



ZAMBIA HEADED FOR DEBT DEFAULT ...with little prospect of recovery - Fitch

By Stuart Lisulo
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We don't know yet whether political parties will be allowed to campaign in prison - Wina

By Julia Malunga
VICE-President Inonge Wina says there is no modality for inmates to take part in the 2021 general elections, and that the law is currently being reviewed to incorporate political activities at correctional facilities. **Story page 3**



Lungu didn't have scheduled trip to Southern Province - Chipampe

By Julia Malunga
SPECIAL Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Isaac Chipampe says there were no plans for President Edgar Lungu to visit Southern Province this week, contrary to UPND's claim. This came to light following reports that the Head of State had cancelled his trip, reportedly out of fear of being booed. **Story page 2**

Inflation rises to 15.7%

By Diggers Reporter
THE annual rate of inflation has marginally increased to 15.7 per cent in September, up from 15.5 per cent recorded in August, mainly induced by price increases in non-food items, according to the Zambia Statistics Agency (ZSA). **Story page 10**

PF warns its members against extorting money from unsuspecting people

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
PATRIOTIC Front (PF) national youth chairperson Kelvin Sampa says the party will not tolerate any member who uses the name of the party to extort money from the public. And Sampa has warned that he will not hesitate to crack the whip on anyone found wanting, regardless of position. Speaking at a press briefing in Lusaka, Thursday, Sampa also said youths who wish to conduct any party activities must only do so with permission from executive committees and while wearing approved party regalia. "I addressed all youths of the Patriotic Front to reiterate..." **Story page 10**

Asking for debt suspension an admission of bankruptcy – Musokotwane
Story page 10

ZICA investigating HoneyBee, I.Dore alleged audit fraud

Story page 6



Hakainde Hichilema
@HHichilema

The cowardly Mwankoles have ordered the Police in Kasama arrest 3 UPND campaign officials, Deputy SG Patrick Mucheleka, Campaign Manager for the Lukashya parliamentary by-election, Elias Mubanga and National IPS Samuel Ngwira.
#Fikapwa

11:08 AM · Sep 14, 2020 · Twitter for Android

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FIKAPWA!

#BallyWillFiXIt



By Natasha Sakala

MINES Minister Richard Musukwa says government will ensure that workers at Mopani Copper Mine are protected as discussions for its eventual takeover are expected to be concluded in the shortest possible time.

And Musukwa says the purpose of ZCCM-IH increasing its shareholding in Mopani is to have controlling stake, but it will later look for a business partner to operate the mine.

Musukwa was responding to various issues raised by the Mineworkers' Union, who stressed the need for workers to go through a fresh employment process so that they could access benefits for the work done for Glencore.

The Union equally expressed concern over the owning of shares by workers in Mopani as Glencore proceeded to sell off its shares to ZCCM-IH, among other would-be investors.

"We do not want the new company or the new entity to move into the platform with liabilities. We would like that all those issues will be addressed and it applies to the issues of KCM. We want to ensure that all the issues surrounding workers, workers' conditions of service, especially those who have worked in the past, are addressed so that as people go to another platform, they go on a clean slate. But tell bashi mine, not ukwamba ukukongola ngabaya pa zero mileage (tell the miners not to start getting credit because they have reached zero mileage); getting credits on benefits that they have not yet seen. They must use this money that they have worked for many years to invest in some sustainable future processes

ZCCM-IH's planned Mopani takeover will involve business partner to run mine – Musukwa

that should be able to help them when they retire," Musukwa said.

"What we are just careful, as government and the negotiating team is that, we don't want us to get into the story of KCM, which was sold for US \$25 million and the following day, we were told that money was recovered. We don't want to be a laughing stock of the negotiating process that's why we want to ensure that key professionals undertake the process. That's why ZCCM-IH has appointed a transaction advisor, who is actually also trying to run through all things once they are done. So, we would like to assure the workers at Mopani that as we negotiate out of this difficult challenge, we are very confident that we will come out of this process in the shortest possible time, and that that all the issues that you have raised are being tackled so that we create a full package for everyone."

He added that the negotiation team had made progress with conclusions expected at the earliest convenience.

"I also want to assure you that the technical team negotiating this process has made very good progress, in fact, that is how now we have ensured that the unions are part of the negotiations so that we are able to send the information across to the public and the people out there so that there is no gap in terms of information. I can assure that we are looking at concluding these discussions at the earliest convenience and must commend Glencore that

they have been extremely very forthright coming in terms of ensuring that we conclude these processes," Musukwa said.

And he explained that the purpose of ZCCM-IH increasing its shareholding in Mopani was to have controlling stake, but it would later look for a business partner to operate the mine.

"Now, I know that there has been issues from several entities, including politicians, as regards the competence of ZCCM-IH to run and operate Mopani. We have firmly indicated that ZCCM-IH's expression of interest to grow the shareholding is meant

to have controlling shares. In this instance, Glencore has said they do not want to continue operating or investing in Mopani, what are we supposed to do? To force Glencore to continue? Government is an option of the last resort in this case and that's why we have allowed ZCCM-IH to proceed on this trajectory as a platform merely as a platform for offloading these shares and then you know very well that our directive to ZCCM-IH is to ensure they operate as a business, then they are going to look for a business partner to operate the mine," Musukwa explained.

"ZCCM-IH is not mobilising resources from government, they will mobilise resources from international platforms in terms of partners. In brief, just to help the 'doubting Nichodemus,' ZCCM-IH will find partners; they can find any partner and structure a model in terms of shareholding. If you [workers] are coming on board to be shareholders, that will be good because we want this to run at an economic platform, and for a long time, the people of Zambia have not had an opportunity to be real shareholders in the mining industry, which commands 80 per cent of our economic performance. What we are looking forward to is also indigenous Zambians should come and be part of the shareholding."

