

# Mugabe leaves legacy of economic ruin, upheaval in Zimbabwe

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — From widely acclaimed liberator of his nation to despotic dictator, Robert Mugabe's 37-year rule of Zimbabwe has been one of Africa's most controversial and influential.

Wily and ruthless, the 93-year-old Mugabe outmaneuvered his opponents for decades but was undone by his own miscalculation in his final weeks in power. He blundered when he sidelined his right-hand man in order to position his wife, Grace, as his successor. He didn't anticipate that the fired vice president, Emmerson Mnangagwa, would swiftly and skillfully depose him.

But Mnangagwa had spent years learning from Mugabe how to seize and wield power.

For years Mugabe inspired other leaders across the continent to emulate his tactics and extend their rule by manipulating the constitution and suppressing opposition through violence and intimidation.

Mugabe's often violent seizure of Zimbabwe's white-owned farms was his signature action — and devastated the country's agricultural production, transforming what had been known as Africa's breadbasket into a land of barren fields and hungry people. Mugabe cloaked the land grabs in ringing rhetoric, shaking his fist and shouting that Africa's land should be held by Africans. It didn't matter that the farms, which had been pledged to go to poor blacks, instead went to his generals, Cabinet ministers, cronies and his wife — or that many of the fields lay fallow years later. Even now Mugabe is widely revered by many Africans as the continent's most radical de-colonizer.

His mismanagement of Zimbabwe's economy was staggering. The country has been transformed from one that could offer good employment opportunities to its well-educated population to a place of so little hope that people left in droves. And the 13 million who stayed behind in Zimbabwe have coped with an unemployment rate estimated at higher than 80 percent.

Mugabe had a Marxist's belief that even the economy would do



Zimbabweans celebrate after Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe resigned in Harare on Tuesday. The streets of Zimbabwe's capital have erupted in dancing, singing, honking and cheers after Mugabe announced his immediate resignation after 37 years in power.

AP Photo/Tsvangirayi Mukwazhi

what he wanted. "Countries don't go bankrupt!" he once scoffed when asked if by sending army troops to Congo in 1998 he would ruin Zimbabwe's economy. He was wrong. By 2008 Zimbabwe's hyperinflation reached 500 billion percent, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Once the land of liberation from white minority rule, Zimbabwe became one of fear as a result of Mugabe's far-reaching domestic spy network, the Central Intelligence Organization. Hundreds of opposition supporters were killed or disappeared during election campaigns. Many more were tortured, such as Jestina Mukoko, who was tortured for weeks and after her release bravely advocated for the rights of those detained.

It is hard to remember that Mugabe once enjoyed international praise for bringing Zimbabwe to independence. Throughout the

1970s he directed a deadly, effective guerrilla war against Rhodesia's white minority rule regime. When he won the 1980 elections, he was relatively unknown. The country, and the world at large, was impressed by his impeccable, carefully enunciated Oxford English. He endorsed racial reconciliation to wide acclaim. He was nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize.

But even in the glory years of Zimbabwe's early independence, Mugabe appeared cold and calculating in public appearances and speeches.

And then came the bloody campaign in which the army's North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade brutally put down a small rebel group supporting opposition leader Joshua Nkomo. Between 1983 and 1985 an estimated 10,000 to 20,000 people of Zimbabwe's Ndebele minority were killed by the army in southern Zimbabwe, in

what is known as the Matabeleland Massacres. Human rights groups and the Catholic Church documented and condemned the killings, which remain the darkest stain on Mugabe's record and a scar that plagues the country.

"Amnesty Lies International," was how Mugabe dismissed a critical report by Amnesty International.

Tarnished by the killings, Mugabe was still grudgingly respected, especially for his support for the battle against apartheid, the system of white minority rule in neighboring South Africa. When Nelson Mandela was freed from prison in 1990, he quickly visited Zimbabwe to thank Mugabe for his support. But Mugabe came to resent Mandela, who outshined him. When Mugabe married his second wife, Grace, in 1996, Mandela attended the reception. Mugabe glowered with irritation when Mandela got far

more cheers from the thousands of guests than he did.

Mandela put forward a generous, inclusive view of African nationalism that won him international praise and a Nobel Peace Prize. Mugabe became a starkly different type of African leader, who marginalized critics and restricted freedoms. His homophobic outbursts against gays as "worse than pigs and dogs" contrasted with Mandela's enthusiastic support for LGBT rights.

