

MONTHLY UPDATE

IN TRANSFORMATION
INITIATIVE

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ZIMBABWE



MAIN STORIES

Cartels and
Corruption

Digital
Authoritarianism

Coronavirus

HIGHLIGHTS

- Vice President Kembo Mohadi resigned after allegedly 'conducting' two extramarital affairs while in office. Zanu-PF Politburo sources say that leading the pack to succeed Mohadi is the party's secretary for administration, Obert Mpfu.
- According to a new report titled 'A Study of Cartel Dynamics', by South Africa's *Maverick Citizen*, a supplement of the *Daily Maverick* newspaper, Zimbabwe may have been prejudiced of US\$20 billion through corruption due to the operations of cartels that now run its politics and economy. President Emmerson Mnangagwa, who has been a public critic of illicit financial transfers, is identified as one of the cartel bosses whose patronage and protection keeps cartels operating in a wide range of commodities.
- As of 8 March 2021, Zimbabwe had registered 36 271 coronavirus cases, 1 485 deaths and 33 834 recoveries. Vice President Constantino Chiwenga was the first Zimbabwean to be vaccinated. President Mnangagwa has threatened to punish those who do not get vaccinated.
- The United States (US) has renewed its targeted sanctions against Zimbabwe citing President Mnangagwa's reluctance to roll out political and economic reforms. President Joe Biden, in a letter to Congress, said in the past year Zimbabwe's security services had committed several human rights violations.
- The European Union (EU) renewed its arms embargo and targeted asset freeze against Zimbabwe Defence Industries (ZDI), a state-owned company.
- Human Rights Watch (HRW) said in a statement that the government is evicting thousands of people from 'an indigenous minority group' from their communal land. The order affects more

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than 13 000 people of the Shangani minority as the land was being set aside for lucerne grass production.

- A HRW report chronicles how more than 20 African governments are using the Covid-19 pandemic to clamp down on freedom of the media. The report, 'Covid-19 Triggers Wave of Free Speech Abuse', finds that Zimbabwe's government is one of the worst offenders.
- A study by the African Digital Rights Network (ADRN) states that the government has employed digital technologies to control and conduct surveillance on its citizens.
- Foreign investment inflows to Zimbabwe in 2020 fell by 23.7% to US\$40.06 million compared to S\$53.47 million in 2019.
- The African Import and Export Bank (Afreximbank) agreed to help Zimbabwe raise funding to refinance \$1.4 billion in loans to the pan-African lender.
- Zimbabwe is expecting a bumper harvest that will see maize production triple to 2.8 million tons for the 2020/21 agricultural season.
- According to a survey conducted by the Confederation of Zimbabwe Industries (CZI), Zimbabwe's biggest manufacturer's representative body, capacity utilisation in 2020 increased to 47%, an 11-percentage point gain from 36.4% recorded in the prior year.
- The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) said its monetary policy committee (MPC) had been dissolved because a number of members' other appointments were deemed in conflict with their work at the bank. Minister for Finance, Mthuli Ncube has appointed a new MPC.
- Top mining investors in Zimbabwe, including JSE-listed Anglo American Platinum (Amplats), have raised the red flag over Zimbabwe's new punitive tax regime, after the RBZ hiked exporters' retention thresholds to 40% from 30%.



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