



Parliamentary Monitor

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our parliament

our voice

paramende yedu

izwi redu

Ipalamente yethu

ilizwi lethu



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Beating our own Drums

Wow! What a reception to Parliamentary Monitor weekly e-newsletter. We have been receiving constructive feedback from readers of the newsletter since our launch three weeks ago. There were some who asked who we are. Like we spelt it out in our launch edition, we are a Parliamentary Monitoring Trust whose mandate is to monitor the august house. By launching the newsletter, we were making sure that readers would be able to track what is happening in parliament, get to know some of the debates, ascertain what the MPs are up to doing. This is one of our mandates. We also have a mandate to monitor Portfolio Committee meetings and come up with unofficial minutes. Remember, these are not covered under Hansard. We have a special section where members to our facebook group – Parly Monitor- contribute and discuss a topic. There is so much more from this newsletter as we invite various opinions on an issue and encourage ordinary Zimbabweans to put their opinions across for a better Zimbabwe.

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The Bottom-line

It should be mandatory for each MP, drawing on the fund, to publish the expenses as this would show the people how the communities benefited.

Audit 1st Then CDF 2.0

So many has been said about the implementation of CDF and it is time that people ascertain how the funds were used in the constituencies. The figures so far are far from being inspiring making a strong case for a proper audit of the fund. Only 107 Members of Parliament are said to have submitted returns. This shows that slightly over 50% of the MPs (as those constituencies whose representatives either were fired or passed away had the senator drawing the funds on their behalf) are prepared to have the responsible ministry look into how they used the funds. This means that close to half of the representatives who drew on the fund may still be preparing / cooking the books or are hiding from the glare of accountability. It has to be mentioned that like we argued last week, CDF has own loopholes but the responsible ministry, Constitutional and Parliamentary Affairs, should not let the MPs widen these loopholes for selfish ends. It is thus important to have all MPs account for every cent they drew under CDF and this should be matched with what is on the ground before the second phase of the innovative fund is rolled out. It is expected to be rolled out under the 2012 budget which is likely to be announced in November. The Finance Minister, Tendai Biti, is likely to be faced with a paradoxical situation with regards to how much should be allocated under CDF. Whereas it was a simple case of multiplying the constituencies (210) by US\$50 000, during the first phase, the need for periodic review and audit means that another amount should also be allocated for these purposes at a time when the country has very limited

revenue streams. It was sad hearing the news that the Ministry of Constitutional and Parliamentary Affairs' audit of CDF was frozen as they had run out of cash. Another issue the minister, Eric Matenga, raised was the capacity to cover the length and breadth of the country and that as such they had been forced to prioritise projects. One way of making sure that the ministry has the capacity to cover all the constituencies is to ensure that enough resources were allocated through a national budget which may mean starving other non-critical needs. Another way of doing it is to make sure that the funds are made available say in the first quarter of next year and make sure that any project undertaken is completed by end of the first half of the year to allow proper audit, monitoring and evaluation. This should not be a mammoth task if the MPs are genuinely working with the people as they already have a priority list with them. It is important to have MPs draw down on the fund early as there are arguments by some that they received the funding late thus are still doing the books or rounding off the projects. CDF is a public fund, allocated through the national budget which is funded by the tax payers and for purposes of accountability, it is important that the MPs show how they used the funds. It should be mandatory for each MP, drawing on the fund, to publish the expenses as this would show the people how the communities benefited. This will also be the first step towards accountability as it would be easy to verify a project on paper with what actually happened in the constituency. An apparition of doubt has always stalked the fund. When announced

last year, it was greeted with hope on one side and skepticism on the other as many were not clear on the implementation modalities that were to be used. Some feared that it was to become a partisan fund, to be drawn down by members of one political party. With most of the doubts now cleared, the onus is now on the Members of Parliament to show how they used the funds. Until then, no one in his or right senses will advocate for CDF2.0. However, as a nation full of paradoxes, another issue crops up, should those who played by the book and have already submitted their returns be held back by the bad apples that are yet to do the basics? The answer should be, there has to be a balance, those playing by the book getting incentives for doing so while the bad apples should at least go through some form of rehabilitation. Then the final question? Why is the responsible ministry not publishing the names of the MPs yet to submit returns? Or better give the names of those playing by the book and as they say one can know what something is by knowing what it is not, we will know the bad apples and when they come to our constituencies we will ask them what is happening. Until then, CDF will continue to be viewed as a fund that was meant to reward the MPs. Many constituencies continue craving for real development and CDF remains a tool that can be used to achieve what has eluded the country in the last 30 years, that is people centred and driven development initiatives. This tool has to be handled carefully or it would be abused by the MPs



