

# The Politics of State Capture in Zimbabwe

Teddy Mungwari

*PhD, Senior Lecturer, Centre for Language & Communication Studies, Chinhoyi University of Technology, Zimbabwe*

**Abstract:**-This article demonstrates that Zimbabwe experiences serious problems of state capture. State capture began to be an issue in 2017 when factionalism between Team Lacoste and Generation 40(G40) reached its climax. However, state capture became topical in Zimbabwe in October 2018 following Reserve Bank Governor's (RBZ) announcement of interventions through the 2018 mid-term monetary policy statement, particularly the 2% tax; which immediately triggered price increases and fuel crisis. The research question addressed in this article is: What is state capture and how is it manifested in Zimbabwe? Firstly, it systematically unpacks the phenomenon as a type of business-state relationship distinct from influence and corruption and outlines its types, features and essence. Secondly, the article explores state capture in contemporary Zimbabwe- focusing on the mining, banking, energy (fuel), agricultural sectors, government ministries (legislature, state media and judiciary), the security sector and Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission. The methodology and theoretical framework adopted in this study involves qualitative political economy approach. A combination of current research reports, analysis of newspaper articles and social media to illuminate the phenomenon and its manifestations. The article contributes to existing knowledge by not only clarifying a concept conflated with corruption but also analyzing the manifestations of state capture in Zimbabwe.

**Key Words:** State capture, corruption, media, manifestations, factionalism

## I. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of state capture was identified at the dawn of the new millennium (Hellman, Jones & Kaufmann, 2000a) as an aberration in governance. State capture became topical in Zimbabwean political discourse in 2017. There was power struggle to succeed former President Robert Mugabe within ZANU PF between two factions, Team Lacoste (which backed Mnangagwa) and G40 (which supported former First Lady, Grace Mugabe). The then Higher Education Minister, Jonathan Moyo, Savior Kasukuwere then National Political Commissar and Minister of Local Government and Patrick Zhuwau then Minister of Youth, backed Grace Mugabe to succeed Robert Mugabe. In a politburo meeting held on 19 July 2017, Jonathan Moyo accused then Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa that he had captured key State institutions as part of a sinister scheme to become the ZANU PF (Presidential) candidate. Moyo claimed institutions such as the Zimbabwe Anti-Corruption Commission had been captured by Mnangagwa and his acolytes and were now being used against those opposed to his 'secessionist plot' (*News Day*, 21 July 2018). Moyo also claimed Mnangagwa had captured the judiciary and raised the issue of the late former Chief Justice Godfrey Chidyausiku,

arguing Mnangagwa had tried unsuccessfully to force him into early retirement.

However, Vice –President Mnangagwa (then), responded to “State capture” allegations in a Politburo meeting on 13 October 2017 in which he denied all the accusations. Mnangagwa accused G40 of secretly conniving to whittle Mugabe’s powers by challenging ZANU PF’s one centre of power principle and leaking confidential information to the Press (*News Day*, 13 October 2017).

This article argues that Team Lacoste had also captured State media (see Mungwari, 2018 article titled ‘Post Mugabe coup: Mnangagwa administration challenges’).

Considering the foregoing assertions, all state controlled media deliberately did not report nor cover both Jonathan Moyo presentation in July and Mnangagwa’s presentation in October. However, 1<sup>st</sup> TV covered Jonathan Moyo’s presentation to the ZANU PF Politburo meeting on July 19 2017, detailing his allegations against Emmerson Mnangagwa. It is important to note that 1<sup>st</sup> TV also produced a video presentation which revealed recordings of journalists from Zimpapers stating that they were working to further VP Mnangagwa’s Succession Agenda and that they worked closely with General Chiwenga. 1<sup>st</sup> TV also revealed full details of an interview given by VP Mnangagwa to a British Magazine newspaper, *The New statesman*, that led to the publication of an article titled “The Last Days of Mugabe” <https://www.facebook.com/1stTV/videos/watch-part-onevideo-zanu-pf-politburo-presentation-prof-j/1133733216760161/>

In view of the foregoing revelations, this article argues that the November 2017 Coup which removed President Robert Mugabe from power was not surprising. Jonathan Moyo’s allegation that Mnangagwa and Team Lacoste were plotting a coup was confirmed with events in November 2017 which subsequently led to Mnangagwa taking over power from Mugabe through a coup (see Mungwari, *ibid*).

## II. CONCEPTUALIZING STATE CAPTURE

EISA (2018) asserts that modern usage of the terminology of state capture is quite specific. It is about efforts by very particular private concerns, individuals even – not business in general or broad sectorial groups – to shape the regulatory domain that affects their commercial operations. These interests seek to shape or reshape financial rules or public policy in both legal and illegal ways. This article discusses a range of different groups that may be engaged in state capture

undertakings and identifies the features of political settings that are especially vulnerable to state capture. Successful action against state capture may require high levels of civic mobilization. Since 2000 the term 'state capture' has been employed in a precise fashion to distinguish a particular form of political corruption.

In its colloquial usage state capture simply refers to a situation in which an identifiable group of interests – leaders of a political party or members of a particular social group – secure control over the government and the public administration in such a way that their predominance is secure and unlikely to be challenged in the foreseeable future (see, for example, Edwards, 2017). Used more pejoratively, and closer to the contemporary way in which the term is often employed, state capture implies that the state has lost its social autonomy and is unable to function in such a way as to serve broad social interests or to make decisions that might achieve long-term developmental goals. It is unable to do these things because it has become harnessed to a very particular and especially narrow set of private interests (EISA, 2018). From 2000 a group of researchers at the World Bank began using the terminology of state capture to refer to efforts by business groups – firms or corporations – to determine or shape the 'basic rules of the game', that is. Laws and regulations that might have an impact on their operations – investment codes, for example. In other words, essentially, in this view, state capture is regulatory capture. Aspirant state captors might try to achieve such a goal by bribing parliamentarians, or by inducing political parties, through donations, to develop policies aligned with their needs (Lodge, cited in EISA, 2018, Bennich-Bjorkman, 2002: 346). In captured state businesses have undue influence over the decisions of public officials; state capture allows large economic interests to distort the legal framework and policy-making process (Chetwynd, Chetwynd and Spector, 2003:9).

The original theory of state capture (see lodge, Southall and Stoyanov chapters in EISA, 2018) suggests that the principal agents are corporations external to the state. Lodge suggests, however, that there is another kind of 'captor' that develops in dominant-party systems: political party business interests. As captors are concerned with the formulation or interpretation of laws, rules or regulations, the legislature, the executive, the judiciary and regulatory institutions are commonly targeted. Within the executive arm of government, critical ministries such as finance, public enterprises and natural resources are particularly appealing to illicit private interests, but they are not the only targets.

