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Nampula tragedy: Presidential Guard blocked gate, stopping people leaving

Actions of the Presidential Guard may be behind the Nampula tragedy, which killed 10 people and injured 98, according to a Bulletin investigation, talking to people attending the event, including journalists and police officers.

On Wednesday 11 September President Filipe Nyusi, standing for a second term as president, gave a speech at a "showmicio" (free music "show" + "comicio" or meeting) at Nampula's 25 June Football Stadium. It can accommodate 5,000 people seated, but many more were there, standing on the field. Filipe Nyusi had just left the stadium when thousands of people tried to leave at the same time using a single open gate. Some fell and were trampled to death. Curiously no television showed the moment of the incident, nor are smartphone images circulating on social networks, as might be expected. So we investigated.

Nampula is an opposition city, and Frelimo last won it in 2008. Municipal elections in 2013 were won by MDM, and a by-election in 2017 and municipal elections in 2018 were won by Renamo. So many in the audience were supporters who had been brought long distances to fill the stadium.

Thousands of people, including many who came for the free music, were stuck for long hours and could not leave. Nyusi was scheduled to arrive at 15.00 and after that no one could leave. He arrived a half hour late. His speech finished at 17.00. After Nyusi's convoy of luxury cars left through the main gate, thousands of people tried to leave on foot through the gate after the cars, but the gate was closed again and no one could leave.

People were crowding near the only gate that was open during the day but were not allowed out. As soon as Filipe Nyusi and his entourage left,

people who were bored all wanted to leave at the same time and the gate was closed again, causing a crush.

Many journalists left in convoy cars. But even journalists on foot were not allowed to leave. "I was able to sneak out through the small gate near the ticket window, because I was up against a deadline," one journalist told us.

Other Presidential candidates are protected by the police. But Filipe Nyusi, as the sitting President, is protected by the Presidential Guard (Casa Militar da Presidência da República). The Presidência website explains that "It is the function of the Casa Militar to protect the places occupied, permanently or provisionally, by the Head of State, including regulating and controlling access to areas occupied by the President of the Republic."

<https://www.presidencia.gov.mz/por/Presidencia/A-Casa-Militar>

It was the Casa Militar agents, directed by Brig. Eugénio Roque, who were in charge - not the police - and it was Casa Militar which blocked the three gates to the stadium.

The initial lack of information about the tragedy was because most journalists had already left with the president. As word spread, they ran to the Central Hospital, where they were blocked by Casa Militar. At gunpoint, Eufrásio Gilberto, a cameraman of HAQ Televisão, was forced to hand over his camera. Others were forced by Casa Militar to delete any pictures they had taken.

Police commander suspended, but he was not in charge

After the incident, Interior Minister Basílio Monteiro appointed an investigation commission of four senior police officer, and he suspended provincial police commander Joaquim Sive. But security at the event was not controlled by the police because it had been taken over by the Casa Militar which is specifically responsible for Presidential security.

As the Presidência website stresses: "The personnel of the Casa Militar come mainly from the armed forces and the police forces, on secondment basis. During the period of secondment, the personnel are totally subordinate to the Direction of the Casa Militar."

Police were not responsible for the showmicio security and the suspension of the Commander Joaquim Sive, who the local newspaper Ikweli called a "victim," seems to have been intended to distract attention from the security of the President

Basilio Monteiro acted as Interior Minister to suspend the provincial police commander, but he is also an interested party in the case. Monteiro was in Nampula at the scene of the incident accompanying Filipe Nyusi in the campaign. Basilio Monteiro is part of Nyusi's campaign as a member of the Frelimo Central Brigade in Zambézia Province.

National March for Cabo Delgado; just a minute of silence for Nampula

The day after the stadium horror, Filipe Nyusi took a helicopter to Mugovolas, where he proceeded with the election campaign. Mugovolas district is just over 100 kilometres from Nampula, towards the southern coast of the province.



The access roads are so precarious that only by air can you reach them quickly. At the first rally in Mugovolas, after the fatal incident, Nyusi called for a minute of silence for the victims of Nampula. He announced that he would not hold concerts in his campaign until the burial of those who died in the incident.

Without public announcement, Frelimo also decided that throughout the country, Saturday campaigning would be a "March against the attacks of Cabo Delgado". Posters of the march are illustrated with an image of Philip Nyusi in the foreground accompanied by a crowd of Frelimo supporters in a festive mood rather than grief and pain. The attacks of Cabo Delgado have been taking place since October 2017 and this is the first march against them. Is the march an attempt to erase the memory of the Nampula tragedy forget, which may have resulted from the irresponsibility of the security agents of the Presidential Guard?

CNE: 'We look anxiously to the next 28 days'

"We look very anxiously on the next twenty-eight days," the National Elections Commission told party agents Saturday. It cited the deaths in traffic accidents in caravans caused by drunken drivers, destruction of party posters, use of children in the campaign, and violence. "We should stop children from being involved in the election campaigns, inciting them to violence, sabotaging and destroying the materials and/or work of others. They should not see scenes of violence between campaigners dressed in different colours."