Meanwhile, the minister said the government would ensure a credible investor takes over KCM's operations from Vedanta to guarantee continued operations at the mine.

"I know that the liquidation process for KCM has taken extremely long, but there is no case that lasts forever. We were frustrated with several court processes. As a law abiding government, we have been religiously following these processes and we know that these issues are now nearing conclusion and we think that government will move in to ensure that a credible investor comes on-board and ensures that we guarantee the operations of KCM. What KCM requires is fresh injection

of capital in order to ensure that ramping up takes effect and the project, especially KDMP projects, becomes a reality and guarantees the future," Musukwa said.

"We feel that the resource that lies at KCM is the future of Zambia, the resource that lies at Mopani is the future of Zambia and we feel that put together, the mining industry still remains buoyant and will create huge employment and contribute to our economic trajectory."

The Chililabombwe PF member of parliament further disclosed that four companies had expressed interest in taking over Chambishi Metals.

"We have told our colleagues at Chambishi that after the 30 days expired, we have actually received expressions of interest from various entities that want to take over the operation and invest. So, we have started the process because we cannot continue with business as usual. The same operation we have had presentations from four different companies that have given us a serious projection of how they can restart the operations so we have asked our colleagues that this is the process that we are embarking to ensure that we guarantee job security and also the economic trajectory in our areas, especially Chambeshi, Kitwe," said Musukwa.

Glencore Plc is facilitating the offloading of 90 per cent shareholding in Mopani to ZCCM-IH.

The Swiss-based commodity and mining company had earlier this year announced its intention to place Mopani on care and maintenance, signalling its desire to exit the Zambian mining sector amid its huge operational costs.

Lungu didn't have scheduled trip to Southern Province – Chipampe

By Julia Malunga

SPECIAL Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Isaac Chipampe says there were no plans for President Edgar Lungu to visit Southern Province this week, contrary to UPND's claim.

This came to light following reports that the Head of State had cancelled his trip, reportedly out of fear of being booted.

In an interview, Chipampe said the President was surprised that people were creating trips for him.

"He has not cancelled his trip. There was no trip in the first place so where has that come from? Do you remember the President announcing the trip? Do you remember me announcing the trip? So the people who are claiming that the President was supposed to travel should explain everything since they have now taken over my job or the job of the President himself," said Chipampe.

"The President was surprised that people are creating trips for him and even speculating and people are being paranoid suddenly. The President is not going anywhere. Everyone was surprised when we read all these conspiracy theories."

We don't know yet whether political parties will be allowed to campaign in prison – Wina

By Julia Malunga

VICE-President Inonge Wina says there is no modality for inmates to take part in the 2021 general elections, and that the law is currently being reviewed to incorporate political activities at correctional facilities.

Responding to a question raised by Monze UPND member of parliament Jack Mwiimbu who wanted to find out what modalities were put in place in order to facilitate for the participation of inmates in the 2021 general elections and whether the modalities allowed political parties to access correctional facilities and campaign, Wina said there was a mapping exercise undertaken in all the correctional facilities.

"I wish to inform this August House that the Zambia Correctional Service working with the Electoral Commission of Zambia and the stakeholders have undertaken a mapping exercise in all the correctional facilities across the country. The purpose of this exercise is to collect data on how many prisoners are in possession of National Registration Cards and Voter Registration Cards. The House may wish to note that ECZ is the only institution mandated to plan the election modalities regarding political parties to access and campaign in correctional centres. The Law is being reviewed to incorporate the voting of inmates. Once the law is amended, it will spell out the rules and regulations that will govern and operationalise the election system with regard to voting by inmates," Vice-President Wina said.

When asked if the political parties were being consulted, Wina said they would be consulted when the laws were finalised.

"This is a new phenomenon for Zambia to have prisoners participate in elections. The ECZ has to look at all the pieces of legislation that will facilitate this exercise. The Law Development of Zambia is being engaged to look at the relevant laws that will respond to this situation that has arisen in the country. And once that has been finalised, I believe the political parties will be engaged in the modalities of conducting the participation of prisoners in elections and rules and regulations that will govern the



campaigns in these correctional centres," she said.

Zambezi East member of parliament Brian Kambita wondered what was compelling the ruling party to have prisoners voting in the next elections, but Wina said the government was merely following the court ruling.

"This is not an idea that is imposed on the Zambian people by the PF government. This is a court ruling that this government is following. However if a member feels that this law is contrary to the way the Zambians conduct their business, the member is free to contest this particular ruling in court because the government is merely following what the court has decided and ruled in favour of. Equally the PF is not as excited as the honourable member may think in this situation but because we have to follow the law, we had to put modalities in place to address the issue," Wina responded.

Meanwhile, Namwala member of parliament Moono Lubezhi wanted to know whether she would be allowed to campaign in a correctional facility, and the Vice-President said it was not known whether or not political parties would be allowed to campaign in correctional facilities.

"The modalities of how to go about campaigning in the correctional centres are still being worked out by ECZ in conjunction with other governmental relevant institutions. For now, the PF have not been engaged and other political parties have not been engaged to inform us of how to go about this situation. I believe when these measures have been considered and finalised, the modalities will be given to the relevant political parties so that they can start their work in the prisons or we may not be allowed to go in those centres. We do not know yet," said Wina.

Civil rights activist musicians seek Chief Justice's intervention in ECZ case

By Julia Malunga

MUSICIANS involved in civil activism have written Chief Justice Irene Mambilima, requesting her to intervene in a matter where they sued the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) in the Lusaka High Court but the matter has not taken off.

