

Shut-down *Daily News* to appeal to High Court

Zimbabwe's only independent daily newspaper, the *Daily News*, which was shut down on Friday for operating without being registered with the state's Media and Information Commission (MIC), will be appealing to the Supreme Court this week in a bid to resume publishing.

Associated Newspapers of Zimbabwe (ANZ), the publishers of the *Daily News*, had petitioned the Supreme Court to nullify sections of the Information and Protection of Privacy Act (Aippa) which it claimed impinged on the rights to freedom of expression, association and protection from compulsory acquisition of property enshrined in Zimbabwe's Constitution. Under the Aippa, promulgated by the Zimbabwean government last year, all media organisations are required to register with the MIC.

Justice Chidyausiku of the Supreme Court ruled that because the *Daily News* had not challenged the constitutionality of the Aippa before the deadline for registration in January this year, the paper was operating outside of the law. Riot police shut down the *Daily News*' offices last Friday and journalists were barred from the building.

According to the court's ruling, if the *Daily News* is to continue operating it will have to first be registered with the commission, however editor-in-chief Francis Mdlongwa has said that they will be petitioning the court this week for permission to resume publishing while the MIC is processing the registration.

According to a recent survey the *Daily News* is read by about 1.5 million Zimbabweans every day. The last time that the country's authorities closed down a newspaper was in 1964 when the Rhodesian government closed down the black nationalist *African Daily News*.