### III. ORIGIN OF STATE CAPTURE AND DEFINITION

The phenomenon of state capture was first observed by Hellman et al. (2000a) who conducted the first Business Environment and Enterprise Performance Survey in 1999 on behalf of the World Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. Hellman and colleagues used the term 'State Capture' to describe a new dimension

corruption had taken in East European countries (Richer n.d.:2) cited in Dassah, (2018), moving from planned to market economy. 'State capture' was coined and used in referring to the existence of three grand corruption aspects among political and business elites in the former communist countries of Eastern Europe, which involved 'payment of bribes to gain contracts but also the purchase of political influence' (Hall, 2012:4). The phenomenon derives from the notion of regulator capture (Wren –Lewis, 2011:148), which is about a problematic relationship between the regulator and 'special interests', the regulated. Similarly, state capture is about a problematic relationship between politics and business in the context of transition and rooted in the market for influence (Hellman, n.d.:n.p.).

Dassah (2018) argues that state capture is an aberration in governance. The literature is replete with a plethora of definitions, one of the earliest being: 'efforts of firms to shape the laws, politics, and regulations of the state to their own advantage by providing illicit private gains to public officials' (Hellman & Kaufmann, 2001:1). Hellman, et al.(2000c:4) provide the following definition: 'the propensity of firms to shape the underlying rules of the game by "purchasing" decrees, legislation, and influence', or 'efforts of firms to shape and influence the underlying rules of the game (i.e. legislation, laws, rules, and decrees) through private payments to public officials'. These definitions focus on firms, but omit an important agent or captor actor (individuals in private official capacity) and critical means of capture (funding of political activities). In the Zimbabwe context, state capture engulfs a web of military and business moguls and the presidium. Consequently, the operating definition of state capture (Transparency International, 2014) in this article is:

---one of the most pervasive form of corruption, where companies, institutions or powerful individuals use corruption such as the buying of laws, amendments, decrees or sentences, as well as illegal contributions to political parties and candidates, to influence and shape a country's policy, legal environment and economy to their own interests (p.1).

By seizing of laws to the advantage of corporate business via influential political links in the parliament and government (Pestic, 2007:1), the legal system is rendered the opposite of what it should be as it serves illegal interests in legal form. According to Zimbabwe Democracy Institute (ZDI) Report (2017), four major state institutions that have been targeted and captured by military interests and utilized to institutionalize, dispose military patronage networks and buttress long –lasting control of the state by securocrats include: state controlled media, the electoral process, the judiciary and the legislature. These institutions have been consistently populated with security sector recruits and Trojan horses. These have maintained the continued

dominance of the security sector in politico-economic affairs in Zimbabwe.

'Capture' is a military metaphor invested with connotation of force used by individuals or business entities to hold the state to ransom, but the capture process is, in fact, informal, subtle, covert or surreptitious in nature not overt or characterized by violence (Dassah, 2018:3). Adams et al. (2007:1) note that although 'capture' may conjure images of physical capture, the process is more of capturing 'hearts, minds and emotions'. It is the process of making laws, policies and regulations individuals or business entities seek to influence, not implementation of existing laws. As such, state capture involves subversion of public interest. In state capture situations, Dassah (2018) argues, the nature of the business entity-state relationship is illicit, which implies that laws and regulations made or actions taken are products of corrupt acts or transactions. Consequently, legality becomes a function of illegality. Although captors are typically private sector individuals or business entities, public officials themselves are capable of capturing state institutions. An example is Vladimiro Montesinos Lenin, who was head of Peru's intelligence services under President Alberto Fujimori (1990-2000). He first captured the media and key agencies such as the judiciary and military (Kupferschmidt, 2009:14). Therefore, he used the military as an instrument to facilitate arms and narcotics trafficking and the tax authority to finance illicit activities and compel unwilling individuals to cooperate. Private gain by individuals or business entities at the expense of the public, and in fact, subversion of public interest is the primary motive of state capture. It should be noted that in Zimbabwe the security sector, particularly the military and intelligence services, captured the ruling party, Zimbabwe African National Union Patriotic Front (ZANU PF), and subsequently there is military capture of virtually every sector in Zimbabwe, as this article will demonstrate. State capture in Zimbabwe is a complex web.

In Derek Matyszak's case study of Zimbabwe (*State Capture in Africa – Old Threats, New Packaging*, 2018, Chapter 6), the concept of state capture is used to refer to a situation in which electoral arrangements are manipulated or even intentionally conceived to ensure the predominance of a particular party, in this case; ZANU PF. Citing a particularly severe case of state-party conflation, Matyszak details how the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front manufactured its victory in the election battle for a parliamentary seat in the Mount Pleasant constituency in Zimbabwe's 2013 elections. In order to capture the seat, a disproportionately powerful executive was able to manipulate three institutions of the state machinery – the security sector, the election management body and the judiciary, all of which should, ideally, be independent.

#### IV. STATE CAPTURE THEORY AND IDEOLOGIES

Stigler's (1971) 'Theory of Economic Regulation', referred to as 'capture theory', attributes difficulty in implementing

socio-economic development in former socialist countries to negative short-term welfare effects of economic reforms. Hellman et al. (2000b) overturned this view by arguing that criminal capture of state organs and policy formulation itself by politico-economic elite networks presents the main obstacle to progressive societal reorganization, thereby establishing current state capture.

Dassah (2018) asserts that the notion of state capture is ideologically contested. There are three schools of thought, the neo-liberal, neo-institutional economics and Marxist, each with different notions of the state and economic, political and ideological understanding of state capture. The neo-liberal perspective of state capture, which currently holds sway, is propagated by the World Bank and other international financial institutions. For neo-liberals, state capture occurs because policy makers are inherently corrupt and use state power for rent allocation and patronage (Robson & Hadiz, 2004:4). Neo-liberals believe in self-regulation, the economic assumption underpinning their view of state capture being that the forces of demand and supply are better determinants of interest and exchange rates, ensuring availability of capital through savings. This article argues that state capture assumes different sophisticated forms from one country to another. As pointed out earlier, state capture in Zimbabwe largely manifests through military, influential top government officials, executive members in parastatals, and many sectors of economy as will be shown later in this article.

New institutional economists believe in intervention of state institutions to address market failure and are opposed to neo-liberals. For them, institutions ensure efficiency and play the important role of reducing transactions costs (Srociji, 2005:14). State capture occurs when institutions are weak or not independent enough to enforce rules. Based on this view, there are two types of capture. The first is that orchestrated by lobby and private sector groups or distributed coalitions motivated by their own interests to manipulate policy in order to increase their share of national income (Haggard, 1985:509). The second and more extreme type of state capture sees policymakers and rent seekers groups as having the common aim extracting as much as they can from society, while maintaining their power base (Bardhan, 2001:255, Evans, 1985).

The third school of thought, Marxist, believe the state is always under the control of a dominant group, class or coalition, that is, the state is viewed as serving the interests of groups, classes or coalitions. Effectively then, the state is under perpetual capture (Srociji, 2005:16). There are two Marxists view on state capture. The Gramscians see the state as a force for cohesion, not an instrument of domination, while other Marxists view the state as an instrument in the hands of a dominant group, especially where capitalists hold political power. For them, state capture occurs because of an ongoing struggle between different capitalists to influence economic and social policy within state institutions. This

article concurs with the second view – in the case of Zimbabwe there is an ongoing struggle between factions within the ruling party at any given period. State capture in Zimbabwe, therefore, also manifests through factional battles within ZANU PF.