Mugabe's leadership became more like that of his one-time foe, Rhodesia's white minority ruler Ian Smith. Mugabe used Rhodesian-era laws to suppress public gatherings and opposition parties. He used the army, police and the security to keep the people subservient.

An ascetic leader, Mugabe rarely drank and stayed spry into his 90s. But while his tastes had been relatively modest through the 1980s that changed after his marriage to Grace Mugabe. They built a 25-bedroom mansion on a sprawling property in Harare's Borrowdale suburb that became known as the Blue Roof house for its turquoise tiles imported from China. Sporting designer clothes, shoes and sparkling jewels, the first lady, more than 40 years younger than Mugabe, became known as "Gucci Grace."

In the last months of Mugabe's rule the family's lavish ways became outlandish, even to Zimbabwe's jaded public. Grace Mugabe pressed a lawsuit against a Lebanese diamond dealer in which she charged she had paid him for a 100-carat diamond but he only gave her a gem of 30 carats. One of the couple's sons posted images on social media of himself pouring champagne over his diamond-encrusted watch.

The growing outrage among Zimbabweans at the excesses finally spilled over on Saturday, a few days after the military moved in to put Mugabe under house arrest, a the bulk of Harare's 1.6 million people thronged the streets to demand that the longtime president finally step aside.



AP Photo/Hussein Malla

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri, center, escorted by his bodyguards walks to pray over his father's grave, upon his arrival to Beirut, Lebanon, Tuesday.

## Lebanon's Hariri returns to Beirut amid resignation saga

BEIRUT (AP) — Saad Hariri returned to Lebanon late Tuesday for the first time since he stunned his country by announcing from Saudi Arabia that he was quitting as prime minister more than two weeks ago.

His resignation, made in an uncomfortable televised statement from Riyadh, set off an international political crisis involving Paris and Washington, who were left without one of their chief partners in a region swirling in conflict.

Hariri left Saudi Arabia for Paris on Saturday by invitation of French President Emmanuel Macron, before traveling on to Beirut by way of Egypt and Cyprus on Tuesday.

President Michel Aoun said he would not accept the resignation until Hariri delivered it in person.

Hariri, looking solemn upon his arrival, was driven from the airport to pray at the grave of his father, the late Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. He then retired to his home in central Beirut.

He was expected to join Aoun and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri at the army's independence day parade Wednesday.

Hariri was leading a coalition government with his political opponents in the militant group Hezbollah when he stunned Lebanon by announcing his resignation on Nov. 4. He accused Hezbollah of holding Lebanon hostage and hinted there was a plot against his life.

The announcement pushed Lebanon back to the forefront of a pounding regional rivalry

between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which until recently appeared to have a tacit agreement to find an accord to keep Lebanon stable.

It also set off speculation that Hariri had been forced to step down by the Gulf kingdom and was being held there against his will. His announcement was accompanied by a sharp intensification of Saudi rhetoric against Hezbollah, which the kingdom accuses of meddling on Iran's behalf in regional affairs.

Hezbollah has been fighting on the side of Syrian President Bashar Assad in that country's brutal civil war, where many of Assad's enemies are rebels backed by Saudi Arabia. The kingdom says Hezbollah is also advising Houthi rebels waging a war against Yemen's Saudi-backed government.

Hezbollah says Saudi Arabia has partnered with Israel to conspire against regional independence.

Hariri, in his only in depth interview since announcing his resignation, told his media station Future TV that he could retract his resignation if a deal could be struck with his opponents to distance Lebanon from regional conflicts.

Hariri's trek back from Saudi Arabia came by way of Paris, Egypt, and Cyprus, where he met with the presidents of those countries.

Egyptian President Abdel-Fatah el-Sissi and French leader Emmanuel Macron are reportedly trying to mediate a solution that would involve rolling back Hariri's resignation.

## Dramatic video shows escape, shooting of N. Korean defector

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A North Korean soldier races for the border in a jeep and then on foot before his former comrades shoot him at least five times as he limps into South Korea, where he collapses and is dragged to safety by southern soldiers on a dramatic video released by the U.S.-led U.N. command Wednesday.

The defection, subsequent surgeries and slow recovery of the soldier have riveted South Korea, but it will be a huge embarrassment for the North, which claims all defections are the result of rival Seoul kidnapping or enticing North Koreans to defect. Pyongyang has said nothing about the defection so far.