In this matter, musicians Chama Fumba popularly known as Pilato, Maiko Zulu, Brian Bwembya, also known as B-Flow, and two others, applied for leave in the Lusaka High Court to commence Judicial Review proceedings against the decision of the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) to compel duly registered voters to present themselves before registration officers for verification under a new register for the 2021 general elections.

When the matter came up on September 22, it could not take off as Judge-in-charge Gertrude Chawatama was reportedly in quarantine after being exposed to COVID-19.

In a letter signed by Pilato, Thursday, the artists said the matter was urgent.

"Dear Your Ladyship, as citizens in our beloved country Zambia, we feel that we have a right and duty to contribute to good governance, human rights and social well being of all people. It is in this regard that we started an action against the Electoral Commission of Zambia. We strongly feel that the current voters registration exercise will disenfranchise a lot of Zambians and that this is not allowed by the law. Most importantly, we brought this action in the courts of law based on our individual and collective desire to see to it that important questions of governance are addressed by our courts. We filed our case on the 11th of September 2020, despite the matter being extremely urgent it took some time to allocate the matter. 11 days later on 21st September, 2020 our matter was supposed to be

heard," read the letter in part.

"However, it was adjourned due to the fact that the judge was in self isolation as she had been in contact with a person exposed to Covid-19. We understand that we are living in uncertain times with the Covid-19 pandemic and as such we wish the judge, a well and quick recovery in the event that she caught the infection. In this light we wish to express our sincere concern that while we understand the public health reasons for isolation, this may lead to delay in the determination of a matter which is urgent and should be of interest to every Zambian."

Pilato stated that it was the desire of the petitioners to enter into an election year without many unresolved issues surrounding the electoral process.

"Our concern comes from the need to ensure that our case is not overtaken by events bearing in mind the time frame set for the registration. It is our desire to ensure that we enter into an election year without so many unresolved issues surrounding the electoral process. In this regard the speedy resolution of this and other like matters is urgent to ensure a smooth election period," stated Pilato.

"We have a chance to develop our democracy and tell the world how mature we are, hence, no matter the outcome, at least the matter can be treated with the time sensitivity that the subject demands. It is not our place to request or ask you to act according to our wishes but you agree that this matter requires urgent attention as such if the Judge allocated to deal with our case is in isolation shouldn't the matter be reallocated in view of the urgency. We thank you most sincerely and wish you and all the other judges and court officials good health in these uncertain times"

Nakacinda a PF agent, Mofu tells court

By Zondiwe Mbewe

MMD deputy national secretary Gregory Mofu has submitted to the Lusaka High Court that nominated member of parliament Raphael Nakacinda is not a genuine MMD member, adding that the latter is in fact an agent of the PF.

And Mofu has further submitted that Nakacinda was duly expelled from the party in accordance with the provisions of the MMD constitution.

This is a matter in which Nakacinda has sued MMD in the Lusaka High Court seeking a declaration that his purported expulsion from the party is

invalid and void.

Nakacinda, who has sued Elizabeth Chitika in her capacity as MMD national secretary, further wants an order of interim injunction restraining Chitika either by herself or agents from continued interference with his membership in the MMD.

He also wants a declaration that his purported expulsion from the MMD was illegal by reason of procedural impropriety and absolute defiance of the established rules of natural justice.

However, according to an affidavit in opposition to summons for an order of interim injunction filed recently, Mofu argued that Nakacinda was duly expelled in accordance with the provisions of the party constitution, and that by articles 52 (2) and 19 (n) of the said constitution, the MMD NEC had powers to take disciplinary remedies.

He added that it was, therefore, evident that there were no grounds upon which an injunction as sought by Nakacinda could be entertained.

Mofu stated that the issue relating to Nakacinda's expulsion was even debated in Parliament on June 27, 2020, and that it was a matter of public record that the Speaker ruled that Nakacinda does not sit as an MMD member, but rather as a PF nominee.

"The plaintiff (Nakacinda) having been suspended and subsequently expelled is not a genuine MMD member as [he]

is in fact an agent of the Patriotic Front whose sole purpose has been to destabilize the MMD," he stated.

Mofu stated that Nakacinda had refused to accept the judgement of the High Court dated November 5, 2019, under cause No. 2016/HP/0989 and still holds illegal meetings where he purports to still be MMD national secretary.

He charged that the behaviour only confirmed the fact that Nakacinda was very undisciplined, and that the MMD as a party had no interest in continuing petty squabbles with him, hence the expulsion.

Mofu submitted that Nakacinda had deliberately omitted pertinent facts necessary to be brought to the court's attention in order for it to make a reasoned decision in the matter.

He stated that Nakacinda was suspended from the MMD as far back as February 22, 2016, and continued to be suspended, having at no point challenged his suspension, until his expulsion on June 22, 2020.

Mofu stated that despite being suspended and, therefore, having no powers, authority or rights to carry out any responsibilities, Nakacinda, along with other expelled and suspended members, proceeded to organise an illegal convention, contrary to the MMD constitution.

He stated that Nakacinda's illegal actions, among other expelled and suspended

members of the MMD, resulted in the commencement of a matter under cause No. 2016/HP/0989, in which the Court confirmed in its judgement that Nakacinda was in fact a suspended member of the party.

"By judgement dated November 5, 2019, the Honourable Justice Sharon Nwema held that the plaintiff (Nakacinda), together with Mr Felix Mutati, Mr Mwansa Mbulakulima and Mr George Kangwa (co-defendants under the above cited cause number), had no power to call convention and address any meeting or convention of the party and further ordered that the Registrar of Societies rectify the register of office holders of the MMD forthwith to those before the convention was held," Mofu stated.

"The said judgement further confirms that the plaintiff was in fact a suspended member of the party and could not enjoy rights of membership to it."

