



MAIN STORIES

The Road to Elections: The Current State of Play

Mnangagwa is Struggling

Zunaid Moti and Suspicious Deals in Zimbabwe

More Revelations on Gold Smuggling

HIGHLIGHTS

- President Emmerson Mnangagwa said on 21 April that he will proclaim an election date at the end of May.
- Afrobarometer's latest survey found that for the upcoming elections only 47% of Zimbabweans believe that the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) will conduct credible elections; and 83% say they will vote for candidates whose policies they agree with, rather than for candidates who give them gifts.
- Vice President Constantino Chiwenga said at a public gathering in Mhondoro that the upcoming elections were a fight against former white colonial rule.
- Citizens Coalition for Change (CCC) senior official and Zengeza West MP, Job Sikhala, arrested almost a year ago, was convicted of obstruction of justice in May 2023. Sikhala must pay a \$600 fine by 5 May or face an additional six months in jail. Sikhala must remain in jail even if he pays the \$600 fine because he is also on trial on separate charges of incitement to commit violence and disorderly conduct.
- On 5 April 2023, CCC national spokesperson Fadzayi Mahere was convicted and fined US\$ 500 for "communicating false statements prejudicial to the state" for posting a video on Twitter alleging that a police officer had killed a baby.
- On 28 April, opposition Transform Zimbabwe leader Jacob Ngarivhume was sentenced to four years in jail by a Harare magistrate on charges of inciting public violence in 2020.
- Mnangagwa is doling out title deeds to settlements that were previously considered illegal. Some analysts view it as a clear attempt to entice urban voters.
- The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) demanded that the Postal and Telecommunication Regulatory of Zimbabwe (POTRAZ) probe the flooding of unsolicited political short messages services by Zanu PF.

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- Chamisa was overwhelmingly selected by all provinces as the sole presidential candidate for the CCC to contest the forthcoming poll.
- Mnangagwa warned both losing and winning candidates in Zanu PF primary elections against being disloyal to the party and his leadership, vowing unspecified consequences.
- A collection of confidential papers contained in a probe by The Sentry, a US-based investigative and policy organisation, shows that a firm controlled by one of South Africa's richest tycoons, Zunaid Moti, the founder of African Chrome Fields (ACF), suspiciously moved millions of US dollars to politically connected Zimbabwean companies and powerful individuals, including Mnangagwa and Chiwenga.
- The third and fourth part of “Gold Mafia,” a four-part series by Al Jazeera’s Investigative Unit (I-Unit) alleged that Mnangagwa has a US\$240 million war chest in personal funds for general elections.
- Mnangagwa took delivery of a US\$54 million Dassault Falcon 7X presidential jet. The private jet was not budgeted for in the previous or current financial year, and its acquisition remains shrouded in mystery.
- The World Bank April 2023 Macro Poverty Outlook states that real GDP growth is estimated to have slowed to 3.4% in 2022. Economic growth is projected to slow to 2.9% in 2023.
- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said in its April 2023 World Economic Outlook (WEO), published on 11 April that the economy will grow by 2.5% in 2023.
- Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube said Zimbabwe's GDP growth prediction of 3.8% for 2023 was understated. Ncube said that the economy could grow by 6% in 2023.
- Zimbabwe's annual consumer price inflation eased to a ten-month low of 75.2% in April 2023, from 87.6% in the prior month.



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- More than 2.8 million people of working age are unemployed, with Matabeleland North having the highest number, the 2023 first quarter labour force survey report published by the Zimbabwe National Statistics Agency (ZimStat) states.
- The Reserve bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) announced on 28 April that it would be issuing gold-backed digital tokens with effect from 8 May 2023. Zimbabwe needs \$100 million of gold to kick-start its proposed bullion-backed digital currency, according to Persistence Gwanyanya, a member of the central bank's monetary policy committee.
- According to data collected by the National Statistics Agency, the use of US dollars in transactions has exceeded the use of the re-issued local currency for the first time since June 2019, accounting for 77% of transactions so far in 2023.
- According to the Fraser Institute's Annual Survey of Mining Companies 2022, published on 4 May 2023, Zimbabwe is placed in 62nd position out of 62 (1=best; 62=worst) countries and jurisdictions on the Investment Attractiveness Index (IAI). In terms of the Policy Perception Index (PPI), Zimbabwe is also placed last.
- Zimbabweans that are facing deportation from South Africa after the expiry of their special permits in June are not responding to the government's offer to register for assistance to return home voluntarily.
- Mnangagwa said the participation of European nations, the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK) at this year's Zimbabwe International Trade Fair (ZITF) is an indication that his re-engagement drive is effective. For the first time in history the EU presented its own stand at the ZITF.



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- EU ambassador to Zimbabwe Jobst von Kirchmann said Zimbabwe still needs to work towards cleaning its "negative perception" so it could gain investor confidence from businesses.
- King Mswati III of eSwatini officially opened the ZITF during a state visit to Zimbabwe. A coalition of over 80 Zimbabwean organisations blasted the government for hosting Mswati.
- The UK's All-Party Parliamentary Group on Zimbabwe demanded that London withdraw its invitation to Mnangagwa to attend the coronation of King Charles, citing severe political and human rights violations.