Dassah (2018) distinguished state capture from related terms such as corruption and influence. State capture is an aspect of systematic political corruption implicated in causing poor governance (Sitorus, 2011:46) in transitional democracies, with the potential of aggravating developmental problems.

#### *Corruption*

According to Sitorus (2011:47), the key distinction between corruption and state capture is that most types of corruption aim to subvert the implementation of laws, rules and regulations through acts of bribery, while state capture involves corrupt attempts to influence the way laws, rules and regulations are formed, making it synonymous with legalized corruption. Although state corruption and state capture are linked, the latter is not simply widespread corruption but essentially ‘a distinct network structure in which corrupt actors cluster around certain state organs and functions’ (Fazekas & Toth, 2014:3). The description aptly fits the nature of state capture in Zimbabwe in many ways, particularly cartels in RBZ and fuel scandals.

#### *Types of state capture*

According to Sitorus (2011:47), two types can be distinguished. The first relates to distinguishing among types of institutions that can be captured, which include legislative, executive, judicial, regulatory agencies and public works departments or ministries. In Zimbabwe, all these institutions are captured among others. Richter (n.d:8) states that although all types of state institutions are susceptible to capture by private actors, ‘the most important ones are where political decisions are made’ such as the legislature and the executive.

Dassah (2018) reckon that the second distinction has to do with types of captors seeking to capture the state, which include large private firms, political leaders, high-ranking officials or interest groups. This article further notes that Zimbabwe state capture includes state security sectors. Fazekas & Toth, 2014:5 present a third type by distinguishing between the capture of a single organization or government department (local capture) and capture of all organizations or government departments (global capture). Local capture occurs when ‘only some public and private organizations enter into a capture relationship with their “islands” relatively autonomous’ (Fazekas & Toth, 2014:5). In global capture, ‘captured organizations are linked to each other and a national level elite controls them’ (Fazekas & Toth, 2014:3). All these apply to the Zimbabwean situation where state capture is sophisticated and widespread.

#### *Features and essence of state capture*

Dassah (2018) outlines some features of state capture. Firstly, individuals or business entities with an agenda to capture state institutions or people in positions of power tend to focus on the political level of elected and unelected officials as captives because they are responsible for making policy decisions and laws... Secondly, it is network based like corruption, which thrives on social and political networks through clientelism and patronage (Richter, n.d.:8).

Hall (2012:4) outlines three key features of state capture, namely involvement of systematic networks and individuals; privatization and announcing of government contracts as part of the business-politicians relations.

From the literature review above, the main targets of capture are formal state institutions such as parliament, legislature, judiciary, regulatory bodies, high-ranking public officials and politicians who play key roles in the formation of laws, policies and regulations. Means of state capture include illicit, non-transparent, formal or informal behaviour such as bribery or private payments.

#### *Who is doing the capturing and what is being captured?*

World Bank’s usage suggests that the captors are firms or company directors or particular business groups. What they seek to ‘capture’ is decisive influence over the regulatory framework that governs the way they operate in general, or the nature of their interaction with state departments, with respect to procurement in particular or with regard to entry into particular fields of business that may be restricted by an investment code (EISA, 2018). State captors might be older sectional interests, though, not just commercial actors, ethnic elite, for example (see Edwards, 2017). Studies of state ‘militarization’ that were fashionable in the 1970s and 1980s were, in effect, focusing on the capture of state power by a particular subset of state functionaries; as it can be argued public officials themselves can capture the state. State capture can happen in different institutions: captors may target the legislature, the executives, the judiciary or regulatory institutions, or different ministries – the ministry of finance or the treasury may be an especial focus of would-be captor effort, as would be the Central Bank. Because state capture is often about the regulatory framework (or its application) it tends to be focused on those institutions that are most concerned with formulating or interpreting the laws, rules or regulations that govern corporate concerns and which determine their role in public investment or their relationships with public entities.

## V. STATE CAPTURE SITUATION IN ZIMBABWE

### *Background*

State capture is defined by Dassah (2018) as the systematic takeover of state institutions by presidential allies and the resulting exploitation of institutions by presidential benefactors for commercial advantage and profit. A more

detailed explanation is that state capture is corruption that enables powerful individuals, institutions, companies or groups to influence a nation's policies, legal environment and economy to benefit their private interests, often with negative consequences for economic development, regulatory quality and the provision of public services (Swilling & Chipkin 2018). The above explanation fits Zimbabwean situation in every sense of it as the article demonstrates later.

The argument in this article is that state capture in Zimbabwe is rooted in security sector involvement in politico-economic affairs. Zimbabwe Democracy Institute (2017) argues that security sector involvement in politics and related economics is rooted in the nature of the political terrain that underpinned the independence of Zimbabwe, the brand of politicians who entered the political scene thereafter and their ideologies, histories and fears. ZDI (ibid: 6) further posits 'military capture of ZANU in 1975 through strategies such as the Mgagao Declaration was the first move to institutionalize and entrench security sector involvement in the political economy of Zimbabwe'.

ZDI (2017) findings indicated that a bush-to-office modus operandi ran deep in the bloodstream of all liberation movements and it has metamorphosed into what is today seen as state capture by military interests. The subsequent capture of PF-ZAPU in 1987 was part of the ZANU – PF/military strategy of capturing the nation- state from Zambezi to Limpopo and to maintain one centre of power- the military control of the state. ZDI (2017) opine that the move to capture, sabotage and weaken Movement of Democratic Change (MDC) in the 2009 Government of National Unity (GNU) was not separate from the dominant trend of capture of the political economy of state by military interests.

The involvement of the security sector in politico-economic affairs of Zimbabwe is institutionalized through complex patronage networks and webs built around ZANU PF liberation struggle ideologies. This network has been webbed across key national institutions rendering them short of independence from military influence.

ZDI (2017) study identified four major state institutions that have been targeted and captured by military interests and utilized to institutionalize, dispense military patronage networks and buttress long- lasting control of the state by securocrats. These are: state controlled media, the electoral process, the judiciary and the legislature. These institutions have consistently been populated with security sector recruits and Trojan horses. These have maintained the continued dominance of the security sector in politico-economic in Zimbabwe. This article argues that post –Mugabe coup has ushered in more military dominance in virtually every sector in Zimbabwe. I have argued elsewhere (see Mungwari, 2018 article titled "Post Mugabe Coup: Mnangagwa administration challenges") that there is militarization of

state institutions in Zimbabwe – which is a form of 'state capture'.