Mofu stated that contrary to Nakacinda's assertion, he (Nakacinda) was duly charged by letter dated November 19, 2019, which letter he deliberately chose not to act upon having been called and advised of the disciplinary proceedings.

He added that Nakacinda was given every opportunity to be heard, but neglected or refused to attend before the disciplinary committee.

Mofu stated that as was duly deliberated by Justice Nwema, Nakacinda as suspended

member of the MMD, and more so now that he was expelled, had no locus standi to seek an injunction or purport to assert any rights as member of the MMD.

"In any event, the expulsion has already occurred and this Honourable Court cannot reverse what has already happened as was the case in the matter commenced by Felix Mutati under cause No. 2016/HP/0388 resulting in the ruling of Honourable Justice Chanda dated March 22, 2016," he stated.

Mofu stated that this was not fit and proper case for the Court to grant order or interim injunction.

Nakacinda had stated in his statement of claim that he was informed by Chitika in a letter dated June 22, 2020, that he had been expelled from the party on alleged grounds of arrogance, insubordination and disregard for the party leadership, among others.

He stated that Chitika accused him of holding meetings in Lusaka, Chipata, Luangwa and other places around the country and that he continued to bring the name of the MMD party into disrepute and slander, thereby, injuring the party's name and abrogating sections of the MMD constitution.

Nakacinda stated that he was neither formally charged on any of the grounds alleged in the letter nor was he ever given an opportunity to be heard on the allegations leveled against him by the defendant.

PUBLIC APOLOGY

ON 12th April 2020, I issued a statement where I accused the executive of the Law Association of Zambia of occupying their office illegally. I made that statement without properly looking at the provision of the law and I ended up misleading the public. I would therefore like to apologise to the [former] president of the Law Association of Zambia, Mr. Eddie Mwitwa, and his executive for that statement and to the entire legal profession for bringing it into disrepute. I would also like to apologise to the members of the public for misleading them with my statement.
Hon Tutwa Ngulube, MP

By Stuart Lisulo

FITCH Ratings has downgraded Zambia's credit rating to 'C' from 'CC', meaning the country is in imminent default with little prospect of recover.

Fitch has also downgraded Zambia's rating on its senior unsecured foreign-currency bonds, mainly triggered by the Zambian government's request to suspend debt interest payments on its US \$3 billion worth of Eurobonds.

In a press release issued via Fitch's Hong Kong bureau, Thursday, Fitch Ratings downgraded Zambia's long-term foreign-currency issuer default rating (IDR) to 'C' from 'CC', while equally downgrading the ratings on Zambia's senior unsecured foreign-currency bonds included in the "consent solicitation" to 'C' from 'CC', which includes all the foreign-currency bonds rated by Fitch.

This means that Zambia's credit rating has significantly

Zambia headed for loan default, with little prospect of recovery – Fitch

dropped on the back of the Zambian government's appeal to bond holders to suspend debt interest payments on all its US \$3 billion worth of Eurobonds.

According to Fitch, the development has now signalled Zambia's imminent loan default, being the first African country to ask for debt suspension on its Eurobond.

"...The downgrade reflects Fitch's view that a sovereign default will follow the 'consent solicitation' issued by the Zambian government on suspending debt service payments on its three outstanding global bonds. A suspension in payments, if agreed to by bondholders, would constitute

a Distressed Debt Exchange (DDE) in Fitch's view. The authorities have indicated that they will continue to make debt service payments on outstanding Eurobonds if an agreement is not reached. However, Fitch judges that there is a high risk of a missed debt payment over the forecast horizon," Fitch warned.

"On 22 September, the government of Zambia issued a 'consent solicitation' to holders of three global bonds, requesting a suspension of debt service payments for six months from 14 October, 2020, effectively covering the upcoming three coupon payments due on 14 October, 2020, 30 January, 2021 and 20 March, 2021, on

the respective bonds. Fitch deems this formal request to be the initiation of a default-like process, consistent with a 'C' rating. Should majorities of creditors agree to the request at the thresholds specified in collective action clauses, the payment standstill would constitute a DDE under Fitch's criteria given that it entails a material reduction in terms and is needed to avoid an outright default."

Fitch downgraded Zambia's rating to 'CC' on April 16 to indicate the increasing likelihood of a default event as a result of constrained external liquidity was exacerbated by the shock from the Coronavirus pandemic.

In a major announcement, Tuesday, Secretary to the Treasury Fredson Yamba conceded that the Zambian government was under severe fiscal stress, which necessitated an urgent appeal to bond holders to suspend Eurobond interest debt payments, effective October 14.

"The Ministry of Finance has announced a Consent Solicitation to holders of its (i) US \$750 million, 5.375 per cent; notes due 2022; (ii) US \$1,000,000,000, 8.500 per cent; notes due 2024 and (iii) US \$1,250,000,000, 8.970 per cent; notes due 2027 to request the suspension of debt service payments for a period of six months from October 14, 2020, effectively covering the upcoming three coupon payments due on 14 October, 2020, 30 January, 2021, and 20 March, 2021 on the respective notes. The Republic of Zambia is confronted with a very challenging macroeconomic and fiscal situation aggravated by the COVID-19 crisis that has

severely affected the country's public finances," Yamba said in the statement.

"A combination of declining revenues and increased unbudgeted costs caused by the COVID-19 pandemic have resulted in a material impact on the government's available resources to make timely payments on its indebtedness leading to increasing debt servicing difficulties. This is the reason why the Republic of Zambia has taken the decision to apply for the G20 Debt Service Suspension initiative in August, 2020, and is requesting similar debt service suspension from its commercial creditors, including note-holders."

