

Grace Mugabe fined five cows and two goats for improper burial of Zimbabwe dictator

Written by Administrator
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Fred Harter – 07/09/2021

The widow of the former Zimbabwe dictator [Robert Mugabe](#) is challenging a fine of five cows and two goats imposed by a traditional leader for improperly burying her husband's body.

[Grace Mugabe](#) is also seeking to overturn an order, issued by the same leader in May, to exhume her husband's body and rebury it at a purpose-built mausoleum in the capital, Harare.

Mugabe, who died in September 2019 aged 95, was buried at his home village of Kutama, 55 miles west of Harare, following [weeks of wrangling](#) over where his remains should be laid to rest.

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President Mnangagwa had planned for Mugabe to be interred at Hero's Acre, a national shrine, and members of the ruling Zanu-PF party claimed at the time that the late tyrant's remains "belong to Zanu-PF first, not the family".

However, the Mugabe family said that he had wished to be buried at his ancestral home. They also claimed that Mugabe gave orders that Grace should watch over his body until it was buried out of fears that superstitious Zanu-PF members might use his remains "for rituals and witchcraft".

Since then, senior ruling party officials have repeatedly called for Mugabe to be dug up and reburied at the national site. Some sources have claimed that traditional elders have been offered cars and cash bribes to intervene in the dispute.

Mugabe's nephew has claimed the real reason Mnangagwa wants to exhume his predecessor's body is to lay his hands on a [mystical sceptre](#) believed to have been buried with Mugabe, which "he [Mnangagwa] believes will give him the authority to be the leader of Zimbabwe".

After Chief Zvimba fined Grace five cows and two goats and ordered the exhumation in May, Mugabe's children lodged an appeal against the decision. However, a magistrate upheld the traditional chief's order last month, prompting Grace to step in with a fresh appeal to the High Court.

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Mugabe died in a private clinic in Singapore nearly two years after a military coup ended his 37-year rule. His downfall was prompted by a feud between Mnangagwa and Grace Mugabe, 56, who many ruling party members believed exercised undue influence over her ailing husband.

Mugabe was buried in a steel coffin topped with heavy rectangular blocks and his grave was filled in with concrete. A spokesman for his family said that they wanted to ensure that the casket was “tamper-proof” to prevent grave-robbers from digging it up.