ZDI (2017) study revealed that the state economy was captured through capture of the political terrain that determines distribution of economic goods. It was found that the fact key positions of authority in the body politic are captured by military interests; the same interests have seen individuals associated with the military by history, descent or caste benefiting from key economic zones like agriculture, mining and government employment opportunities. The economic sector, the study revealed, has been managed through political patronage network structures and this has been used to make opponents poor and entice prospective supporters. An audit of employees in government agencies, commissions, universities, parastatals and boards shows that military connectedness is a strategic determinant in recruitment (ZDI, ibid).

The security sector in poor countries like Zimbabwe has, "... for flimsy reasons and excuses, infiltrated the political administrative machineries of the state..." (Omilusi, 2015:3). However, in most cases, incumbents are the ones who give concessions to the security sector in the form of political appointment and economic incentives in an attempt to buy it off and/ or co-opt it, rely on it to maintain and retain power and preserve the status quo in their favour not regarding whether such machineries violate the yearning of the masses (Diamond, 2008). This article argues that the ruling ZANU PF does not care about the welfare of ordinary citizens who seem to be perpetually subjected to economic ruin by leadership.

Important to note is that security sector involvement in political affairs of a nation- state does not appear in a homologous form everywhere all the time. ZDI (2017) report posits two main different forms of military capture of the state namely: a) absolute capture and b) institutionalized unconventional state capture. In an absolute military capture of the state, two tracks can be taken by the security sectors that are: (i) absolute explicit state captures which comprise coup d'états by members of the security sector resulting in a junta government and, (ii) absolute clandestine state capture followed by creation of a pseudo civilian government that takes instructions from the barracks. At face value, one can think it (type ii) is a civilian government due to its inclusion of civilian relatives and friends of security sector personnel in government posts at all levels. Under this set up, the security sector governs through civilian fronts or relatives and friends. ZDI (2017) further notes that such fronts cannot independently make policy decisions that contradict permanent interests of the security sector without attracting outrage or threats. In both cases, the security sector wields decisive powers and the civilian government is subservient to it. I argue in this article that posts Mugabe coup scenario reflects the above description, particularly the period between November 2017 and July 2018 pre-election. Although Mnangagwa was elevated to position of President,

it can be argued that the security sector was in charge of the situation through Chiwenga, who was both Vice President and in charge of the Ministry of Defence. In this regard, there were numerous debates from analysts of who really was in charge-Mnangagwa or Chiwenga.

However, post July 2018 elections, which saw Mnangagwa narrowly winning the 2018 presidential elections. Chiwenga's powers were trimmed. Mnangagwa re-appointed Chiwenga as one of the Vice Presidents but removed him from being in charge of Ministry of Defence, instead, Oppah Muchinguri – Kashiri was given the ministry. This further strained the relationship between Mnangagwa and Chiwenga and created two factions in ZANU PF-one is behind Mnangagwa and the other backs Chiwenga. This article shall show how state capture manifests through factionalism.

Under institutionalized unconventional state capture, there exists a complex incarnation of the security sector in form of a political party (clandestine and public). The security sector, ZDI (2017) argues, captures a known political party and incarnates itself in a political party form to wrestle power. The civilian part of government is elected from among friends and/or retired security sector personnel but has too much dependence on security sector support in acquiring political power, maintaining it and retaining it to the extent that it cannot do anything without security agreement from the security sector. This is what almost happened in Zimbabwe as described earlier, but was thwarted by Mnangagwa by 'plucking' power from Chiwenga. Factional battles have been extensively covered by the private press, particularly *Zimbabwe Independence*, but state controlled media has been silent about it.

The state has been fully captured by the security sector in Zimbabwe and a securocratic state that partially fits in what Levytsky and Way (2002) termed a competitive authoritarian regime has been created. They noted that, four key institutions of the state are targeted and / or captured and those are (i) the electoral system; (ii) the legislature (iii) the judiciary and; (iv) the media (Levytsky and Way, 2002). However, as argued by ZDI (2017), such institutions cannot be effectively captured through merely populating them with security sector personnel and friends, an authoritarian state deploys the military in every decision making body of the state at all levels to ensure that the impact in those four targets for maintaining and retaining power is well assured. The article concurs with ZDI (2017) findings in that, the securocratic state in Zimbabwe differs from Levytsky and Way's (2002) conceptualization in that it introduces capture of a dominant political party (ZANU PF) and turning it into a security sector incarnate with complex militarized patronage networks and webs running across the country. This argument is buttressed by the analysis of the Mgagao Declaration in 1975 used by the securocrats to capture ZANU and subsequently restructuring of ZANU in a manner that leaves no doubt that it was incarnation of the security sector in the body of a political party ready to capture the

state political economy. However, it should be noted that Robert Mugabe (former President) continuously resisted the total capture by security sector by him declaring the principle that 'politics leads the gun; and not vice versa (see Mungwari, 2018).

In Zimbabwe, the phenomenon has been variously problematized by different thinkers; some perceive it as militarized party/state conflation (Masunungure, n.d.), military capture of the party/state (Cizc, 2012); securocrats state (Mandaza, 2016) and /or; capture of the state and military by (ZANU PF) party (Reeler, 2016). The security sector has been implicated in various instances of direct public support of ZANU PF and participation in its political activities (see Mungwari, 2018 article titled "Post Mugabe Coup: Mnangagwa administration challenges"), appointment into leadership positions in key political and economic institutions and issuing of press statements supporting ZANU PF and sabotaging and /or rubbishing political opponents (Masunungure, n.d.; Cizc, 2012; Reeler, 2016).

As argued by ZDI (2017), there is no certainty and /or clarity as to who captured who between ZANU PF and the security sector and which among the two forces has captured the state although justice has been done in revealing that the state has been captured. This study sought to give clarity to this problem and explore the impact and implications related to state capture in Zimbabwe.

#### *Mnangagwa Chiwenga Power Struggle*

This section analyses press framing of state capture and how it manifests. *Zimbabwe Independence* of October 26 to November, 2018, published an article titled 'Mnangagwa, Chiwenga on new collision course...' The weekly newspaper revealed that political tension between President Emmerson Mnangagwa and Vice President Constantino Chiwenga over unresolved ZANU PF leadership issue and control of the levers of state power escalated to dangerous levels recently, with the former army general openly drawing clear battle lines between the two. *Zimbabwe Independence* has been consistently reporting the strained relationship between Mnangagwa and Chiwenga since the military coup that toppled former president Robert Mugabe in November 2017. This article contends that bitterness was triggered on 23 October 2018 during the routine Monday security briefing at State House when the issue of Finance Minister (Mthuli Ncube) and the temporally hiring of ZANU PF activist, William Mutumanje (also known as Acie Lumumba) as his taskforce chairman was discussed.

The issue was that Mnangagwa and Ncube were aware of why Mutumanje was hired. He was roped in through the Ministry of Information to attack Chiwenga's real or perceived allies over allegations of state capture and corruption. Information Minister, Monica Mutsvangwa recommended Mutumanje and his committee, which had a number of other players, including journalists, at the

instigation of her husband Christopher Mutsvangwa, who is fighting with Chiwenga and his supporters.

