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Shots by police in Gurué trigger false social media claims of deaths

A huge MDM march in Gurué Saturday 29 September blocked the centre of the city in front of Cine Gurué, and also prevented a Frelimo march from passing. MDM governs Gurué and has wide popular acceptance, and its rally drew such large crowds that the main road was blocked and police could not clear space. Police appealed to MDM leaders to clear the square but that proved impossible. Police then fired shots and tear gas to disperse the crowd. The crowd responded by throwing stones at the police.

The shots led to false reports on social media, notably WhatsApp, that the police had shot and killed three people.

Police in discussion with local MDM officials shortly before they fired shot which created local panic.



Renamo says it has soldiers in Marromeu

Police and security forces have taken up positions in Marromeu to intimidate voters on election day, according to Renamo district political head, Zitano Caitano. "We have also mobilised our forces and men are here from Satunjira", the Renamo main base on the

Gorongosa mountain. "We have armed men here, and if we see any armed action, we will respond," Caitano said.

Marromeu district police commander Lancerda Rafael, speaking to this newsletter, confirmed the presence of police and military forces. But he said "these are forest and border guards to control the thefts of forest resources which have increased here, and they are not present for political reasons." He also admitted increased patrols in the town, but said they were only to maintain law and order and not to intimidate the opposition."

2013 fraud sites

Marromeu and Gurué were the two confirmed cases of fraud in 2013. In Gurué the Constitutional Council forced a rerun of the election, which was

2018 Local Elections is part of the
Votar Moçambique programme



won overwhelmingly by MDM. (Renamo boycotted the 2013 election.) In Marromeu, the Frelimo candidate for mayor won over MDM by only 283 votes, but there were 1119 invalid votes - 11% of the total and an unrealistically high percentage compared to the normal 3-5%. It seems likely that Frelimo won only because votes for MDM were invalidated by adding an extra ink mark during the count. But there was no protest because there were no observers and few MDM delegates.

Police better prepared and preventing violence in campaign

Parades of party supporters with a mix of cars, bicycles and supporters on foot - often called caravans - are a major part of Mozambican campaigns. Police received special training before the campaign, and are accompanying party parades this year and have so far prevented conflicts and violence when caravans meet, according to our correspondents in the 53 municipalities.

Indeed, our correspondents report that so far, the main problem has been parties tearing down each others posters.

Reports from our correspondents:

Xai-Xai: Gaza is a Frelimo bastion and in past elections has seen violence to keep out the opposition. The Gaza capital Xai-Xai never had opposition members in the municipal assembly until 2013, when MDM won 8 seats. So far, this election has been peaceful. The opposition is being careful, stressing door-to-door campaigning, and has few complaints. Renamo's João Muchanga said that Renamo has been provoked; on the first day the head of list was assaulted and publicity material torn down, but nonetheless he feels encouraged by the campaign. Joelson Matusse of MDM talks of caravans being blocked and posters being torn down, but is generally satisfied.

Chókwè: Police blocked the road in front of Frelimo headquarters to guarantee the security of the speaker of parliament, Verónica Macamo, in town for the Frelimo "showmício" with the South African band General Muzka. An MDM caravan

passed 150 metres from the location and there was an exchange of insults between young men, but prompt police intervention prevented a physical confrontation.

Quelimane: On Saturday Frelimo, MDM and Renamo caravans met various times, always trading insults, but police prevented any escalation.

Nampula: Caravans of the three parties met at the central market Saturday afternoon and market traders booed Frelimo, but police blocked any physical conflict.

Catandica, Manica: Civility has been shown in the campaign in which all three parties promise to improve the lot of local residents. Frelimo has the most cars and other means. MDM has only one car and campaigners are walking. Renamo has least resources but is making up for that with more enthusiasm of parading members.



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Partners:

Detailed coverage of 2018 municipal and 2019 national elections is again being provided by the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, which has covered all of Mozambique's multi-party elections. We will have a large team of local journalists throughout the country, ensuring that our reports are accurate and verified.

The elections newsletter is also in Portuguese; para subscrever <http://eepurl.com/cYjhdB>
Previous issues of this year's newsletter are available on <http://cipmoz.org:9000/elections2018/>
Newsletters from 2013 local elections and 2014 national elections are on <http://bit.ly/2H066Kg>
There are two archives of historic elections data, at IESE on <http://www.iese.ac.mz/eleicoes-resultados/> and at London School of Economics on <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>