Mugabe now wants 100% of everything

GWERU, ZIMBABWE: Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe on Friday (7 December) vowed to overhaul business laws to require 100% black ownership of firms, up from 51%.

In a pre-election address to the ZANU-PF party faithful, Mugabe said the government would press ahead with controversial indigenisation policies, despite protestations from foreign investors.

"The notion that capital is more important than any other factors is nonsense," Mugabe told 5,000 delegates in the central city of Gweru.

"That philosophy is dirty, filthy and is criminal."

Mugabe's government passed a controversial indigenisation law two years ago, forcing all foreign-owned firms to cede a 51% share to locals, arguing it would reverse imbalances created during colonial rule.

"I think now we have done enough of 51%. Let it be 100%," he told the last party conference before 2013 polls, which could well see the 88-year-old's name on the ballot for the last time.

In typically bombastic style, Mugabe's comments plotted a clear populist platform for his re-election campaign.

"If you don't want to abide by the rules go away," he said.

Mugabe and ZANU-PF face an uphill struggle to win over voters, many of whom are angered at the poor state of the economy.

The party must also patch up the damage done by internal splits that cost the party dearly in the 2008 general elections.

In that election, for the first time since independence in 1980, ZANU-PF lost its majority in parliament.

That helped force the veteran leader into a shaky power-sharing government with long-time rival Prime Minister Morgan Tsvangirai, whom he will face at the polls next year.

Source: *AFP* via I-Net Bridge

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