North Korea's actions during the defector's Nov. 13 escape at Panmunjom violated the armistice agreement ending the Korean War because North Korean soldiers fired across and physically crossed the border in pursuit of the soldier, Col. Chad G. Carroll, a spokesman for the U.N. command, told reporters in a live TV briefing.

The video shows the soldier speeding down a tree-lined road, headlights on, past dun-colored fields and shocked North Korean soldiers, who begin to run after him. He crashes the jeep into a ditch near the line that divides North and South and the blue huts familiar to anyone who's toured the area, which is the part of the border where North and South Korean soldiers face each other at their closest distance just feet apart. There were no tour groups at the time of the defection, Carroll said.

## VA study shows parasite from Vietnam may be killing veterans

HERALD, W.Va. (AP) — A half a century after serving in Vietnam, hundreds of veterans have a new reason to believe they may be dying from a silent bullet — test results show some men may have been infected by a slow-killing parasite while fighting in the jungles of Southeast Asia.

The Department of Veterans Affairs this spring commissioned a small pilot study to look into the link between liver flukes ingested through raw or undercooked fish and a rare bile duct cancer.

It can take decades for symptoms to appear. By then, patients are often in tremendous pain, with just a few months to live.

Of the 50 blood samples submitted, more than 20 percent came back positive or bordering positive for liver fluke antibodies, said Sung-Tae Hong,

## BRIEFLY



United Nations Command via AP

This combination of images made from Nov. 13 surveillance video released by the United Nations Command shows a North Korean soldier running from a jeep and then shot by North Korean soldiers in Panmunjom, North Korea, before collapsing across the border in South Korea.

the tropical medicine specialist who carried out the tests at Seoul National University in South Korea.

"It was surprising," he said, stressing the preliminary results could include false positives and that the research is ongoing.

Northport VA Medical Center spokesman Christopher Goodman confirmed the New York facility collected the samples and sent them to the lab. He would not comment on the findings, but said everyone who tested positive was notified.

Though rarely found in Americans, the parasites infect an estimated 25 million people worldwide.

Endemic in the rivers of Vietnam, the worms can easily be wiped out with a handful of pills early on, but left untreated they can live for decades without making their hosts sick. Over time, swelling and inflammation of the bile duct can lead to cancer. Jaundice, itchy skin, weight loss and other symptoms appear only when the disease is in its final stages.

## Haitians relieved to stay in U.S., upset status to end

MIAMI (AP) — Yolnick Jeune couldn't sleep for days, anxious over the fate of a program that has saved off the deportations of both herself and tens of thousands of other Haitians in the U.S.

Then, President Donald Trump's administration this week announced one last 18-month extension of the Temporary Protected Status that has allowed her to work and provide for her five children, including a 7-year-old, U.S.-born girl.

"I can breathe a little and get some rest. This buys me time to figure out what's next," Jeune said Tuesday in Miami's Little Haiti community, standing next to her daughter Lagranda.

But at the same time, Jeune is upset that the government on Monday said she and nearly 60,000 Haitians must return home July 2019, ruling out any further extensions of the immigration benefits given to Haitians who came before and in the aftermath of the Caribbean country's 2010 earthquake.

"I am very depressed to know that within 18 months, I have to go back," she said.

Having been in Miami since 2009, Jeune has not returned to Haiti but hears from her sister and other relatives back in her native Port-de-Paix that conditions have not improved for those whose lives were upended by the earthquake.

## Bombing at Nigeria mosque kills at least 50

LAGOS, Nigeria (AP) — A teenage suicide bomber attacked worshippers as they gathered for morning prayers Tuesday at a mosque in northeastern Nigeria, killing at least 50 people, police said, in one of the region's deadliest assaults in years.

Bloody debris covered the floor inside the mosque in Mubi town in Adamawa state where worshippers had arrived around 5 a.m. Outside, people gathered around the dead.

President Muhammadu Buhari tweeted that he was "saddened by the very cruel and dastardly suicide bombing attack."

"May the souls of the dead rest in peace," he added.

Police spokesman Othman Abubakar told The Associated Press they were "still trying to ascertain the number of injured because they are in various hospitals."

While there was no immediate claim of responsibility for the bombing, suspicion immediately fell on the Boko Haram extremist group.