It was a strong statement in a campaign which has been more aggressive and violent than in past elections.

In its final exhortation, the CNE said: "Party parade members must drive responsibly to avoid loss of life on public roads and avoid alcohol consumption behind the wheel", and it called on the police to stop drunken drivers.

"In cases of detention of some party members or supporters, avoid demonstrating in front of police units to demand their release," the CNE appealed.

The CNE also called for an end to concealing the use of government cars in the campaign by covering their license plates: "Parade leaders should check road safety measures and avoid concealing license plates on vehicles and motorcycles with electoral propaganda material."

Nampula begins issuing observer credentials

Eleven observer credentials were issued last week to Nampula Bulletin correspondents - a start, but there are still dozens of Bulletin correspondents in Nampula without credentials.

The issuance of plasticized credentials in Nampula comes after much complaint and insistence from civil society organizations (CSOs) addressed to the Provincial Elections Commission which alleged that the machine to coat them in plastic was not working.

Unfortunately, the same has not happened in Zambézia province, where CSO observers have not yet been accredited and the response from the elections commission is a deafening silence.

Frelimo campaign paralyzes civil service in Nampula and leaves 1000s of students without classes

Hundreds of students from public schools were without study in all districts of Nampula province during the visit of Frelimo presidential candidate Filipe Nyusi.

On the afternoon of September 11, the day the Frelimo candidate campaigned in Nampula City, students from Nampula Secondary Schools, including Muatala and Maria de Luz Guebuza, did not take classes because the teachers and other civil servants went to campaign for Frelimo.

After visiting Mogovolas and Mossuril on the 12th, on Friday (13 Sept), the Frelimo presidential candidate Monapo and later Nacala-Porto. In Monapo district, there were no classes in all schools because teachers were summoned by the District Education, Youth and Technology Service (SDEJT) to attend the Frelimo candidate rally, our correspondents reported. The teachers were tasked to assist in the preparation of the event at party headquarters level.

The same thing happened in Nacala-Porto, where Nyusi moved after Monapo. Students in the Primary and Secondary Schools in that district were told by the principals of their respective schools not to attend classes because the Frelimo candidate had visited that district. At some schools there was no early warning and students arrived to find the school doors closed as if it were a holiday.

In Liupo district, also in Nampula, civil servants, mostly teachers, paralyzed their activities with the

arrival of Frelimo Assistant Carlos Mesquita, and the students were left without classes.

Voters cards for cyclone relief food

"Anyone who refuses to hand over their voter's card is threatened with not receiving donations for IDAI cyclone victims," said Pedro Matengure, Renamo political delegate in Marera, Macate district, Manica. On Thursday he claimed that local officials are collecting voter cards for unclear purposes, claiming to be registering residents on the voter card base.

Also in the Mecate district, Renamo suspended their campaign for lack of propaganda material claiming that it was destroyed by Frelimo. Matengure said the material received in the early days of the vote-hunting process was vandalized by Frelimo members, allegedly at the behest of the local secretary, José Viagem.

Renamo accused of 2 attacks on Moatize

Renamo supporters stormed the residence of Frelimo's cell secretary, known as Vinho, in Palombe village, according Augusto Chaleca, the local chief of Nkonedzi, Tete. According to Chaleca, the group was headed by the Renamo delegate by the name of Nhoca and another named Domingos. According to the correspondents of the Bulletin, the attackers were accompanied by loud music and flags.

Chaleca also accused Renamo of assaulting and injuring a community leader, Joaquim Tsamba, in the village of Tchessa, Moatize district, on Monday on Monday 9 September.

According to Chaleca, four Renamo members ambushed and beat the victim, who was taken to the Health Centre of the Zobue administrative post.

Ossufo barred from Milange stadium

Milange district officials told Renamo it could not use of the municipal stadium for presidential candidate Ossufo Momade's rally on Saturday afternoon (September 14) allegedly because an event had already been scheduled at the venue, the Renamo Political Delegate Joaquim Dinala reported. at that point in the country,.

According to the report, at the time of Ossufo Momade's arrival in the district, the stadium where the rally was to be held had been occupied by members of Frelimo who were gathered there. Instead the rally was held at Renamo party headquarters.




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Detailed coverage 2019 national elections is again being provided by the *Mozambique Political Process Bulletin*, which has covered all of Mozambique's multi-party elections. We will have a large team of local journalists throughout the country, ensuring that our reports are accurate and verified.

The elections newsletter is also in Portuguese; para subscrever <http://eepurl.com/gnZXPz>

The newsletters covering the 2018 local elections are on <http://bit.ly/LocEI2018>

Newsletters from 2013 local elections and 2014 national elections are on <http://bit.ly/2H066Kg>

There are two archives of historic elections data, at IESE on <http://www.iese.ac.mz/eleicoes-resultados/> and at London School of Economics on <http://bit.ly/MozEIData>

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