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THE WHISTLE BLOWER



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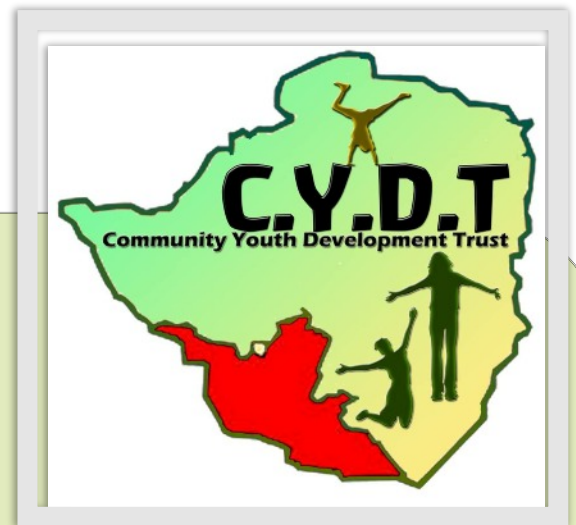
The Editor's Note

Call To Action

As we continue with our fight against corruption, I present to you our 6th edition of The Whistle-Blower Newsletter. We continue making inroads in the fight against corruption in the mining sector through our lobby and advocacy approaches that have seen leaders joining our cause. War Vets Minister Matemadanda challenge big mining companies to share mining land though claims with young people in Matabeleland South. Chief Mathema from Gwanda has also been vocal on the issue of corruption is a recently held Anti-Corruption Indaba. This is positive. We hope it wont end as mere words but these big companies will heed to the calls. We also hope that the Minister will take the call to other policy makers and ensure that government provides solutions to this issue.

However, what is sad is that our police service are the major players in this corruption game. Time and again small scale and artisanal miners have been sharing stories of how police officers are involved in corruption. This makes it difficult to fight for justice as what should be the protectors have become the perpetrators of corruption. This has worsened the mining sector which has been characterised by violence and loss of life. Therefore, the majority of young people, families and communities continue to suffer whilst mineral resources that are supposed to benefit them are exploited by the corrupt. This is why as CYDT, we have been challenging young people to stand up and fight for what is theirs. This edition covers these chilling stories about how the mining sector has become a jungle where the fittest survive, whilst the future of this nation-the young people languish in poverty.

It is us, young people who are exploited and vulnerable. It is us young people who can stop the exploitation and vulnerability through standing up for our rights and our community. Our weapon is our voice. Lets stand up and fight corruption. *Zwakala Ntanga*



Share your Story

Are you a victim of corruption? Do you suspect that someone is involved in corrupt activities? Let us cover the story. Get in touch with us through the following details:

Visit Us: No4, Rainbow Mall 1st Avenue Gwanda

E-mail: cydtmatsouth@gmail.com

Tel: +263 842821711

Twitter: @CydtMat or **Facebook:** Cydt Matsouth

Zimbabwe Republic Police

Protector or Perpetrator?

Since the launch of the anti-corruption campaign by the Community Youth Development Trust (CYDT), the Zimbabwe Republic Police Matabeleland South has been a very compatible partner in terms of raising awareness on corruption issues scourging the economy, leaving communities at the mercy of abject poverty as well as dehumanising living conditions.

As enshrined in the constitution of Zimbabwe, it is expected of the police to be very vigilant in executing their duties whilst uplifting the ethical principle of being fair and just to all citizens regardless of tribe, race, gender, societal orientation or even financial background.

However, it is now with very much doubt that the police force is still a constitutional entity, which is free from partisan politics and direct infiltration by the politically powerful government officials and even wealthy individuals who are perpetrating corruption.

This has been observed on numerous occasions, where for example, perpetrators of corruption have been awarded free passage by the police, as they repeatedly engage in massive corruption scandals that have brought about the destruction of both the public and private sectors, resulting in negative impact on human development and security.

Serving members of the police force have been implicated on numerous accusations, where they are alleged to be fully involved in perpetrating bribery and corruption especially in the mining industry.

Many infuriated small scale and artisanal miners have expressed outrage regarding police conduct pointing out that reporting corrupt officers to other police officers has mostly proved to be fruitless since no justice is being served.

Instead, the victims are made to pay fines once they arrive at the charge office to

report these corrupt crimes.

"The cops have a tendency of confiscating pure gold, detectors, unprocessed gold ore from us, some even raid and take over the operations at mine claims so as to resume activity for their own benefit.

