

# **Zim diamond mines to set up own power**

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Harare - A handful of diamond mining companies affected by crippling power cuts in Zimbabwe have been forced to set up their own dedicated \$36m power line, a newspaper reported on Sunday.

The five companies with operations in Chiadzwa diamond fields, in the east of the country, would have to raise at least 60% of the total cost of installing the line, the official Sunday Mail reported.

According to the report, "erratic" power supplies meant miners' efforts to realise their full potential were "stifled".

Zimbabwe's cash-strapped state power utility is owed more than \$100m by consumers. Earlier this month, it caused an uproar by raising tariffs by an average of more than 30%.

If the mining companies pay for the power line, they will only be charged half the going tariff, said the Sunday Mail.

Diamonds were first discovered in Chiadzwa in 2006, sparking a gold-style rush to the area before the military drove out illegal miners in 2008. Human rights groups said up to 200 of them were killed in the operation.

Separate reports on Sunday said diamonds have recently been discovered in Murehwa, 79km from the capital Harare, sparking another rush.

Mines Minister [Obert Mpofu](#) was quoted as saying he would send geologists to investigate.