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HIGHLIGHTS

- During the Zanu-PF primary elections, several bigwigs, including ministers, fell by the wayside as voters decided to vote for locals. Many loyalists of President Emmerson Mnangagwa lost out. During a Politburo meeting on 3 April, Mnangagwa rescued some of his allies who had lost.
- Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) leader, Nelson Chamisa, said the nomination of candidates kicked off on 5 April 2023. He said the selection process was citizen-centric (citizenocratic) where a panel of independent citizens would oversee the selection of candidates.
- “Gold Mafia,” a four-part series by Al Jazeera’s Investigative Unit (I-Unit), reveals how billions of dollars’ worth of gold is smuggled every month from Zimbabwe to Dubai, with the alleged knowledge of Mnangagwa and the suspected complicity of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) and Fidelity Printers and Refiners.
- According to Freedom House’s Freedom in the World 2023 report, Zimbabwe is rated as “Not Free” with an aggregate score of 28/100 (0=Least Free, 100=Most Free).
- The US Department of State’s 2022 report on Human Right Practices, released in March 2023, states that significant human rights issues included credible reports of: unlawful or arbitrary killings, including an extrajudicial killing; and torture and cases of cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment by the government.
- On 27 March, Amnesty International released its Report 2022/23: The State of the World’s Human Rights. It states that the right to freedom of expression was threatened with the cybercrimes law used to arrest journalists.

ZIMBABWE



- According to Afrobarometer, a majority (58%) of Zimbabweans say they felt unsafe while walking in their neighbourhood at least once during the previous year. Six in 10 Zimbabweans (60%) say "most" or "all" police are corrupt. More than four in 10 Zimbabweans say the police "often" or "always" use excessive force against protesters (48%).
- Zimbabwe recorded a 45% surge in crime last year after 208 027 criminal cases were reported to the police in the last quarter of 2022, compared to 143 923 cases in the first quarter, latest Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStat) figures have shown.
- The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) decided to reduce the Bank policy rate from 150% to 140% per annum.
- Zimbabwe's annual consumer price inflation fell to a one-year low of 87.6% in March 2023, down from the prior month's 92.3%.
- The High Court ordered Finance minister Mthuli Ncube to come up with a debt contraction law that compels Treasury to seek parliamentary approval before issuing guarantees and contracting public debt.
- The government offered public sector workers, including teachers a 100% salary increase.
- Zimbabwe received US\$1,78 billion in foreign currency receipts in the first three months of this year, 31% up from the same time last year, Central Bank Governor John Mangudya said.
- Zimbabwe raised a \$193.3 million loan from Standard Bank, its Zimbabwean unit and Absa, to finance public hospitals and clinics. The deal indicates that "external banks are now extending lines of credit to Zimbabwe's government, which reflects an improvement in the country's sovereign credit risk profile," Minister Ncube said.



ZIMBABWE



- The 2023 Africa Wealth Report published by Henley & Partners says Zimbabwe stands out as a case study of the negative consequences of taking away the legal ownership rights of individuals.
- Lithium stockpiles in Zimbabwe have grown to two million tons after the country imposed an export ban on the battery material in December. Zimbabwe's mining sector is calling on Mnangagwa to review the ban which is harming local producers.
- China Energy Engineering Group tabled a proposal to build a 1 000-megawatt floating solar farm on Lake Kariba at an estimated cost of nearly US\$1 billion
- Hydrogène de France (HDF) and the Zimbabwe Electricity Transmission and Distribution Co. (ZETDC) signed Zimbabwe's first utility-scale green hydrogen power plant, with 178 GWh of expected annual electricity production.
- Mnangagwa said election observers from countries that had in the past invited Zimbabwe to their own plebiscites would be the only ones allowed to witness the country's 2023 polls.
- The President of the Senate, Mabel Chinomona, has invited Russian businessmen to participate in the development of the economy. Zimbabwe was grateful to Russia for helping fight the US-led Western sanctions, Chinomona, also said.
- The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Secretariat and the Government of Zimbabwe signed an agreement to construct a cross-border market at Chirundu border post between Zambia and Zimbabwe.