This has made us to lose our gold and livelihoods because when you refuse to bribe, they make sure you pay a fine or risk being locked up in cells," one miner claimed.

"Small scale miners have lost their gold and other items they use to prospect for gold and efforts to bring to book these perpetrators have proved fruitless. In some instances, police have been brought before the courts facing these corruption and victimisation of miners' charges," the miner said.

Corruption is affecting young people in Gwanda as they are relying on artisanal mining as the main source of livelihood due to increased unemployment. However, they



are still far from enjoying maximum benefits from these natural resources within their communities due to corruption.



Chief Inspector Ndebele

In Gwanda, most police operations are mainly focused on townships and business centres where small scale miners enjoy themselves to booze and music when they are off duty, the most notorious for police raids are Phakama business centre, Ultra High shops and Red Cross and Njanji areas.

These arrests have been deemed by many community members as dehumanising and degrading as hoards of people are harassed each day in these so called operations on illegal miners.

The standards of living of ordinary Matabeleland South youths are further declining as they are hindered from exploiting natural resources that are embedded in their backyards.

Addressing stakeholders at a Provincial Anti-Corruption Indaba recently organised by CYDT in Gwanda, Matabeleland South provincial spokesperson, Chief Inspector Philisani Ndebele acknowledged that indeed there are corrupt officers in the police force who needed to be weeded out.

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Liberalisation of ASM key for unlocking its development potential



Artisanal and small scale mining has become a poverty alleviating strategy and potentially a significant employment generating activity in Zimbabwe, particularly in drought-prone areas like Matabeleland South province.

The sector, previously despised as a poverty driven activity, has witnessed scores of women participating in it as they eke a living and empower themselves.

Last year, artisanal small scale miners allegedly contributed to record breaking gold delivery to Fidelity Printers and Refiners of 21,7 tonnes to total gold deliveries amounting to 32.2 tonnes of gold output.

But despite being the biggest contributors, most artisanal and small scale miners are still crippled by laws and economic factors that are detrimental to the development of the sector.

The current Gold Trade Act and Mines and Mineral Act criminalise the miners to be found in possession of gold.

Government's hand in the operation of mines up until the marketing of minerals is causing massive distortions and discontent miners.

They feel they are being extorted of their gold ore through the Gold Trade Act which is unscrupulously used by government officials to corruptly extort gold ore from the artisanal and small scale miners.

Memory Ngwenya, a miner from Maphisa says it was disheartening to note that government was legalising the trading of gold through gold mobilisation process targeting small scale and artisanal miners.

This is because after the gold mobilisation process the miners were subjected to the criminalisation of possession of gold under the Gold Trade Act.

The miners feel that the government is not sincere in liberalization of the artisanal and small scale mining sector.

"If I have gold, the government allows me to sell gold to the Fidelity Printers & Refiners agents and as an unregistered artisanal or small scale miner why would they criminalise my possession of gold ore through the Gold Trade Act at the same time?

That shows lack of sincerity and creates room for corruption within the governance of gold wealth," Ngwenya said.

For miners like Proffesor Ndebele, artisanal and small scale mining is a source of livelihood and the current energy crisis is detrimental to the development of gold sector.

"The energy crisis that is prevalent is affecting our production as miners. Queues are the order of the day in the mining stamp mills, waiting for processing of the gold ore. This in turn has led to theft of our ore in the milling sites," said Ndebele.

Many miners further postulate that the government's hand in the operation of mines up until the marketing of minerals has caused massive distortions and discontent as it has led to politicization of operations in the mines.

The Central Bank manages the allocation of export proceeds which come in the form of foreign currency. This means the sector is retaining about 55 percent in foreign currency.

However, miners say lower buying rates from agents are creating avenues for miners to sell their gold in the black market, a practice fuelling corruption in their sector.

Mining Violence On The Rise

There is documented evidence of women being victims of various abuses in the mining sector. Women have suffered physical and emotional violence. They have also been subjected to structural violence where they are denied their rights to own mining claims and benefit from the sector like any other citizen. Lets come together and fight corruption so that women and youth can benefit from their own community resources



The artisanal and small scale mining sector has been characterised by violence and gang wars, with the recent case being the alleged murder of Dumiso Dube (34), a promising young man from Matobo District.

The deceased was from Maqina village under Chief Bakwazi and it is reported that he is a victim of gold dispute from his mining partners.

According to information received by CYDT, Dube suffered injuries on 18 August 2019 around 2200 hours after being assaulted by his colleagues at Mwewe Night Club, where he was drinking.

