have nothing to show, their father, brave enough to heed a call for duty left them not much. He was cheated of

his youth by fate, for a greater cause than personal development of course. The children may not trade this for a better present. This brings me to the issue of the welfare of war veterans as discussed in Parliament this week. The debate, I agreed with my antagonist Matigari, took an easy path. The familiar path we have always been subjected the media, followed the same path to say: Even Josiah Magama Tongogara's children were not entitled to compensation. This is a very simplistic way of unravelling the issue. This is what has been happening since 1997 when the war veterans got the hefty packages. We have since then been framing the issue as demand for compensation, nothing else. This is something deeper. A small story will drive my point home. A retired colonel, who is also a drinking partner, said he was given a huge suitcase in 1979 when he was in a country in the Middle East. It was for onward transmission to Rex Nhongo (Solomon Mujuru). Curiosity got the better of him and he opened the suitcase. "What if it were a parcel bomb?" It was better for him to be blown than Comrade Rex. The suitcase was full of crispy US\$. He did not take even a single dollar, forwarded the suitcase to Comrade Rex. "It was money for the

cause," said the retired colonel. His next question was: "Do you think if that opportunity knocks again, I will hand over the notes?" This summarises the lost cause mentality we are in. Calls for compensation are a result of the economic malaise and the rampant corruption by politicians. This was the case in 1997 and it is the case now. Correct the economy and we will have few of the calls for compensation. When we talk of compensation, it will make more sense if it is framed within the dilemma of Jemu, who never got the chance to walk in the corridors of power. Until the issue is framed thus and addressed through a holistic approach, the alienation of the cause will continue and there is going to be patronising of the freedom fighters. The client patronage established in 1997 and reversed within the same year will continue.

Simple Act, Great Significance

There are times when a fight against a disease is lost because there is no political will. The resources may be there. They may not be there. But without political will, any cause may be lost.

A good example is the fight against cancer. Honourable Khupe who is also the Deputy Prime Minister, has taken the fight against cancer to a higher level.

There have been many changes as a result of her commitment. One would see that before she took the fight, there was no point person, in terms of high ranking political figures, who spearheaded the

fight. Its chances of getting attention was slim. History has proven so.

The fight against HIV and AIDS in Zimbabwe has largely been a war with no clear generals on the forefront. We have an AIDS policy, yes but a policy alone would not fight the disease. We need generals in front.

The generals came this week in the form of Members of Parliament who went for testing.

This is a very noble step in that it will dispel the myths around testing. The nation would now see that this is a reality and one has to be tested even if they are OK. It is our hope that the new generals will take the issue of HIV and AIDS so seriously and make sure that

they push for policies which will benefit the population.

They should learn from Hon Khupe and take the fight to a higher plane. What is needed is a sustainable way of tackling the issue.

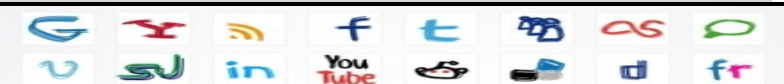
We have seen in the past, Members of Parliament taking tests and then it ends there. It serves no purpose.

What is needed is for the members of the august house to start building a strong fight against the disease, using what they have done so far.

This will feed into the already rolling programmes, supported by the AIDS policy and we will continue to score wins. What is also needed is for some of the politicians to come out in the open about their status. This will also help us in the fight against the disease. But so far, we say **THANK YOU.**



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.

Robert Tinashe Ngwende

Why the constitution is not yet completed. If COPAC was working knowing that it is a people driven constitution not to serve or be inline with the ideologies of any Political party.

Like · · Follow post · Tuesday at 23:39 via Mobile

Marko Shoko and Ricky

Munyaradzi Mukonza like this.

Mkd Mash West Province The Constitution is being modified to suite certain Political Party's agendas, but definitely not for every Zimbabwean.

Yesterday at 08:04 via Mobile · Like · 1

Robert Tinashe Ngwende And they shouldnt waste our time and debating on weather we want this or that, after drafting they get back to us and we say or no to a constitution, thus people driven

Yesterday at 08:12 via Mobile · Like

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza

Its sad that there are people who decided to take the public for a ride by undertaking some outreach exercise whose outcome will not reflect on the draft document. This is more of a political settlement document which has little to do with the people's views. That's why you always reference to the Kariba draft. This shows how public participation in Zimbabwe is taken for granted and this needs to change if we are to make any claims of democracy in our country.

