

Court criticised for dismissing constitutional challenge

The Southern Africa Litigation Centre (SALC) last week criticised the Zimbabwe High Court for dismissing a constitutional challenge brought by civil right group Veritas against the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) and two others. Veritas had challenged the constitutionality of several sections of the nation's Electoral Act over what it described as burdensome limitation on those allowed to conduct voter education in the country. **The SALC said that the dismissal of the case on a technicality was a 'disappointment'.** SALC's executive director Kaajal Ramjathan-Keogh said the legal change by Veritas had emphasised that the Electoral Act limitations were violating freedom of expression and had created a virtual 'state monopoly on speech and constitute unjustifiable prior restraint'. **NewsDay** reports that High Court Justice Owen Tagu last month dismissed the civil rights group's applications after he said he was unable to look into the case's merits since the civil rights watchdog had brought the matter before the court with the incorrect form.