Zambia issued three Eurobonds worth US \$750 million, US \$1 billion and US \$1.25 billion in 2012, 2014 and 2015, with the US \$750 million and US \$1 billion bonds maturing in 2022 and 2024, respectively.

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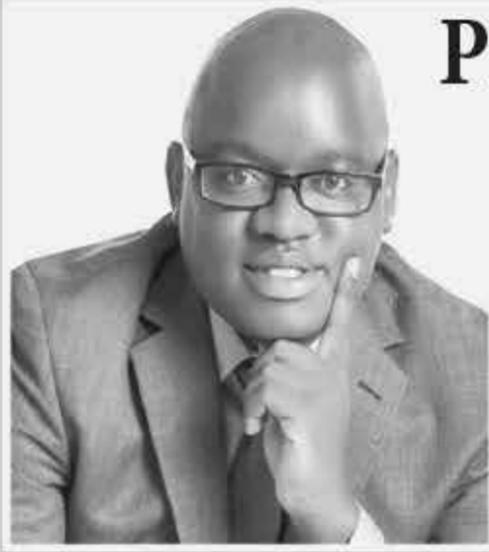
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Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit

According to their website, here is a brief history and objectives of the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit:

"The Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) was created in 1994, as a permanently established statutory government agency, forming part of the Office of the Vice President, charged with the responsibility of ensuring the achievement of the nation's Disaster Management Objectives. The Unit draws its powers from the Disaster Management ACT No. 13 of 2010. The overall implementation and coordination of all disaster management activities and programs in the country is done through the DMMU. The Unit exercises its mandate through the National Disaster Management Council of Ministers, Disaster Management Technical Committee of Permanent Secretaries and appropriate broad-based committees at Provincial, District and Satellite levels. The Unit is headed by the National Coordinator, who is at the level of a Permanent Secretary.

The Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit (DMMU) is vested in the Office of the Vice President and was created in 1994. The following are the objectives of DMMU:

1. To put in place appropriate preparedness measures in order to manage disasters effectively and efficiently
2. To activate response mechanism for effective and timely search and rescue operations in order to save life and reduce damage to property.
3. To put in place measures to restore livelihoods and other life support systems to affected communities.
4. To mitigate the disruptive and destructive effects of hazards and all disasters in order to reduce their impact on vulnerable communities, assets and the environment
5. To put in place preventive measures in order to reduce the negative effect of hazards and strengthen the national capacity for disaster management in order to avoid the adverse impact of hazards.
6. To effectively co-ordinate disaster management activities through a body of procedures and practices in order to avoid duplication of efforts and resources at all levels." That above is the brief background and objectives of the DMMU. However, lately the

DMMU has become notoriously famous for the wrong reasons. There is no dispute that the level of abuse of government agencies under the PF government is unimaginable gross. This one unit the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit is one that has been abused for political mileage by the ruling Patriotic Front. As PAC a political party that consistently participates in elections, we have seen firsthand how the distribution of various goods in places where elections are happening takes place in the name of DMMU. This is blatant abuse of office by those that are running the DMMU. We will not be surprised if the DMMU is enlisted as the machinery for rigging in 2021 by the ruling PF.

As PAC we don't have an issue with the objectives of the Disaster Management and Mitigation Unit but we have a problem with weak institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission that seem not to have powers to deal with such matters. Clearly there is blatant abuse of the country's resources here and just like in most government departments. However, what's so gross about this department is that it's being used to hoodwink people to believe that the PF does care when in fact not. It's being used to impair the vision of the people especially in rural areas where they are desperate to survive another day not to choose their representatives well. All this because of a few greedy people.

We have issues with how this country is being run and no normal person should be happy with what is happening in this country. Everything is being done just so that a few greedy people can continue being in power at the expense of the millions suffering Zambians. Clearly the DMMU's main objective currently is not to follow its core objectives but to be used as a tool for campaigns for the ruling Patriotic Front and this we have seen with our own naked eyes.

Abuse of office like Corruption is a cancer. As we have said it before, it's clear that if we fight it, we can win half the battle of the challenges we are facing as a country. Our politics have affected the fight to stamp out corruption. Successive governments have embraced the old rotten systems because it aids them to hold on to power and because they want to continue looting.

The DMMU's objective like above is to put in place appropriate preparedness measures

in order to manage disasters effectively and efficiently. This country has a lot of disasters be it natural or manmade and if the DMMU is being used to focus its energy to position the PF favorably among voters, then our people will suffer tremendously until we have the right leadership. We don't think this country is prepared to deal with disasters. We should thank God that in as much as we have lost our loved ones through COVID, MTSRIP, we were a little bit spared compared with countries in Europe. Otherwise this DMMU which has become a donation department of the PF would not have managed to do anything.

The other objective is to activate a response mechanism for effective and timely search and rescue operations in order to save life and reduce damage to property. Most of these response operations are mere propaganda aimed at PF strongholds. It seems like nothing in the interest of the people, takwaba fye where people are just interested in power and ignoring the real issues affecting the people. The PAC will put in place a DMMU that will work for all the people in need regardless of their region.

It's clear from the objectives of DMMU that we have institutions that have been established to help this country in times of need but due to the kind of leadership we have these same institutions have been twisted for politics. We would like to emphasize that if we want to see meaningful change in our country, we need to change our politics. We need our politics fixed before we can even talk about development. Our politics is the biggest challenge to Zambia's development today. We need to create politics that will focus more on creating solutions and discussing ideas as opposed to the interest of a few people. We need leaders who will focus more on fixing the economy and creating jobs as opposed to focusing on fixing political opponents.

There are a lot of wrong things that we have accepted in the name of politics, which if they were to happen in other jurisdictions, they would be total crimes. Hence, the idea that wrongs are acceptable in politics must be wiped. Clearly, for our nation to prosper, we need to change our politics. We need a change of mind-set; we need a change of system. We need PAC.

