

SA tightens controls, deports 15 000 Zimbabweans

Times Live reports that about 15 000 Zimbabweans have been deported from South Africa since October last year - and that those who are trying to enter SA to seek asylum are struggling to get the border passes they need to apply for asylum status.

Cape Town-based organisation People Against Suffering Oppression and Poverty (Passop) said there was rampant corruption in the process, and desperate asylum-seekers have been buying the border passes.

Passop alleges that desperate asylum-seekers buy forged border passes for R1500 each so they can apply for permits. It said about 1700 applicants receive their permits every month. This figure is much lower than the number of Zimbabweans deported every month. "Over the past four weeks, the most pressing issue has been that virtually no newcomers are being allowed to apply for asylum. All who do not have a so-called 'border pass' were prohibited from lodging their application," Passop said.

According to Times Live, Passop announced that, together with the Legal Resource Centre, "we are an applicant in an ongoing court case against the Department of Home Affairs concerning this issue." Beitbridge border post official Charles Gwede said that 14932 Zimbabweans were deported through Beitbridge border post "since [...] October 7 last year. Between January 1 and March 2, 7177 Zimbabweans were brought back home," Over 250000 Zimbabweans have been regularised so far. Statistics reveal that most of the deportees are men and that they intend to return.

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