Mutumanje targeted people he thought were Chiwenga's allies such as the suspended Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe directors and Sakunda Holdings executives, one of whom he described as "Queen B" (*The Standard*, October 28 to November 3, 2018, 'Mnangagwa ally spills the beans ... as fuel scandal deepens'). Important to note is that there are many other characters involved in the background, some with different agendas, including political expediency, fighting parallel market traders along factional lines and exertion activities.

The issue is basically political and economic. The groups are fighting for political supremacy and economic opportunities...there is a fuel pipeline issue dividing the two groups involved in all this (*Zimbabwe Independence*, October 26 to November 1, 2018).

This article argues that the Mnangagwa- Chiwenga battle, worrying regional and international diplomats, also manifested itself at the state media platforms – the battleground for ZANU PF factions when they start to seize control of the narrative (see Mungwari, 2017 PhD thesis titled "Representation of political conflict in the Zimbabwean press: The case of *The Herald*, *The Sunday Mail*, *Daily News* and *The Standard*: 1999-2016").

It should be noted that Monica Mutsvangwa, a Mnangagwa ally, wanted Zimbabwe Newspapers (Zimpapers) to stop covering Chiwenga, but presidential spokesperson, George Charamba, a Chiwenga ally was resisting. Monica Mutsvangwa and the permanent secretary in the Ministry of Information, Nick Mangwana, who allegedly belong to Mnangagwa faction want to fire current editors under Zimpapers seen as controlled by George Charamba and doing VP Chiwenga's bidding, and replace them with their own appointees. While Monica Mutsvangwa and Mangwana want new editors, the ministry's deputy minister Energy Mutodi, is stalling their plans since he belongs to Chiwenga faction. The issue has divided the Ministry of Information largely along the fault lines of the two factions. Caesar Zvayi and other Zimpapers editors were supposed to be removed in the context of the Mnangagwa –Chiwenga power struggle. The Zimpapers board was also expected to go. On his Twitter handle on 25 October, 2018, Mutodi said:

Those fighting Caesar Zvayi (Zimpapers editor –in-chief and *The Herald* editor) are not for the good of *The Herald*. Not for the good of the ED (Mnangagwa) government. We stand for meritocracy, not grudges, nepotism and proxy leadership (*Zimbabwe Independent*, October to November 1, 2018).

Again, Monica Mutsvangwa and Nick Mangwana, on one hand, and Energy Mutodi, on the other, are fighting over the suspension of state broadcaster Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) senior executive Tazzen Mandizvidza who is accused of fraudulently benefiting from allowance running into a million dollars. Monica Mutsvangwa and Mangwana want Mandizvidza gone, while Mutodi wants him to remain.

Subsequently, *The Herald* Editor and his *Sunday Mail* counterpart, Mabasa Sasa, were removed from their positions in a major editorial shakeup at Zimpapers. Zvayi's former deputy, Joram Nyati is the new editor of *The Herald*, to be deputized by the newspaper's political editor, Tichaona Zindoga. Victoria Ruzvidzo, who was managing editor of *The Herald*, becomes the editor of *The Sunday Mail*. Ruzvidzo will be deputized by Ranga Mataire who was senior reporter for the *Southern Times*. Ruth Bataumocho, who was gender editor for *The Herald* assumes the post of Managing Editor vacated by Ruzvidzo (*The Herald*, 18 December 2018).

Considering the foregoing scenario, it can be argued that state capture manifests itself through efforts to capture state media in order to control the narrative as noticed earlier in literature review.

This article notes that Mnangagwa clipped Chiwenga's wings when he removed him from the Ministry of Defence and frustrated his proxies in post July 30 cabinet appointments. Mnangagwa removed Chiwenga from the Defence Ministry and reduced him to a ceremonial vice-president without a portfolio, to contain him and also under pressure from Britain which wants him to demilitarize the government. Addressing a church gathering in his rural Hwedza home, Chiwenga took the opportunity to remind Mnangagwa that it was he who orchestrated the coup which topped Mugabe in November 2017- and that he would not allow anyone to run away with the political project and its spoils.

Initially, there was speculation that Mnangagwa might use the Commission of Inquiry (chaired by former South African president, Kgalema Motlanthe) to nail Chiwenga who is alleged to be the force behind the military deployment that resulted in the killing of civilians on 1 August 2018.

*The Standard* of October 28 to November 3, 2018 carried a story with a headline "Mnangagwa ally spills the beans... as fuel scandal deepens". President Mnangagwa's advisor Christopher Mutsvangwa claimed that a ZANU PF benefactor Kudakwashe Tagwirei was now a source of divisions in the presidium. Mutsvangwa also revealed that Tagwirei was being given preferential treatment in the allocation of foreign currency for the importation of fuel – which created a monopoly in the fuel industry.

Tagwirei, who owns Sakunda Holdings and has several controversial deals with the government, was thrust into the vortex of the infighting after ZANU PF apologist William Mutumanje claimed he was at the centre of a fuel cartel that included top RBZ officials. RBZ governor John Mangudya

suspended the four directors from apex bank citing Mutumanje's "expose".

Social media has also been critical in exposing corruption and bringing to light untold transactions and murky dealings of the elite and the big fish. Post July 2018 election, President Mnangagwa reiterated on his fight against corruption and any retrogressive behaviour that would cripple the economy. Corruption in Zimbabwe had reached alarming levels during the Mugabe era, and when President Mnangagwa declared war against it, people were willing to help him as well as to test the sincerity of his public statements against corruption. William Mutumanje popularly known as Acie Lumumba in the political circles as well as on social media is among the social media warriors who took corruption expositions to social media.  
<https://twitter.com/acielumumba/status/1054080860071346176>

In a letter, Finance Minister Prof Mthuli Ncube announced the appointment of Lumumba on 20 October 2018 as the new spokesman for his ministry. The letter was widely circulated on social media and was also widely criticized on social media. In no time, news went viral that Lumumba had been unprocedurally appointed and that his ouster was imminent. Lumumba took to Facebook and Twitter to expose people who were behind his sacking as well as behind the financial crisis in the land. He alleged that Queen Bee leads a corrupt cartel that has captured some senior politicians, and named certain directors at the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (RBZ), claiming they were part of a syndicate causing untold suffering in the country. Consequently, and because of Lumumba's revelations four directors at the central bank were suspended pending investigations. Lumumba's story was widely believed, people started to question the sincerity of President Emmerson Mnangagwa and his government in its fight against corruption. This did not only expose corrupt cartels, it also exposed the state as well. Social media in this case was used to even influence the state to take action see (<https://zimbabwewestoday.com/index.php/2018/10/23/zim-news-mnangagwa-strikes-at-rbz-as-promised/>). The above news site suggests that Lumumba's social media antics had pressured the President to make the officials suspended through RBZ governor.