About the Author
Andyford Mayele Banda
President
People's Alliance for Change (PAC)

ZICA says it is investigating HoneyBee, I.Dore's alleged audit fraud

By Julia Malunga

THE Zambia Institute of Chartered Accountants (ZICA) says it is investigating a case where HoneyBee Pharmacy allegedly falsified its financial statements purported to have been audited by I.Dore company, in order to win a US\$17 million medical supply tender under the Ministry of Health.

And ZICA says it is unable to state whether or not it would take action against I.Dore, as it has not

yet established that the audit firm was involved in the alleged audit fraud.

ZICA director for standards and Regulation, Mwelwa Mwaba, told News Diggers prior to the press query that the institution usually carries out its own investigation when it receives such an allegation.

"We are not able to

provide specific responses to HoneyBee and I.Dore because what we do is that when we receive such a case, we would carry our own investigations and then we would determine what the position is. If we think there is a genuine case, then we take it to the standard and regulation board who then review the case and then

send it to the disciplinary committee. That is the procedure we follow when we find that the audit firm needs to answer for what they have done. But we can't answer specifically in this case on the question about I.Dore whether we think they did something wrong or not because we need to do an investigation. ...like I have

said, we will not give you specific responses in relation to I.Dore and HoneyBee because this matter is still under investigation." said Mwaba.

And responding to a press query, ZICA chief executive officer Bonna Kashinga said the Institute takes such cases seriously.

"Kindly note that as an

Institute we take such matters seriously as we endeavour to ensure that our members follow the disciplinary process in line with the provisions of Part VIII of the Accountants Act No. 13 of 2008 (as amended). Mr Ismael Dore is a registered member of the Institute with membership number I.D F000535. We are unable to comment specifically on the matter relating to I Dore. We would however like to advise that the Institute does take interest in all matters that might involve professional misconduct by its members. We are unable to provide details on this matter regarding investigations," stated Kashinga.

"The Institute has an annual Continuous Professional Development (CPD) calendar in place that discusses various topics including among other matters ethical conduct. In addition the Institute has a Code of Professional Ethics in addition to the Accountants Act No. 13 of 2008 which all accountants are mandated to comply with. Auditors that are found to be guilty of professional misconduct have their licences withdrawn and names removed from the register of firms in Zambia if the ZICA Disciplinary Committee headed by a State Counsel determines the verdict as such. This goes for the partner of the firm as well as the audit firm. We are unable to comment on what can or cannot happen to I Dore. However, as indicated above, auditors that are found to be guilty of professional misconduct can have their licences withdrawn and names removed from the register of firms in Zambia if the ZICA Disciplinary Committee determines the verdict as such."

An investigation into the supply of toxic drugs by HoneyBee Pharmacy revealed that the firm actually submitted falsified financial statements to the Ministry of Health in order to win the US\$17 million Health Centre Kits tender.

Sources close to the investigation told News Diggers that apart from failing ZAMRA inspection, HoneyBee Pharmacy also submitted fake statements of account to the procurement committee, and the contract was awarded based on false information regarding the firm's capacity to deliver specified goods in the bid.

According to bid documents seen by News Diggers, HoneyBee submitted financial statements purporting to have been audited by I.Dore, to the effect that the Pharmacy had the financial capacity to execute the procurement of 22,500 Health Centre Kits within a delivery period of eight to 12 weeks.

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Are you a Zambian citizen?
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Are you in possession of a green NRC? If you answered "yes," then you are eligible to pre-register to vote.

#VotingSquad

ILLEGAL MINING: How FDI is reaping off locals in Zambia's Chingola

By Felix Chiteule

Zambia has for a long time been recognized internationally as a country with so much mineral resources, maintaining itself as an attractive place for investment due to favorable geology, long history of mining and its political stability.

The country is a major producer of copper and cobalt, ranked as the seventh and second highest world producer respectively. The country equally produces precious metals such as gold, silver, gemstones (amethyst, aquamarine, emerald and tourmaline), coal and industrial minerals. The mining revenue accounts for 12% of Zambia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 70% of total export value. The sector is also a significant source of formal employment, both directly and indirectly.

Despite the endowment, stakeholders are concerned at the lack of benefits to the host country. The mines have been left in the hands of foreign investors who retain the top jobs and take the money into offshore accounts. For a common man, they are left to scavenge and live in deplorable state. There's no use having

investors if their investment does not benefit the local communities!

Dennis is a 27-year-old youth from Chiwempala, born and raised in Chingola. He has been digging and dealing in minerals for the past 6 years. David says he makes a lot of money from the illegal digging mainly of the copper although he believes it is not illegal.

For Dennis, he has no idea of the actual worth of the copper he has and the fact that he is being exploited by his buyers. With no educational background to his name, what is important to him is he makes ends meet. The buyers of the minerals are exploiting the youths in Chingola who engage in mineral trading to make ends meet under difficult circumstances.

"We're never there when they are checking the percentage of copper. All we are told is it is 6% or whatever percent it is. Then we get paid, just like that. I know it's good money but I also know that the people who measure the quality of the mineral make more," said Dennis (translated, not verbatim).

Although the bargain hunter, mostly Chinese and Indians have trading licenses, it is evident that they only regard the diggers

as machines, their means of production. What seems like a lucrative venture to them is purely a death trap.

The diggers, mostly within the local communities, do not have protective wear. At a near sight, they are in boxer shorts and one would think they are enjoying themselves. On the contrary, they are in that particular attire in order for them to fend off the heat experienced underground. A well-meaning investor should be worried about the safety but for main buyers, the Chinese, they are only concerned about making profits. One of the Chinese buyers claims that his company does not have the responsibility of the diggers as they are not his employees.