Making Parly Accessible – My Zim and SA Experience

By Matigari*

Do you think it is possible for, let us say a Kenyan, to walk to our Parliament and upon production of his or her passport be let in and attend a portfolio committee hearing? My personal experience, having worked as a reporter in Zimbabwe for more than a decade, is that it is easier for a camel to pass through an eye of a needle than for one to enter our parliament. However, three years ago I was surprised by the treatment that I got when I visited the South African Parliament working as a monitor for the Parliamentary Monitoring Group (an NGO based in that country.) I had been told to bring my passport and upon producing it at the security checkpoint, I was surprised by the warmth the police officer showed. She asked me if I knew where I was going and when I answered in the negative she told me to wait for someone who came within a minute to escort me to the committee room. This set me thinking on how far South Africa had gone in democratizing its institutions. The country could have its problems but in terms of parliamentary democracy, it was outpacing us. I started to think of the problems one goes through to access our parliament including the no-nonsense police officers who guard the entrances.

This is made worse by the security personnel at the public entrance who think the parliament was for the MPs and not the public. One of the security personnel at the public entrance was mad at me after, during the process of emptying my pockets, one of the MPs almost bumped into me. It was quite surprising that even after the honourable MP said sorry, the guy fumed at me asking where I had come from. I simply told him I was coming from one of the constituencies and wanted to go to the publications sections as I wanted to have a look at one of the acts. On asking him how I would find my way to the publications section, the security guy told me to follow someone else who was going to a completely different section. Another brush with security at parliament was when I wanted to cover the 2009 budget. I was asked to produce my identity

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card or passport or driver's license. When I said I had neither of the three but had then Media and Information Commission accredita-

tion card, the two guys manning the entrance said they did not recognize it. I asked why it was so since the accreditation through MIC was a result of the passing of an Act of Parliament. They said they had their own rules. I had to beg them so that they would let me in and cover a national budget. My experience with our parliament and what I went through South Africa has shown me that there are things which may not require any funding to change. What is needed is a change of mindset so that the security personnel know that they are working for a public institution which should be accessible to as many people as possible. I never had problems the 10 or so times I visited SA parliament in 2008 but I cannot say the same about our local parliament. The security guys have a tendency of trying to intimidate and cow people and the result is not many people are interested in going near them. This is something that should be changed if we are to make Parliament accessible to the people of Zimbabwe. A simple training on the duties of the security personnel would do it!

***Matigari is a Harare based journalist who for professional reasons could not use his real name for this article.**

What Freedom do MPs Have: To Be With The Party or Not To Be

Two weeks ago, the Zanu PF Mashonaland East Province suspended Tracy Mutinhiri, MP for Marondera East and Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, for working against the party. It was further announced by some in the party that the MP was going to be recalled – meaning that the Zanu PF would approach the speaker of Parliament telling him that Mutinhiri was no longer a member of the party and as such forfeits her seat. Should Zanu PF take this issue to Parly, it would make it four MPs who have been fired by their party for alleged insubordination or working against it as MDC has also done the same to the trio of Abednico Bhebhe (Nkayi South); Njabuliso Mguni (Lupane East) and Norman Mpofu (Bulilima East). It has always been argued that the first past post system of elections, where the candidate with the highest number of votes becomes a representative was less liable to manipulation compared to proportional representation. Proportional representation entails a party drawing a list



Mutinhiri

say in a province of its candidate and the total votes garnered in the province as a percentage of the possible votes will be the percentage of MPs they will have from the province. The manipulation comes in when preparing the list of candidates as the party chiefs can push one down the list meaning that their chances of getting the seat are limited. With the first past the post, a popular candidate can stand his/her ground and win both primaries and the elections proper. However, our constitution allows a party to deal with dissent in the manner that Zanu PF could be dealing with Mutinhiri or the MDC trio. If anything, the constitution allows for the whipping of MPs into line. Most of the MPs know that they are like fish out of water should they leave the party. Munyaradzi Gwisai, former MP for Highfields, was expelled by the MDC in 2003 and when he stood against the party in a by-elections he only garnered about 73 votes against more than 4 000 for the winning candidate. As such MPs will always be afraid to go against the party line. Either way, proportional representation or first past post, the MP has limited freedom.



