

**Zimbabwe MDC politician Sten Zvorwadza beaten in Mbare**  
**BBC**  
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A Zimbabwean politician has been attacked in the capital, Harare, during the last day of campaigning before a referendum on a new constitution.

Sten Zvorwadza, who hopes to become the next Movement for Democratic Change MP for the city's Mbare suburb, was punched as he tried to put up posters.

He escaped uninjured and says the youths were almost certainly Zanu-PF supporters of President Robert Mugabe.

Both Zanu-PF and MDC are campaigning for a "yes" vote in the referendum.

But the referendum campaign has been raising political tensions ahead of an election expected later in the year.

The parties have been in a coalition government for the last four years following a disputed vote in 2008 marred by violence.

'Midwife' to new Zimbabwe

The BBC's Andrew Harding witnessed the incident in Mbare - an MDC stronghold in Harare - and said the youths also threw punches at him and his film crew.

Although no-one was seriously injured, the incident is a reminder of the violence lurking close to the surface in Zimbabwe, he says.

Under the new constitution, the president who wins the election, expected to be held in July, will be able to serve a maximum of two terms.

Mr Mugabe and MDC leader Morgan Tsvangirai, who is currently serving as prime minister, are both expected to vie for the presidency again.

Mr Mugabe, 89, has been in power since independence in 1980.

On Wednesday, he expressed concern over reports of a resurgence in political violence across the country.

Zanu-PF spokesman Rugare Gumbo said the president wanted people to vote peacefully.

"He said we should not have violence and added that the party will not tolerate that nonsense whether it is intra-party or inter-party. He wants the people to vote in peace," Zimbabwe's state-run Herald newspaper quotes Mr Gumbo as saying.

Analysts say the constitution is seen as a compromise document.

According to the AFP news agency, during campaigning the MDC has focussed on clauses guaranteeing protection against all forms of violence, and free and fair voting.

The MDC's Tendai Biti, who currently serves as finance minister, told the BBC the document was the "midwife" to a brand new Zimbabwe as it sets out people's rights, devolves some power and sets up a system of check and balances for those in authority.

The Zanu-PF campaign has highlighted the irreversibility of the land reform programme, which saw some 4,500 farms seized from mainly white commercial farmers, and other moves intended to give more economic power to black Zimbabweans, AFP reports.

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