

Election officials charged with vote fraud

by UPI

HARARE, Zimbabwe -- Police said they arrested five Zimbabwean election officials for allegedly under-counting votes cast for President Robert Mugabe in last month's election. The officials, accused of taking nearly 5,000 votes away from Mugabe, were charged with fraud and criminal abuse of duty, the BBC reported. Meanwhile, U.S. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has joined international calls for an urgent release of the results. High Court Judge Tendai Uchena Monday dismissed the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission's argument that the court lacked jurisdiction, scheduling to hear the case Tuesday. The judge said he would decide whether to treat it as an urgent case before hearing arguments. The main opposition party, the Movement for Democratic Change, has sought a court ruling to publish the results of the March 29 elections. The MDC said its leader, Morgan Tsvangirai, won the election by a clear majority. Independent sources, however, said Tsvangirai won but collected less than 50 percent of the vote, meaning a runoff between Tsvangirai and Mugabe would be required. Mugabe's Zanu-PF is seeking a recount.

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