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.

Below is an engagement , we have kept the date, number of people who like etc to show the virtual interaction

Nyamutatanga Makombe

If you meet your MP (either senator or House of Assembly) what would you tell him or her?

18 August at 23:49 via Mobile · Like · · Unsubscribe

Martin Kadzere nothing.

Friday at 00:20 via · Like

Ellen Muchineuta I wouldnt say a word coz its wasted enegy.

Friday at 01:55 via Facebook Mobile · Unlike · 3 people

Ronnie Musokeri ?@Ellen kikikest.

Friday at 05:35 via Facebook Mobile · Like

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza I will tell hem/her the problems faced by the community

Friday at 08:42 · Like

Pmt Zimbabwe ?@ellen you mean they do not listen to you or what?

Friday at 09:24 · Like

Ronnie Musokeri I think wat Ellen means is, every MP promises quiet a number of goals which wil benefit the community, and its nolonger suprising tat only 2% or Zero is achieved and ol the funds are channeled to personal use i.e starting business, partying, buying lofts, etc.

Friday at 09:56 via Facebook Mobile · Like

Nyamutatanga Makombe quite interesting hope they are listening

Friday at 10:06 · Like

Jupiter C. Punungwe If it's the MP for Chikomba I would tell him road from Chivhu to Sadza via Masasa needs to be tarred, and also the road from Featherstone to Masasa via Chambara needs to be tarred.

Friday at 10:11 · Like · 2 people

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza ?Jupiter C. Punungwe, we share the same sentiment on

that homeboy. Our road infrustracture is just bad.

Friday at 10:13 · Like

Jupiter C. Punungwe If it's the MP for DZ/Tynwald South I would tell him to press Harare city council that we need shops and council schools in Tynwald South.

Friday at 10:15 · Like

Grace Chikodzi Kaseke kuti ari kunwa mvura iri kubva kupi coz its now a week tisina mvura in Chitungwiza

Friday at 10:30 · Unlike · 2 people

Daison Ngirazi ?"Mr MP I am waiting for the next election to let you know exactly where you belong-that is managing your own household!"

Friday at 11:38 · Like · 2 people

Daison Ngirazi That will be MP for Gutu Central

Friday at 11:39 · Like

Daison Ngirazi As for all senators I will tell them of the need for them to retire!

Friday at 11:40 · Like

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza ?Daison Ngirazi, i think you are now threatening the livelihood of other people. Some people are career politicians and have no other skills.

Friday at 12:15 · Like · 1 person

Maria Mudimu I will tell him the reason why I left Chitungwiza for SA and ask him what he is doing now to make the city a better place for every1 despite economic challenges and again I will ask him what he has done so far since sworn is as the MP for Chitungwiza

Friday at 12:35 · Unlike · 1 person

Daison Ngirazi That is the system we should stop!

Friday at 12:52 via · Like

Maria Mudimu ?@Leonard, I think I

will need something like "A day in the life of Chitungwiza MP" and find out how his day is composed of, what systems are in place(if they are there at all) at his workplace, what his challenges are; then I may understand why he is failing to deliver the basic of services

Friday at 13:01 · Like

Nyamutatanga Makombe ?@ Maria, that is something very profound. I think we will use this platform to probe what they are doing, what their challenges are and also how we can assist since they are supposed to serve us!

Friday at 13:04 · Like

Maria Mudimu ?@Leonard, I agree but how many of these MP's have joined parliamentary Monitor or how many of these MP's use social media?

Friday at 13:16 · Like · 1 person

Ronnie Musokeri ?@Maria, gud qn.

