

Daily News back on the streets

Zimbabwe's latest independent newspaper, *Daily News*, hit the streets on Friday morning, bringing the number of daily newspapers in the country to four.



The relaunch of the newspaper, shut down by Mugabe's government in 2003, has sent shivers into the market.

Print media has been largely dominated by state-controlled dailies *The Herald* in Harare and *The Chronicle* in Bulawayo.

The *Daily News* also faces stiff competition from *NewsDay*, another independent daily, owned by Alpha Media Holdings, which is the stable of media mogul Trevor Ncube, the publisher of *The Independent*, *Standard* and South Africa's weekly newspaper *Mail and Guardian*.

'Selling like hot cakes'

Staff at *Daily News* claimed on Friday that the paper was selling "like hot cakes".

The souvenir launch edition led with a story headlined "Is this Zim's future?" an article speculating about Mugabe's allegedly deteriorating health.

The Zimbabwe Media Commission, constituted in terms of Constitutional Amendment No 19, has to date registered 15 media houses.

Media stakeholders have welcomed the entry of the new kid on the block.

"We applaud its publishers for their show of resilience, despite numerous assaults on their quest to see the paper returning to the streets," the Youth Forum said this week.

"We, however, urge the newspaper to be a cut above the rest and give more focus and space for the youth voice, noting very well that our country is a youthful nation, where over half of the population is below 35 years of age," it added.



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The organisation also encouraged all those media players who had so far been licensed by the commission to start publishing their newspapers.

"The Youth Forum calls on the government of Zimbabwe to repeal all draconian laws that are working to retard media freedom and plurality.

"Top of the list is the Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act and the Broadcasting Services Act.

"These should be replaced by more democratic laws that govern and regulate the work of the media without restricting and suppressing it, as is the case with the two acts cited above," the forum said.

The Media Institute for Southern Africa Zimbabwe chapter and the Zimbabwe Union of Journalists also welcomed the entry of the *Daily News*. They called for the opening up of the broadcasting sector, which is still dominated by the state-controlled Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC).

Source: *Sunday Times*

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