



MAIN STORIES

SADC Summit

The ZiG

Relations with South
Africa

HIGHLIGHTS

- During the 44th Southern African Development President Emmerson Mnangagwa's allies set in motion manoeuvres to amend the Constitution to enable him to exceed the constitutionally mandated two terms when his tenure ends in 2028. The ruling Zanu-PF wants a resolution for the amendment of the Constitution to be made at its annual people's conference set for October.
- During the 44th Southern African Development Community (SADC) Summit held on 17 and 18 August 2024 in Harare, Mnangagwa took over the chairpersonship from Angolan President João Lourenço.
- In the lead-up to the summit, Mnangagwa's government faced international scrutiny for its crackdown on pro-democracy activists and opposition supporters over suspicions of planning demonstrations. SADC leaders avoided a confrontation with Mnangagwa on the arrests. Malawi's President Lazarus Chakwera said the SADC summit was not a platform to rein in Mnangagwa over human rights abuse.
- The absence of Zambia's President Hakainde Hichilema and the late arrival of President Cyril Ramaphosa at the summit cast some shadow on the summit. However, with Comoros' Azali Assoumani and Prithvirajsing Roopun of Mauritius the only other heads of state who did not attend, Zimbabwe prided itself on attendance. In 2017, in South Africa seven heads of state were absent.
- After the summit, Zanu-PF spokesperson Christopher Mutsvangwa said the incarcerated pro-democracy activists should be set free as there was "nothing to disturb anymore." Mary Lawlor, a UN special rapporteur on human rights, said that the disrespect shown by Mutsvangwa, who laughed and joked about such a serious matter at his press conference "is telling."

ZIMBABWE



- Vice President Constantino Chiwenga's wealth has come under scrutiny following revelations that his wife, Miniyothabo Baloyi, was defrauded of nearly US\$1 million in construction deals.
- The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ) said the month-on-month ZiG inflation stood at -0.1% and 1.4% for July and August 2024, respectively.
- On 6 August, the cabinet approved a roadmap to abandon the US dollar. Finance Minister Mthuli Ncube must still announce the details of the roadmap.
- Rand Merchant Bank (RMB) said in its report titled "Where to Invest in Africa," that Zimbabwe is ranked last out of 31 countries in terms of investment attractiveness.
- According to the African Development Bank (AfDB) Zimbabwe has an estimated annual financing gap of US\$3.7 billion which will scupper the country's target of achieving an upper-middle-income status by 2030.
- The government banned the sale of unleaded petrol in a bid to retain the National Oil Infrastructure Company's (NOIC) monopoly in the fuel industry as the state entity struggles to secure foreign currency.
- The Famine Early Warning Systems Network (FEWS NET) warned that Zimbabwe is facing a 60% maize deficit.
- More than 6.2 million rural Zimbabweans will require food aid between now and April 2025, as the country battles the worst drought in over 40 years, according to Information, Publicity and Broadcasting Services Minister Jenfan Muswere.
- On 24 August, a technical problem at the Hwange Thermal Power Station worsened electricity supply shortages, reportedly extending some power cuts to 18 hours daily.
- Zimbabwean government spokesperson, Nick Mangwana, accused South Africa's Health Minister, Aaron Motsoaledi, of xenophobia. This accusation followed Motsoaledi's comments alleging that Zimbabwe is sending its citizens across the border to access free medical treatment.



ZIMBABWE



- South African Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) leader Julius Malema called on young Zimbabweans to rise against the “tyranny of Mnangagwa.” Zanu-PF Information Secretary Chris Mutsvangwa told Malema to stick to South Africa's affairs.
- On 30 August, a large group of South Africans protested against high incidents of theft of vehicles, hi-jacking and smuggling of vehicles into Zimbabwe through the Beitbridge Border Post, blocking the Baobab Toll Gate.
- On 6 August, a group of Zimbabweans and some South Africans marched to the Zimbabwean embassy in Hatfield, Pretoria, to demand a standard price for passports that they say should be in line with other African countries. The group also called for Mnangagwa’s resignation.
- Mnangagwa arrived in Shenzhen, China, ahead of a state visit and the Forum on China-Africa cooperation (FOCAC) from 4 to 6 September.
- Mozambican President Filipe Nyusi, who was in Zimbabwe on a two-day working visit, officially opened the Zimbabwe Agricultural Show. Nyusi said Zimbabwe “is a tried and tested agricultural powerhouse.”
- The United States (US) is looking to bolster its diplomatic relations with Zimbabwe and expand trade between the two countries, US Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Pamela Tremont, stated during a courtesy call on Chiwenga.