However, the suspended directors are protected because they may be connected to senior government officials as illustrated in *Zimbabwe Independent* of October 28 to November 3, 2018 in a story titled "RBZ scandal in new twist". RBZ governor insists that the central bank is not fueling the foreign currency parallel market despite suspending four directors allegedly linked to the illicit deals. On 10 December 2018, RBZ governor published a Press Statement to the effect that "investigations into four officials suspended on 22 October over corruption allegations show that they did nothing wrong and hence the quartet has been absolved of any wrong doing." This did not surprise anyone as the investigations were mere smokescreen. This article argues that Reserve Bank of

Zimbabwe is one of the institutions which is also captured by ZANU PF executives as their cash cow; darting back to 2008 during the tenure of Gideon Gono as RBZ governor.

Christopher Mutsvangwa was quoted launching an unrestrained attack on Tagwirei thus:

He is dividing the presidium. How can a businessman have preferences in the presidium? That is trying to turn the country into a banana republic. Tagwirei's business gets about US\$80 to US\$90 million every month for fuel from the RBZ, yet many companies, some of them largest fuel dealers in the world, want to come and invest in the fuel industry in the country (*The Standard*, October 28 to November 3, 2018).

Mutsvangwa claimed most of the foreign currency given to Sakunda was being sold on the black market to repay the RBZ through the real-time gross settlement (RTGS) system. Mutsvangwa also claimed that Tagwirei was involved in "oligopoly politics" and Trafigura (a Singaporean company in fuel deals also) was bent on capturing the state. This article notes that when Tagwirei's father died in 2017, the whole army went to attend the funeral, the whole government was closed – a single person closing government business; this is a sign of inordinate power. The questions to be asked are: where does it (power) come from? Who is backing him? How can a pipeline and underground fuel reserves built by a country end up being run by a private individual? Why does Tagwirei invoice in hard currency for a facility that belongs to the country?

Mutsvangwa said that the command agriculture program being bankrolled by Sakunda was meant to facilitate state capture. This article argues that Tagwirei is not only involved in fuel scandals and command agriculture but also in many other murky deals which the private newspapers cover extensively.

*News Day* of October 29, 2018 carried a story with a headline "Fuel mogul spoils ED, Chiwenga". *News Day* (ibid) reported that Government Command Agriculture benefactor Tagwirei splashed millions of scarce United State dollars on luxury vehicles for President Mnangagwa and his deputies, Chiwenga and Kembo Muhadi, as well as their spouses and several other top government officials. The vehicles were delivered ahead of the disputed July 30 elections controversially won by ZANU PF. It is understood that the vehicles which were brought into the country under the government's ambitions Command Agriculture scheme were reportedly exempted from paying import duty.

Tagwirei, the owner of Sakunda Petroleum, which is in 50-50 partnership with Trafigura, a Singaporean company with vast interests in the fuel industry across the globe, allegedly seized the opportunity to also import three Lexus vehicles for



himself, while two of his allies also capitalized on the avenue-reflecting how state capture manifests itself in a web and network as the literature reveals.

Command Agriculture is a government program funded through Treasury Bills, contrary to claims that the Sakunda chief executive, Tagwirei funded the project. Tagwirei has been cited as the biggest reason why the country's domestic debt has continued to skyrocket at the expense of the majority hard-pressed taxpayers. Recently, Tagwirei possibly the biggest ZANU PF benefactor so far, who has also been awarded many controversial government deals, including the Dema diesel project, bought over 50 vehicles for ZANU PF officials, with more to be delivered again.

He reportedly financed the ambitious government programme to the tune of over \$500 million, which he was paid back through Treasury Bills in an arrangement described by Former Finance Minister, Tendai Biti, as a parallel scheme and the beginning of state capture (*News Day*, October 29, 2018). William Mutumanje, a former ZANU PF youth leader, exposed that some business people had captured the country, a claim directed at Tagwirei, whom he referred to as 'Queen Bee'.

Stembile Mpfu contributed to Business Time an article titled "State Capture: The inevitable bi-product of political systems"- November 1, 2018. Mpfu (2018) reckon that William Mutumanje (Acie Lumumba) is exposing of what he referred to as the "Queen Bee" triggered Zimbabweans to debate on the topical issue. He described the cartel as having achieved State Capture by providing money to individuals in strategic positions within state institutions and the political arena. According to Mpfu (ibid), Lumumba revealed that directors within the Reserve Bank were responsible for allocating huge amounts of foreign currency to this cartel ostensibly for the purchase of fuel some of which did not reach the country but was paid for. As days have passed unofficial information about the size and intricacies of this network have emerged. The allegations being that the web engulfs the mining, banking and agriculture sector, government ministries and even the army.

Mpfu (2018) further argues that as the Zimbabwean public has watched the various events unfold, it has become clear that the toll of the cartel's alleged activities on the economy has been devastating. The country's wealth is said to be serving a select few and the majority of the citizens are left to fend for themselves in an impoverished environment. Diamonds, gold, silver and money have been siphoned out of the country through illicit means with the proceeds of their sale benefiting a few select individuals within the system. Sitting at the centre of these activities and deriving the greatest benefit is the alleged "Queen Bee" who is said to control individuals in strategic positions within government institutions, political parties and the private sector by sharing the spoils.

Also important to note is that the details of these activities have left most Zimbabweans angry, shocked and baying for the blood of those implicated in the scandals. This is an understandable reaction given the extent of the suffering the cartel activities have caused. However, Mpfu (ibid) argues that an objective examination of what is happening in Zimbabwe will show that in many countries in the world these types of arrangement between the politicians and the business sector are the order of the day. One could easily argue that they are the inevitable result of the political systems that are in use in various countries across the globe. The extent to which these nefarious activities affect the economic fabric of a country is determined by the ability of a country's economy to absorb the negative aspects of state capture. It also depends on the ability of the political players and individuals within state institutions of a country to exercise a high level of integrity and restraint when dealing with those in the business sector.

Mpfu (2018) further argues that what must be realized and accepted is that the political system of electoral democracy forces political parties to depend on the business sector for their existence and survival. A political party without links to business parties willing to provide sponsorship will not survive. Political parties do not generate revenue, Mpfu (ibid) opines. In this regard, they will therefore need business partners to provide the funding for electoral campaign, the day-to-day running costs of the political party and expensive goods like vehicles and air tickets for travel (as revealed by Zimbabwean private press earlier). In return, as literature review noted, their partners expect special access to business opportunities once the political party takes up the reins of power – such as is obtaining in Zimbabwe.

We can therefore conclude that Zimbabwe is current 'Queen Bee' saga is one that should be seen in the light of this global challenges. It will be important to note that as we witness this battle against the alleged dominance and corruption of the 'Queen Bee' cartel, we also realize that the suppression of this cartel may result in the emergence of a new one. This is because the root cause of this problem is systematic as opposed to being an individualized one and this is why we see examples of state capture across the globe- neighboring South Africa is a good example of high profile state capture by the Gupta brothers (family).

