



MAIN STORIES

Violence Marks By-Election Campaigns

New Monetary Policy Measures

Zimbabwe Fails to Mend Relations with Zambia

HIGHLIGHTS

- As by-elections approach on 26 March, the launch of the Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) by Nelson Chamisa in January 2022, led to a marked escalation in state-sponsored violence against Zanu-PF opponents in February, which saw at least one CCC supporter killed and several injured. President Emmerson Mnangagwa said at one of his rallies that opposition parties would never rule the country.
- The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU's) 2021 Democracy Index ranks Zimbabwe 133 out of 165 countries (1=best; 165=worst) with a score of 2.92 (1=worst; 10=best), down from 3.16 in 2020, putting it in the category of an "Authoritarian Regime."
- According to Freedom House's Freedom in the World 2022 report, Zimbabwe is rated as "Not free" with an aggregate score of 28/100 (0=Least Free, 100=Most Free).
- The Zimbabwe Peace Project (ZPP) said in its January 2022 report, published in February 2022 that the Zimbabwe Republic Police (ZRP) reclaimed the top position on the list of human rights violators and contributed to nearly 55% of all violations.
- Teachers have been on strike demanding restoration of their pre-October 2018 salaries of about US\$540. Teachers are planning to march to Parliament on 4 March to deliver a petition as they try to force the government to improve their conditions of service.
- Zanu-PF supporters on 28 February disrupted Parliament's public hearings on the Private Voluntary Organisations (PVO) Amendment Bill.
- Zimbabwe has been ranked among the world's three countries with the most restrictive social media policies, especially during elections.

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- Family interests behind the prospective new owners of Tongaat Hulett appear to be linked to a web of companies suspected of shifting money offshore and which are seemingly entangled in a South African Revenue Service (SARS) gold scam investigation.
- According to the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) the domestic economic recovery is expected to continue albeit at a slower rate of 5.5% from 7.8% recorded in 2021.
- Annual consumer price inflation surged for the sixth straight month to 66.1% in February of 2022, from 60.6% in January.
- Merchandise exports are estimated to have increased by 28.0% to US\$6 315.2 million in 2021, from US\$4 931.9 million in 2020.
- Workers unions signed the salary deal tabled by government, which provides a 20% review on gross emoluments amongst others. Teachers' unions distanced themselves from the salary deal.
- The conflict between Russia and Ukraine has negatively affected Zimbabwe's wheat supply.
- According to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET), a poor start to the 2021/22 rainfall season and erratic rainfall are likely to result in below-average harvests by April or May.
- Zimbabwe's plan to develop one of the world's biggest platinum mines stalled after Impala Platinum asked for greater transparency on the ownership of a state-run company before considering a joint venture.
- Kuvimba Mining House (KMH) reportedly proposed to invest up to US\$1.3 billion over three years to revive Zimbabwe Iron and Steel Company (Ziscosteel), which seized operations in 2008. Cabinet approved the partnership between Ziscosteel and Kuvimba.



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- As of 2 March 2022, Zimbabwe had registered 236,871 coronavirus cases, 5,395 deaths and 226,732 recoveries. Zimbabwe ordered the re-opening of all ports of entry and government said it would stop paying salaries of staff who were unvaccinated against COVID-19.
- The RBZ again ruled out a return to using the US dollar as official currency because there “is not enough greenbacks in the country.”
- The RBZ’s Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU) froze the accounts of four companies listed on the ZSE over allegations of money laundering.
- In its latest push for foreign truck drivers to be barred from working in South Africa, the All Truck Drivers Forum (ATDF) is demanding that the Zimbabwe Exemption Permit grace period, which expires on 31 December 2022, be abolished.
- Concerned by the rise of Nelson Chamisa’s Citizens’ Coalition for Change (CCC) and its close relations with the ruling UPND, a Zanu-PF delegation visited Lusaka to address frosty diplomatic ties. However, they failed to make much progress.
- The third session of the Zimbabwe-Botswana Bi-National Commission (BNC) opened in Victoria Falls on 21 February. Mnangagwa said that that there had never been a time in the past 42 years that relations between Zimbabwe and Botswana had been better.
- The European Union (EU) removed already suspended targeted sanctions on Vice President Constantino Chiwenga; Grace Mugabe; and current army boss General Valerio Sibanda, while extending an arms embargo first imposed in 2002.
- Zanu-PF ‘declared war’ against civic society organisations (CSOs) for highlighting human rights abuses allegedly being perpetrated by Chinese investors.