It is alleged that he was assaulted by six miners in dispute involving unequal sharing of gold proceeds as they accused him of stashing some of it for himself.

The assailants were reported as Mihliyifani Ndlovu (18), Lungisani Ncube (30), Thulani Hadebe (23), Mthuthusi Ncube (31), Lyton Dube (24), Thamsanqa Clayton Dube (23).

It is alleged that they brutally attacked the deceased with clenched fists and booted feet until he fell unconscious.

They left him unconscious after the club owners decided to close the club due to violence. He was found the following day by passers-by lying unconsciously about half a kilometre from the night club on a foot path leading to his homestead.

He was ferried to Kezi Clinic and later transferred to Maphisa District hospital where he died upon admission.

Although the post mortem was yet to be conducted, a source revealed that Dube's body had sustained severe injuries leading to speculation that these were the causes of his death.

A full scale investigation was launched resulting in the arrest of the six accused. The violent nature and history of small scale miners has made it one of the most daring if not the most frightening trade anyone can venture into.

Such cases of disputes leading to death have been on the increase in Matabeleland South Province with young people being the victims as they constitute the highest percentage in the sector.

Debates are that the sector is not well regulated as people from other provinces swam the province in search of gold. This has resulted in gang wars as locals would be trying to protect the local resources.

Interactions with these miners reveal that such incidences are usually sponsored by power elite individuals who are either politicians or business people with the aim of taking over new gold discoveries.

The violent nature of this sector has meant that women are marginalised and hence are not benefiting from their own resources.

Zimbabwe Republic Police Protector or Perpetrator?

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Inspector Ndebele emphasised the role of the community in the fight against corruption through monitoring and reporting cases of corruption.

"The police works hand in hand with the community and the community is also faced with the responsibility to report any misconduct by some of our officers in these areas so that they are investigated and brought to book," Ndebele said, further warning the public to refuse to pay bribes or partake in corrupt activities even with the police.

"The reason why it challenging to tackle these problems is that some community members are benefiting from corruption hence most of corrupt cases have been kept out of the light, the community must desist from this practice and come forward with information for investigation," he declared.

Ndebele also said that the officers are recruited from the community hence the community is supposed to ensure that the officers desist from conduct that is erosive to moral and ethical values of society.

"These officers are your children from your communities, so you have to report them

‘Give Youth Mining Claims’-War vets



Vumbachikwe is one of the biggest mining companies in the Matabeleland South Province.

Young people in Matabeleland South province have, for years, battled exclusion from mineral benefaction that is embedded in their region.

Despite youth empowerment promises from government, the participation of young people in the economy and governance of resources and public services is still limited.

Youth participation is recognised by global and development programme such as the Sustainable Development Goals whose message has been Leave No One Behind.

Further, the African Union's Agenda 2063 acknowledges that women and youths should be key drivers of development if Africa is to make progress.

In a meeting held at Gwanda District Club in August this year, ZANU-PF political commissar Victor Matemadanda advocated the big mining companies of Matabeleland South to share some of the unutilized mining claims with youths and women in the province in order for them to get empowered.

Matemadanda said the big mines in the province comprising of Blanket Mine, Vumbachikwe Mine among other companies, were being requested to give other tributes to the youths and women.

He said this in the final phase at a gathering with ex-detainees, war veterans, women, and youths among others. Matemadanda suggested that they want their speculation but they should not deny their children and

women a chance to get profit from the possessions they fought to acquire. He also said they do not want to hear about mines that are not explored.

“You have beacons but understand that we also want to work. In Matabeleland South Province there are various gold mines, most of them being held by Blanket and Vumbachikwe Mining companies.

Therefore, these mining companies are requested to give other tributes to Matabeleland South youths, and women in Matabeleland South,” said Matemadanda.

“You were holding on to those claims before 1980, we are asking you at the same time telling you to allocate some of those mining claims since you have them and the titles where as other people are hungry out there. You should not deny them in those mines in the country they have liberated,” added Matemadanda.

“We want their investment but they should not deny our children and women a chance to benefit from the resources. We do not want to hear about mines that are not being utilized. We are not going to respect them forever knowing that it will not benefit our people.”

Matemadanda raised concern over corruption by the politicians, mining officials in the province and other culprits who abuse their power to facilitate corrupt deals in the mining sector while they enjoy impunity of the law because of their perceived high social esteem in the society.

Minister of Provincial Affairs for Matabeleland South Province, Abednico Ncube was urged to assist young people and women to acquire mining claims from big companies.

