



Zimbabwe – Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 19 February 2014

Is there any evidence suggesting that people with no interest in politics, have been accused by Zanu-PF of being members of MDC and forced to produce their MDC membership card? Are there any accounts as to what has happened to such people?

Information on persons who are not members of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) being forced by ZANU-PF supporters to produce MDC membership cards was not found among sources available to the Research and Information Unit.

A number of sources refer to MDC members being forced to surrender their membership cards by ZANU-PF.

A Voice of America report states:

“The Morgan Tsvangirai led Movement for Democratic Change's losing parliamentary election candidate for Uzumba, Mashonaland East province, Peckson Kazingizi, is accusing village heads and Zanu PF militia of forcing his supporters to surrender their party regalia and membership cards or face unspecified action. Kazingizi said village heads were also using this tactic to entice the MDC-T supporters to ditch their party in exchange for food assistance as they will be removed from so-called 'Zanu PF sanctions lists'.” (Voice of America (14 August 2013) *Zanu PF Militia Force MDC-T Supporters to Surrender Party Cards*)

An article from The Zimbabwean, a newspaper founded by Zimbabweans in exile, states:

“MDC-T supporters here have been ordered to surrender their party cards and regalia to Zanu (PF) officials or face retribution for their political affiliation. Sources told The Zimbabwean that the directive was issued by Zanu (PF) branch Chairman for Ward 10, Charles Mugabe. The sources said that known MDC-T activists in the area had since complied with the order. Village heads, the sources said, are coordinating the process by identifying people in their villages who refused to vote with the assistance of Zanu (PF) officials in the July 31 elections.” (The Zimbabwean (14 August 2013) *Surrender regalia or else: Zanu*)

See also article from The Zimbabwean

“At risk are those who refused to vote with the assistance of ZANU PF officials during the elections. The MDC-T said it is aware of a political crackdown against its supporters by ZANU PF functionaries. A source at Harvest House said they are busy compiling reports from mostly rural areas,

where their supporters are being punished for not voting ZANU PF. The most affected provinces are Mashonaland Central, Mashonaland East, Manicaland and the Midlands South. In Uzumba, Mash East, MDC-T activists are being ordered to surrender their party cards and regalia to ZANU PF officials or face retribution for their political affiliation.” (The Zimbabwean (15 August 2013) *Increasing political retribution against MDC-T supporters*)

An article from The Zimbabwean refers to the alleged intimidation of villagers perceived as MDC supporters as follows:

“Zanu (PF) is holding a series of meetings with Uzumba villagers, threatening them against associating with the MDC-T, according to officials. The party is said to have given MDC-T supporters an ultimatum to surrender their party T-shirts and membership cards, or risk unspecified action. In the recent elections, sources told The Zimbabwean that intimidation was rife and known MDC-T supporters were forced to go to the polls as assisted voters. The Zanu (PF) chairperson for Chipfunde District, identified as Crispen Mashanga, has allegedly been coordinating the meetings with villagers, an allegation he has denied. Mashanga told The Zimbabwean: ‘I never threatened anyone. What I said was that if MDC-T supporters come to surrender, Zanu (PF) should be prepared to accept them because after all, we are all Zimbabwean’”. At a recent meeting, Mashanga allegedly directed known MDC-T supporters to surrender their party cards and shirts.” (The Zimbabwean (19 September 2013) *Zanu (PF) clampdown continues*)

An article from Zimbabwean newspaper The Standard states:

“Cephas Mashingaidze, who is Headman Chidawanyika in Mutasa Central constituency, said all MDC-T supporters must join Zanu PF, the party that won the July 31 harmonised elections. Chidawanyika made the remarks at a funeral at Nyarudzu homestead in Ward 17 last week, saying those who would fail to obey the order would also lose their farming plots. ‘This country is being ruled by President Robert Mugabe and Zanu PF. All the MDC supporters should come and surrender their party regalia and cards to me,’ he told mourners. ‘Those who do not want to listen to my commands will lose their land because, as a traditional leader, I am the custodian of this land. This land does not belong to MDC, it belongs to Zanu PF and our ancestors.’” (The Standard (13 October 2013) *Ditch MDC-T or starve, villagers told*)

This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Research and Information Unit within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

References:

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