22 hours ago · Like · 1

Marimo Ronald

I think that constitution was suppose

to be finished by now people speak and they gathered why is it now it looks like a negotiated document bring that document to people and let them judge whether what they say is in the draft or not thro...See more

20 hours ago · Like

Mkd Mash West Province Lets Get Zimbabwe Working Again!

13 hours ago via Mobile · Like

Paidamoyo Muzulu

what a boring PM Question Time today. The PM did not offer even one policy position but continuously told the house the cabinet would meet and decide.

Like · · Follow post · 15 hours ago

Honerable Shepherd Lenard

Mushonga It is cabinet which sets VCR policy and not pm alone

Hence Pms reference to cabinet

Sent from honorable S. Mushonga

13 hours ago via · Like

Precious Shumba Boring. What do you mean?

Nyamutatanga Makombe

Dear Parly Monitors, please assist me on this one. When does the current parliament (7th Parliament) come to an end? Is it in March or June. what is the legal/constitutional/logical/political/reasonable interpretation

Like · · Follow post · 14 June at 11:09

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza and

Ngoni Nyagomo like this.

Evans Murahwa This one is a bit

challenging boss but just think its

suppose to end in March but apa pakuda re-run

14 June at 19:45 via Mobile · Like

Itai Ncube no winning percentages are stated in the constitution on MPs election i think, so their terms started before the rerun. hence, it is no longer legitimate to have them representing us.

16 June at 21:57 via Mobile · Like

Itai Ncube that is legally and constitutionally. logically and reasonably, they should all leave office and seek new contracts.

16 June at 22:05 via Mobile · Like · 1

Itai Ncube paZIMBABWE paita nyaya

16 June at 22:21 via Mobile · Like · 1

Evans Murahwa Saka toita sei nenyika yeZimbabwe thats our country

16 June at 23:05 via Mobile · Like

Ngoni Nyagomo Zim requires powerfull prayers

Monday at 14:33 via Mobile · Like · 1

Ngoni Nyagomo But

Monday at 14:34 via Mobile · Like · 1

Itai Ncube there should be live political discussions in all districts to educate people on politics and let them know the power they have in deciding on the people to represent them esp in parliament.

Tuesday at 22:26 via Mobile · Like

Jupiter C. Punungwe Parliament end in March. There are no two ways about that. This means even presidential elections must be held in March

12 hours ago · Like

Feedback? info@pmtz.org



Make Portfolio Committees More Relevant

In a mixed democracy like Zimbabwe, parliament plays an important role especially regarding legislative duties, thus the name, legislature.

The legislature is a very important pillar of the state, separated though from the judiciary and the executive. The media has for some time been advocating that it is the fourth pillar, and this has not been granted.

Ask any political scientist and they will give you three pillars. Parliament plays an even more important role through the portfolio committees.

As PMTZ, we are very confident that the oversight role through the portfolio committees is the most important role that Parliament plays. This is for the simple reason that in most cases, take health for example, a specialist is the chairperson of the committee, thus they know what they talk about.

It is usually the case that committees call the

ministers, so that they would answer certain question and give an update on what is happening in the sector.

This has been one of the things that came with Parliamentary reforms. We expected that the two / three party system would make these committee more incisive. But an analysis of their performance so far has been pathetic and disappointing. We have not seen much save for feeding information to the media.

Nothing beyond that. We have seen this week, that they have been calling players from the private sector. And what were the result, we know what is happening, and nothing else.

It is time that the committees develop teeth and start biting. This is the only way through which they will be able to exercise an oversight role over the executive. Until then, they will be a good diary for the media and nothing else.



Madisnyongoro

and the obvious question that one asks is: Does it mean if Government buys the white gold (cotton) then Government would have returns, better returns than what cotton farmers would have got. The problem of making statements with eyes fixed on the coming elections is that we have such incoherent policy proposals. The Members of Parliament who made the suggestions get the award for Madisnyongoro. They have shown that they have gone bananas, cotton should we say?

Mps have said Government should consider buying cotton to ensure farmers get meaningful returns. This is not economics but politics

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