Southall (cited in *State Capture in Africa*, 2018), argues that the concept of state capture has assumed much prominence in South Africa with the under President Jacob Zuma being said to have been 'captured' by corrupt networks constructed by the Gupta family. As a result, South Africans have a fairly clear understanding that it has involved collusion between Zuma (and those around him) and a recently naturalized Indian family, the Guptas, to direct public resources into private hands, notably via the corrupt allocation of contracts by parastatals (state-owned entities) and public ministries to Gupta-related companies. This narrative has become deeply entrenched through the remarkable work of South Africa's

outstanding coterie of investigative journalists; further analysis by academics and most notably, a celebrated exploratory report by former Public Protector Thuli Madonsela (Public Protector, 2016).

All this was capped by President Zuma's subsequent attempts to frustrate Madonsela's recommendation regarding the appointment of a full commission of inquiry into 'state capture' headed by a judge to be selected by the Chief Justice, Mogoeng Mogoeng. Suffice it to say, without going into further detail, the use of the term 'state capture' has now become pervasive; there is widespread concern that the South African state under the presidency of Jacob Zuma was 'captured'; that this was subversive of democracy and deeply damaging to the economy and, accordingly, it was an insidious process that must necessarily be reversed (EISA, 2018). The scale of the corruption or 'state capture' that took place during Jacob Zuma's presidency enabled powerful individuals, institutions, companies and groups to influence South Africa's policies, legal environment and economy to benefit their private interests, with negative consequences for economic development, regulatory quality and the provision of public services (Felton and Nkomo, cited in *State Capture in Africa*, 2018).

According to Dassah (2017), state capture became topical in South Africa in March 2016 following the dismissal of the then Minister of Finance, Nhlanhla Nene, on 9 December 2015. On national television, then Deputy Minister of Finance, Mcebisi Jonas, said the Gupta brothers, who were not only friends of the then President (Jacob Zuma) but also business partners of his son, had allegedly offered him the position of Minister of Finance before the then incumbent, Nhlanhla Nene, was dismissed on 9 December 2015 and replaced by Des Van Rooyen. However, mounting pressure compelled Zuma to replace Des Van Rooyen with Pravin Gordhan. Nhlanhla Nene's dismissal fuelled speculation that President Zuma's prerogative of appointing and removing ministers is usurped by the Gupta brothers. Then Public Protector, Advocate Thuli Madonsela, received and investigated various complaints, including possible violation of the Executive Members' Ethics Act (1998) regarding appointment of cabinet ministers, directors and awarding of state contracts to business associated with the Gupta brothers. In a major twist, Pravin Gordhan and Mcebisi Jonas were removed as Minister of Finance and Deputy Minister in a major cabinet reshuffle on 30 April 2017 and replaced by Malusi Gigaba and Sifiso Buthelezi, respectively. The 'Nenegate' furor of March 2016 revealed a lack of understanding of state capture among politicians and the general public, with one politician stating that because the state consists of three organs, state capture cannot occur unless all three are captured.

In South Africa, *City Press* reported on 4 June 2017 that the public protector had received a letter signed by a group of pro-Zuma members of Parliament asking her to investigate state capture in the Treasury and Reserve Bank 'under their

bosses'. The Treasury during Pravin Gordhan's term as Minister of Finance had been a major agency in opposing public sector contracting to businesses connected to President Zuma's allies. Zuma's supporters, including the corporate groups who benefit from contracting in present-day South Africa, argued that they were engaged in a project to reduce the influence over the state of established older firms that enjoyed predominance during apartheid. So in this narrative; 'state capture' is a defensive smokescreen created by previously politically-connected and well-established business interests-'white monopoly capital' – to keep new and 'transformative' players out of the game (see, for example, Niehaus, 2017). Essentially, this argument runs, state capture is nothing new in South Africa, and present-day beneficiaries of venal public tendering are simply replacing an earlier group of powerful white-owned businesses that enjoyed the same kind of relationship with politicians and officials.

However, Zuma was eventually forced by the situation to resign. Dassah's (2017) article concluded that the phenomenon of state capture exists in South Africa. For more details (see Dassah (2017) article titled "Theoretical analysis of state capture and its manifestations as a governance problem in South Africa").

In the case of Zimbabwe, in its bid to mitigate the dominance of the alleged 'Queen Bee' cartel, Zimbabweans witnessed a government-sanctioned expose by Acie Lumumba. It is clear that public scrutiny and the public outcry were instrumental in shaking up the cartel. The private press and social media platforms play a great role in extensively covering the cartel. State controlled media were selective and silent on state capture expose arguably because the cartel captured the state media. This level of scrutiny of public officials and state institutions must be formalized. Mpfu (2018) asserts that a process must be set up that allows the public to interrogate the actions of public officials. A possibility is to give more prominence to the Auditor General's report, which should be given the same level of prominence as the national budget.

Apart from putting in place laws that govern how and where political parties receive their funding, there should be laws put in place to ensure multiple players are involved in any one enterprise. As this article has argued concerning the alleged 'Queen Bee' cartel, the country can be held to ransom if one entity is the sole supplier of a strategic commodity like fuel. A competitive business environment must be created whereby companies are forced to offer the best possible deal for the country.

#### *Politicization of anti-corruption*

One of the issues central to President Emmerson Mnangagwa's message after his rise to power through a military coup in November 2017; and his bid to sanitize and legitimize his ascendancy through a disputed presidential election in July 2018 was fighting corruption. Since he came in, Mnangagwa, who has a controversial anti-corruption commission, has been waxing lyrical about corruption.

Mnangagwa's administration has moved fast to 'arrest' a number of high-profile officials, including former ministers, bureaucrats and executives mainly at state enterprises.

Some of the senior public officials who have so far been arrested on allegations of corruption and "criminal abuse of office" include Ignatius Chombo, Walter Mzembi, Samuel Undenge, Walter Chidhakwa, Savior Kasukuwere and Supa Mandiwanzira - all former ministers - but all were freed on bail. What is wrong and bad is selectively tackling corruption, particularly when the issue is politicized. That can undermine the whole anti-corruption campaign (*Zimbabwe Independent*, November 9 to 15, 2018).

Politicizing corruption and targeting real or imagined rivals is actually corrupt. Corruption is rampant in Zimbabwe. It is corroding the moral fabric of society, people's morality and public institutions. Corruption is inflicting a heavy opportunity cost toll on the economy. But Zimbabwe's problems, especially corruption, are a familiar story across Africa. Chinua Achebe's book, *The Trouble with Nigerians* echoes reverberate true everywhere in the continent. The late eminent African novelist and critic, author of the famous novel, *Things Fall Apart*, linked leadership and policy failures to other problems like economic challenges, social injustice, mediocrity cult, tribalism and corruption.

This article argues that Mnangagwa must fight corruption without fear or favour. The issue must not be politicized. There should not be selective prosecution. In Zimbabwe, there has been a pattern of arresting mainly his (Mnangagwa's) political rivals, real or perceived. Fighting corruption on a G40 versus Lacoste, or Mnangagwa versus Vice-President Constantino Chiwenga factional template is not serious and sustainable. One cannot fight corruption through a corrupt process.