The minister was also assigned to inform Mines and Mining Development minister Winston Chitando about corruption in the mining sector in the region.

“What transpired in Matabeleland North is overdue for Matabeleland South. Officials in the mining sector are corrupt. Those who cannot serve this government or who are tired and cannot deliver their services efficiently in the public must go,” charged Matemadanda.

“Minister Abednico Ncube can you please engage Mines and Mining Development Minister Winston Chitando as Mat South is having corruption in mines and even though these cases are reported none is arrested,” added Matemadanda.

Matemadanda said Farvick Mine was not submitting to Fidelity Printers being the reason why artisanal miners are producing much gold ore than the big mining companies.

Consequently, mining claims must be given to artisanal and small scale miners as they are the chief suppliers of gold to Fidelity Printers.

It is unfortunate that despite the artisanal and small scale miners supplying more gold to fidelity, the sector is still battling the archaic laws like the Gold Trade Act and other statutes which criminalize them.

Government Challenged To Curb Corruption



Chief Mathema



Inspector Ndebele



Chombo-MP

Government's efforts towards reforming mining laws have been at a snail's pace despite increased calls for urgent attention to this so as to curb corruption.

The Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Mines and Mining Development is working on improving the archaic mining laws and policy inconsistencies that has been fuelling corruption and aiding the plundering of mineral resources in the extractive industry.

Speaking during the Matabeleland South Provincial Anti-Corruption Indaba, Miriam Chombo representing the Portfolio Committee on Mines and Mining development admitted that the Mines and Mineral Act and the Gold Act were outdated.

She said government was currently working on drafting a Mines and Minerals Bill which would address grey areas in the sector, such as titles, land degradation and the use it or lose it policy.

"Currently, the government through the Ministry of Mines Development is drafting a Mines and Minerals Bill to address grey areas

and close the corruption gap in the mining sector. This Bill brings with it the computerized cadastre system which will go a long way in solving disputes and corruption tendencies currently prevailing," she said.

"Mining disputes have become a common feature of corruption mainly affecting the small scale mining sector.

It also seeks to close the gap slowing down growth in the mining sector because more recent practical developments in the mining sector are not incorporated in the current existing laws," she said.

The current Mines and Minerals Act and the Gold Trade Act which has been criminalizing most scale miners to be in possession of gold has made it difficult for the miners to operate as they would not be in line with the practices on the ground, as such driving most of the miners to find solace in the black market.

Chombo said in most parts of West Africa, artisanal and small scale miners were better empowered due to a number of deliberate

policy positions adopted by their governments.

Therefore, as Parliament they were focused on combating corruption in the mining sector and ensuring the protection of small scale and artisanal miners through learning from West Africa.

"There is need for government to willingly release ground to miners through the adoption of the 'willing buyer willing seller principle' as a support mechanism for small scale miners," she said.

Speaking at the same event, Chief Mathema from Gwanda said there was need for traditional leaders to be involved in the allocation of mining claims.

"There is monopolisation of claims by big mining companies who are also bent on facilitating corrupt mining deals that have closed out the space for locals to benefit from their mining resources.

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STOP CORRUPTION

To report corruption or if you are suspecting corruption feel free to contact the Anti-Corruption Commission on the Toll Free Number: 08010101

Remember This?



Government Challenged To Curb Corruption

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Many at times what we suggest as chiefs standing for the communities have been swept under the carpet.

We need a bottom up approach which value community consultancy, participation and benefaction in signing of mining deals and drafting of mining laws," said Chief Mathema.

"We have mega deals that are being signed in the mining sector but who is benefiting, are we benefiting?" further probed Chief Mathema.

The Chief criticized politicians who were doubling in mining activities and using their influence to control the mining sector.

"What are you politicians doing in the mining sector engaging in corrupt activities for your personal gain and sustaining political mileage," challenged the Chief.

The echoes by Chief Mathema come at a time when high profile politicians were implicated in meddling in corrupt activities, forcibly taking and facilitating grabbing of mining claims from powerless small scale miners using their political muscles and political impunity.

The Matebeleland South province police spokesperson chief inspector Philisani Ndebele unpacked the role of police in fighting corruption in the mining sector.

Inspector Ndebele encouraged members of the public to desist from engaging in corrupt activities as well as reporting incidences of corruption regardless of the person's position in the community as no one is above law.

Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission (ZACC) official Dr Onesmus Nyaude gave a run down on the role of ZACC in addressing corruption in the mining sector.

He said as ZACC they have been granted arresting powers as such they would use these powers to fight corruption and bring perpetrators to book.