Friday at 13:43 via Facebook Mobile · Like

Nyamutatanga Makombe ?@Maria the answer to the first question is that we have about six out of 270 (210 House of assembly and 60 senators though about 20 are no more) so lets say out of 250 which is a depressing statistic. We have tried to invite them to be part of the group but for some reason they do not come. which brings me to answer the second question. I was shocked to realise that most do not use social media. as such if you search for you MP u would not get them on FB which leaves to look for them in bars and hotels holding workshops with the same people not us who elect them

Friday at 13:59 · Like · 1 person

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza Maybe we need a programme to encourage our MPs to join these social media fora so that we can engage them

Friday at 14:08 · Unlike · 1 person

Ronnie Musokeri That is, if they

Feedback? info@pmtz.org



Friday at 14:21 via Facebook Mobile

· Like · 1 person

Webster Chiyangwa Ndingovaudza kuti Hon. tangokuvara nge lack of divhoupumenteni...ma pot holes mugotivharirawo nenhamba yemavotsi atakakupai pa election yakapfuura

Friday at 14:25 · Unlike · 2 people

Nyamutatanga Makombe ?@ Ricky, this is the platform, Chamisa is a member, he has posted something this week, Chindori Chininga is another contributor and so is Welshman Ncube - What about the rest should we introduce a course pa orientation on how to engage virtually? I think they are way behind in terms of technology. Some have profiles which are not even updated. Lets go a step further and ask those with friends who are MPs or politicians to add them to this group. Its a campaign which will rope in a number and we will see from ther

Friday at 16:08 via Facebook Mobile · Like

Ricky Munyaradzi Mukonza I agree with you on that, it should be the duty each and everyone of us in this group to convince or confuse our respective MPs into joining this platform. This is one of the few practical ways of holding them accountable.

Friday at 16:22 · Unlike · 1 person

Walter Dongo hapana chandinotaura coz hapana chavari-kuita ,oooooh!!yes i can tell them kuti i was going to do better if i was in yo position ,yu have run out of ideas chisiy-irai vechidiki, we need upgradad ideas, kwete kungotaura

zvanamujibha nana chimbwido, gone are the days, for real development the parliament needs young pple with good ideas

Friday at 16:28 · Like · 2 people

Nyamutatanga Makombe ?@ Walter, sound ideas, what advise would u give politicians to ensure that the young people are members of parliament, would you go for a quota system?

Friday at 16:33 via Facebook Mobile · Like · 1 person

Grace Mutandwa We must do away with all this quota nonsense. We must demand that those who want to represent us in Parliament be men and women who understand why they were voted for. People (including the young) must get in Parly on merit - they must have a clear grasp of democratic principles and understand that the nation needs to be taken forward not backwards. There must also be a cut-off age of who can represent us - no-one should go to sleep in Parly!!!!

Friday at 17:59 · Like · 1 person

Jupiter C. Punungwe The young tend to be distracted by worldly things, usually nice bums and tits. Therefore we need more middle aged people for steady mature progress and a sprinkling of youngsters (under 40) for continuity. Maybe one or two geriatrics for respectability but eish they mustn't stay too long.

Friday at 18:23 · Like

Justice Taruona i wl keep quiet. We have tried and failed in Masvingo North under Stanley Mdenge since independence. No tarred road and the clinic is stil under construction since 80s.

Friday at 18:49 via Facebook Mobile · Like

Human Rights Defender Viomak To resign

Friday at 20:10 · Like

Paul Hove Makosi ndaimuudza kti ndizvo zvatakadziringira Kangai izvozvo 16 hours ago via Facebook Mobile · Like

Feedback? info@pmtz.org

....and @ the back!

Parliamentarians out of order

Honourable dishonour

In an ironic twist of fate, after an Indonesian member of parliament helped to pass one of the strictest anti-porn laws in the nation, a photographer captured an image of him watching pornography on a mobile device. The incident occurred during a parliamentary debate concerning the construction of a new edifice to house the parliament!

Arifinto, who like Cher, only goes by one name, resigned in shame over the incident. His job had been to oversee a parliamentary commission dealing with transportation,

telecommunications and rural development.

He was an ardent and outspoken supporter of the anti-porn law. A member of the Islamic Prosperous Justice Party, he claims he had inadvertently opened an email link, which led to the unfortunate images. Alas, his viewing for more than a few uninterrupted minutes negates his explanation. "I will continue to work for my party. I'm also going to continue to better myself, by repentance,

reading the Koran and asking for guidance," Arifinito told the press.

In almost poetic irony, if he is found guilty of downloading a pornographic movie, which the picture seems to indicate, he might find himself confronted with the same strict and unforgiving anti porn law that he himself helped to create! Two animals, a goose and a gander, come to mind, even though Arifinito just as those will judge him are only human beings after all.

Here's to justice, naked political and otherwise. www.weirdasianews.com



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