#### *Chitando sucked in Hwange Scandal*

<https://bulawayo24.com/news/national/149244>

The preceding scenario confirms network corruption activities in parastatals such as Hwange Colliery scandal involving Mines Minister Winston Chitando who unilaterally recommended Hwange Colliery Company Limited's placement under administration without the blessing of other shareholders. The move was widely seen by some officials as an attempt to cover up massive corruption involving senior management and public officials at the troubled coal miner. *Zimbabwe Independent*, November 9 to 15, 2018 published an article titled "Chitando, shareholders clash in Hwange Colliery scandal" cited Justice Minister Ziyambi Ziyambi who announced the decision echoed by Chitando saying it was meant to put the company on a recovery path and ultimately back to profitability. But shareholders, as well as the Hwange board led by Juliana Muskwe, workers and the Zimbabwe Stock Exchange (ZSE) —which responded by suspending the firm —were also not informed or consulted. This only confirms the argument that state capture and corruption are

interwoven into a complex web involving ministers and other government officials.

However, some individuals are unfazed by corrupt government officials therefore they help society by whistle blowing and exposing them. Muskwe, who exposed Chitando's dominant hand in the company while giving oral evidence before the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee on Mines also confirmed her board was not consulted when the decision to put the company under administration was made. "No consultations were ever made, neither to the board nor other shareholders. What this effectively means is that the board technically no longer exists, something which he (Chitando) has always wanted to happen. This also means that the forensic audit which we have been undertaking to ascertain the extent of corruption at the company will no longer proceed. Everything has been thrown into confusion," (*Zimbabwe Independent*, 9-15 November 2018). Muskwe declined to give further details, but another board member alleged that Chitando used the reconstruction decision as a tool to settle scores with the board and advance questionable interests. The board member also exposed the conflict of interest in the appointment of administrator Bekithemba Moyo, saying his company, DBF Capital, had business interests with Hwange. This story is just a tip of the iceberg of what happens in almost all parastatals and state institutions and the corruption activities die a natural death because government officials even the president may be involved in the scandals as was this case.

<https://www.zimeye.net/2018/11/02/ed-sucked-in-hwange-collery-corruption-scandal/>

PRESIDENT Emmerson Mnangagwa and Mines minister Winston Chitando were dragged into a case in which \$6, 4 million pumped into Hwange Colliery Company for exploration, allegedly disappeared, while board members were kidnapped and held hostage by an operative linked to the two with assistance from police officers. This article argues that innocent individuals end up being sacrificial lambs on the 'altar' of corruption to safeguard senior officials like the president. Those who are connected to the president are protected and they brag about their 'immunity'.

It is important to note that social media platforms played a critical role in whistle blowing corruption deals. Social media again has been used to expose the rot in Public Service, with the latest being the corrupt engagements by Public Service Commission paymaster at the Salary Services Bureau, Brighton Chiuzingo, and general manager human resources only identified as E. Chigaba, on allegations of abuse of office and mismanagement.

(<https://www.herald.co.zw/ssb-paymaster-suspended/>)

According to an article by Matthew Takaona (<https://www.pazimbabwe.com/business-49563-zimbabwe-chief-paymaster-suspended.html>) Brighton Chiuzingo, the chief paymaster at the Government Salaries Service Bureau (SSB) had been suspended from work without pay on

allegations of making arbitrary allowance and salary increases of 40% for himself and collecting back pay of \$6 600 backdated to January 2018.

This rot had been exposed by one Prisca Mutema on 06 December 2018 on her Twitter handle (@PriscaMutema2). She wrote “This is Brighton Chiuzingo, Zimbabwe Gvt Paymaster General. He is a thief & a major reason why gvt spends 95% of its budget just on salaries. He is also part of a cartel that involves the Registrar General's & the Immigration Dept. The cartel's business is fraud.” She further said “This is Ngoni Masoka, former PremSec in the Public Service Ministry & Chairman, Chief Corruptor & Godfather of (NSSA). Since 2014, these 2 have stolen millions of US\$ thru gvt payroll & NSSA. He's also reason 95% of gvt budget is spent on salaries.” <https://twitter.com/priscamutema2?lang=ar>

She went on a 14 thread twitter laying bare facts backing her exposition. The tweet had about 250 retweets from her twitter followers, and the issue was blown in a day. *The Herald* of 7 December 2018 carried a story to the effect that government had suspended Brighton Chiuzingo, a day after social media had blown the whistle. This shows that the political narrative of the land has seen the coming in of a new player which is social media. Social media has been used for the fast spread of news in a way that leaves the traditional media outlets behind. News now spread faster through social media, and people have resorted to believing more on social media for news than any other source. As discussed earlier in the paper, Prisca Mutema who has exposed the Public Service rot is controversially believed to be a ghost account but revealing the sober truth obtaining in the country.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that regular elections have become the norm on the continent, the attainment and consolidation of substantive democracy, including socioeconomic transformation and social justice, remain elusive for many African democracies, even some of those viewed as relatively mature. One of the key prerequisites for the consolidation of democracy is that there should be established ‘rules of the game’. State capture undermines these rules by eroding democratic processes and state institutions, thus depriving citizens of the rights and benefits that should be provided by the state. This leads to a system in which power is systematically diverted from citizens, unraveling democratic gains and socioeconomic transformation (EISA, 2018).

In South Africa, a commission of inquiry was set up to investigate state capture, which ended with President Jacob Zuma's reluctant resignation on 14 February 2018, after an astonishing body of evidence accumulated in the public domain of a complicated and audacious project whose aim was of looting from state funds and diverting these public resources into private accounts had had an impact on almost every function and level of the South African state. However, in Zimbabwe, no genuine investigation is ever done into

apparent state capture. A mere smokescreen is attempted with those involved in corruption protected by captured institutions and get away with it as shown with RBZ case. Powerful individuals like Chivayo are acquitted of high profile corruption charges because they are connected to the presidium. Because state capture is both a form of corruption and a failure of governance, the solution to the state capture problem lies in the legal institutions designed to combat corruption and an active citizenry that demands good governance. In the words of Abraham Lincoln: ‘You have a democracy, if you can defend it’.

Apart from putting in place laws that govern how and where political parties receive their funding, there should be laws put in place to ensure multiple players are involved in any one enterprise. As we have seen with the alleged “Queen Bee” cartel the country can be held to ransom if one entity is the sole supplier of a strategic commodity like fuel. A competitive business environment must be created whereby companies are forced to offer the best possible deal for the country.

Finally, the country's political leaders must commit to putting the interests of Zimbabweans at the fore in all their actions. This will serve to guide them and provide balance when they consider their financial needs as political parties versus the economic needs of the country. State capture, essentially parasitic plundering of public resources, poses a serious threat to the nascent Zimbabwean democracy and needs to be taken seriously.

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