If a woman or men in the company of one woman approaches the dumps where the minerals are being extracted, you can hear the diggers screaming "we don't come with women here!" Much to the surprise of the writer, the stone dealers gave two reasons they do not allow women at the site; firstly, due to an understandable fact that they do not usually have clothes on. However, the other reason is somewhat shocking; that women on site bring bad luck.

"I don't believe a woman

should see a man's sweat, she should stay at home and wait to see the money. It brings bad luck!" exclaimed one of the diggers.

Whether this myth is true or not remains unknown but what is for sure is the diggers, mostly the youths and local communities have been left for dead. In Chingola's Chiwempala area, minors as young as 13 years are at the core of the illegal mining activities in the province. David Kawana is a 16-year-old a grade 8 pupil at one of the local schools in the area. At his age, he has become a regular digger at one of the open pits.

"Because of his body size and height, it's easy for him to navigate through the holes. For me, I have to lie down to rest because the hole is too small," said one of the diggers.

Chingola was once the cleanest town in Zambia but despite the town being mineral rich, it has faced a downturn. Despite the town roads being tarred, the township roads are in deplorable state and one is greeted by a strong stench of sewage while walking past the streets of Chiwempala. The mineral rich town has no recreation and sports facilities. These facilities are important as they increase personal confidence and self-awareness and generally improve quality of life. These are the areas in which the investors reside and you expect that a socially responsible corporate entity improves the host country by setting up such facilities.

With the increased number of minerals such as Gold being found in various parts of the country, one can only fear for the locals. The Zambian land act grants ownership to the occupants of the land. However, once a mining firm acquires a lease for 12,000 hectares of land, the people living in that community automatically become squatters. Squatters on land they were born and raised children from!

"I was ordered to relocate from a home I had lived in for many years along the Chingola-Kitwe road because of some people who came to mine there. I was very even though I received compensation," said Mrs. Banda.

This is the level at which foreign direct investment reduces local and indigenous communities to and the lack of regulatory framework that favors the indigenous

communities. In many cases, a compensation package is offered to the occupants of the land where the minerals are sitting.

For many mining companies in Zambia, their illegality lies in the fact that they do not remit their tonnage and this is where the country is losing out. Trade mispricing and in particular transfer pricing and trade mis-invoicing is the most common way of transferring illicit funds abroad. Mining firms have continued using this tactic to artificially maximize profits through inflating expenditure figures in order to pay less tax on the profits and transfer the funds abroad.

Tax avoidance and tax incentives is depriving Zambia of billions of dollars annually. In 2012, it was reported by the Finance Minister that the country was losing US\$2 billion a year from tax avoidance, around 10 per cent of Zambia's GDP. The increasing tax-avoidance systems by mining firms that seemingly appear legal on face value are aggressively aimed at reducing the amount of tax payable.

Recently, the Court found Mopani liable of abusing transfer pricing and used it as a mechanism to avoid paying full taxes due to the Zambia Revenue Authority (ZRA) and fined the firm a remarkable US\$13 million. The case emanated from the ZRA audit conducted Mopani Copper Mines for the period 2006-2009, which revealed that the transactions between the company and its Swiss parent multinational, Glencore International AG (GIAG) violated the Arm's Length Standards (ALS), "a business deal or transaction in which a buyer and seller act independently without one party influencing the other."

This ruling by the Supreme Court is testament that Multinationals are increasingly abusing transfer pricing as a mechanism to avoid paying tax, not just in Zambia but the entire African continent.

Such illicit flows continue to subvert social development and inclusive economic growth in Zambia. Instead of investing resource revenues into improving infrastructure, health and education, political elites, often in collusion with mining companies, have siphoned off proceeds into their own pockets, to the detriment of ordinary community members.



Artist: Yande Yombwe

Title: Only an Integrity system.

Description: the picture illustrates how a laborer gets paid little money to reach the top. And even when he/she reaches, it's all in vain because the people in charge have no integrity. Starting from the business men to the politicians. The chain always ends with the word "corrupt". Hence, the only way forward is an Integrity system. But does the ordinary citizen understand? Do they know how?



AS WE name and shame the controlling officers, regulatory authorities and politicians who paid a blind eye to the US\$17 million medical supply tender under the Ministry of Health, we must not forget to apportion a good measure of blame on Attorney General Likando Kalaluka, State Counsel. The manner in which State Counsel Kalaluka handled the HoneyBee tender and the energy he exhibited in defending the awarding of a contract to an individual raises a lot of suspicion.

A reckless Attorney General is a drain on the Treasury

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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gatekeepers were the facilitators of this corrupt transaction.

It is not surprising that HoneyBee went to the cheapest possible source to collect these toxic drugs and supply them to the Ministry of Health in Zambia. They had no money in the account to supply the drugs. They relied on shysters who could lend them some fast money so that they could defraud the government of US\$17 million and get richer.

We are not lawyers, but we don't have to be in order for us to apply common sense to a situation. Giving a US\$17 million tender to an individual whose financial capacity you don't know is not a legal issue, it is a matter of common sense. If you are a reckless person and you lack common sense, you can take the risk without any questions, but if you are smart and vigilant you would take serious precautionary measures before agreeing to such a dangerous undertaking.

We say this because US\$17 million is not little money. Even for the richest economies in the world, this is an amount that goes through a few stages of approval before it can be spent. We are talking about K340 million at today's exchange rate. There

is no company in Zambia that can agree to give this kind of money to an individual to supply any goods. The reason is simple, it is too risky, and to take such a risk, the company would have to forensically examine the financial capacity of the bidder. But our government, which is supposed to be even more stringent on spending taxpayers' money, saw nothing wrong with doing this.

