

Voice of America

Phone shops demolished in Southeast Zimbabwe town of Chiredzi

By Carole Gombakomba

Washington 01 August 2005 - Operation Murambatsvina has resurfaced in the southeastern town of Chiredzi, where police are said to have destroyed seven phone shops. Sources told VOA's Studio 7 for Zimbabwe that the only phone shop still open belongs to a ruling party city councilor.

Elsewhere, some former residents of the Porta Farm settlement west of Harare have been dumped at abandoned farms in the capital region. One woman, asking that her name not be used, told reporter Carole Gombakomba that authorities took her and others to an abandoned farm where they live in empty tobacco barns.

She must walk for two hours to reach the Harare-Bulawayo road for transport to Harare, from which she spoke with Ms. Gombakomba on Monday.

Other former Porta Farm residents taken to Hopely Farm on the road from Harare to the satellite town of Chitungwiza, were still not receiving any humanitarian assistance, according to the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights, a civic group.

The organization said authorities were present at Hopely Farm over the past weekend to assess conditions and register about a thousand displaced persons there.

Reporter Carole Gombakomba of VOA's Studio 7 for Zimbabwe asked attorney Otto Saki of the Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights for an update on Hopely Farm.

Elsewhere, families forcibly resettled from Harare to the rural areas of Mashonaland East say their life there is very difficult. Men say they are unable to provide for their families because of their limited access to homes and jobs in the rural district. Such breadwinners say their only chance for survival is to return to the city.

(Available online at: <http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/RWB.NSF/db900SID/VBOL-6EVHD9?OpenDocument> Last viewed: August 3, 2005)