This would be forgivable if there was no lawyer with the barest qualification of common sense involved. But our learned Attorney General was fully consulted on this matter. He saw the irregularities, but instead of looking at the risk and advising against the award of this tender, State Counsel guided the Ministry of Health to simply rectify what they

called clerical errors and go ahead with the deal.

All what was required from the Attorney General was a vigilant mind. Upon being informed that there was a problem with the bidding company's registration papers, he should have recommended a halt to the transaction so that a fresh investigation could be conducted to ascertain the true status of HoneyBee Pharmacy. Unfortunately, State Counsel Kalaluka did not do that. Instead, he went on to claim that there was absolutely nothing wrong with giving an individual a US\$17 million tender to supply drugs.

If Mr Kalaluka had that kind of money, he would not entrust even K1 million in the hands of his best friend to be buying him drugs whenever his family needs medical help.

He would take that money and find the most reputable hospital and secure a reliable medical scheme for his wife and children. But when giving legal advice to the Ministry of Health, our learned Attorney General saw nothing wrong in this transaction. Why did Mr kalaluka act recklessly?

As far as we know, the role of the Attorney General in government procurement ends at giving legal opinion. Whether the ministry goes ahead to award that contract against his advice, that is not his problem, as long as he did his part. It's not the Attorney general's responsibility to award a contract, his is to simply look at the law and provide candid professional legal advice. That is why he is called State Counsel.

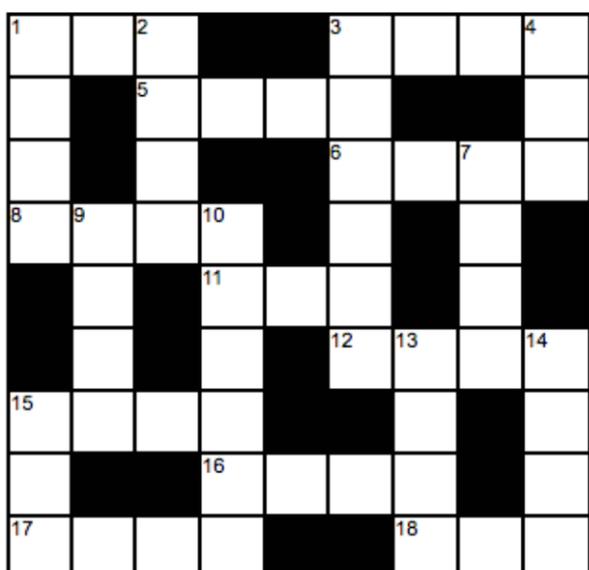
So we don't understand why an

Attorney General would go to great length to defend the award of a government contract in such a manner. We don't understand why an Attorney General would be under pressure to align his legal opinion with the decision that has been made by a government ministry. We are at loss to appreciate why our Attorney General defended the award of US\$17 million to an individual. What motivated him?

Mr Kalaluka knows that Imran Lunat, the so-called businessman who was awarded the tender, has no US\$17 million dollars in his account. As facts have come to show, HoneyBee Pharmacy lied about its financial statements. In fact, the pharmacy submitted a falsified audit report to the Ministry's procurement committee. And no one raised questions because the

We must state now that the Attorney General acted recklessly in this transaction, and a reckless Attorney general is a drain on the Treasury because this US\$17 million will never be recovered. We don't have anything against Mr Kalaluka. In fact, from a journalistic point of view, we are lucky to have an Attorney General who is able to engage with the media to explain how his office operates, but from a watchdog perspective, it is unfortunate to have a person in that very sensitive office who seems relaxed on matters to do with accountability and due diligence. So, with all due respect, Mr Kalaluka sir, shame on you! We beg to move.

Crossword puzzle No 698



"Your strength doesn't come from winning. It comes from struggles and hardship. Everything that you go through prepares you for the next level."
- Germany Kent

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>Across</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chief executive officer 3. Capable 5. Medication 6. Impolite 8. Red planet 11. Bind 12. See socially 15. Specialty 16. Naked 17. Leader 18. Mon or Fri | <p>Down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Squish in 2. Aroma 3. Made a pact 4. New Year's _____ 7. Pub missile 9. Not quite closed 10. Unit of hair 13. Excelled 14. Begrudge 15. Cigar residue |
|--|--|

Crossword puzzle No 697



Reader's feedback

Malanji's 'big donations' before becoming Minister

Editor

There is always a pay back time for such massive flush fund donations from politicians. These are not genuine donations from individuals, worse off politicians with limited business base. There is totally no economic colleration between these huge donations and their business performance in terms of profits!! This is the main reason Zambia has economically fallen to the level of begging nation. Just think of it, all these people in authority together with those connected to them are doing the same and even laughing at the children of the true servants of the country for not amassing wealth despite their parents serving in various economically strategic but tempting government positions. - Kennedy Mulenga

I've never heard DONALD TRUMP who is a real BILLIONAIRE donate such huge amounts of money! If someone can donate \$350,000 like it's pocket change, how much do these people have? This is MADNESS! - Chewe Mubiana

I have never seen UPND MPs donating anything from their massive MP salaries. - Liteta Mwachisompola

How is that the Press missed your magnanimity? It is because you never did!!

For you to make such a huge donation, you must be a taicoon. This is why life style audit must be our new normal. - Abraham Mwamba

DIGGERS OPINION: There shouldn't be any amnesty, unless thieves surrender what they stole

Dear Editor

Sure we don't need amnesty for criminals ,well said proff, that's why even HH needs to be conclusively investigated to clear the air on the alleged abuses, then in chronological order we will shift to the current regime. - Chamfya Lumbwe

If people who did less damage were caged, what more him. To

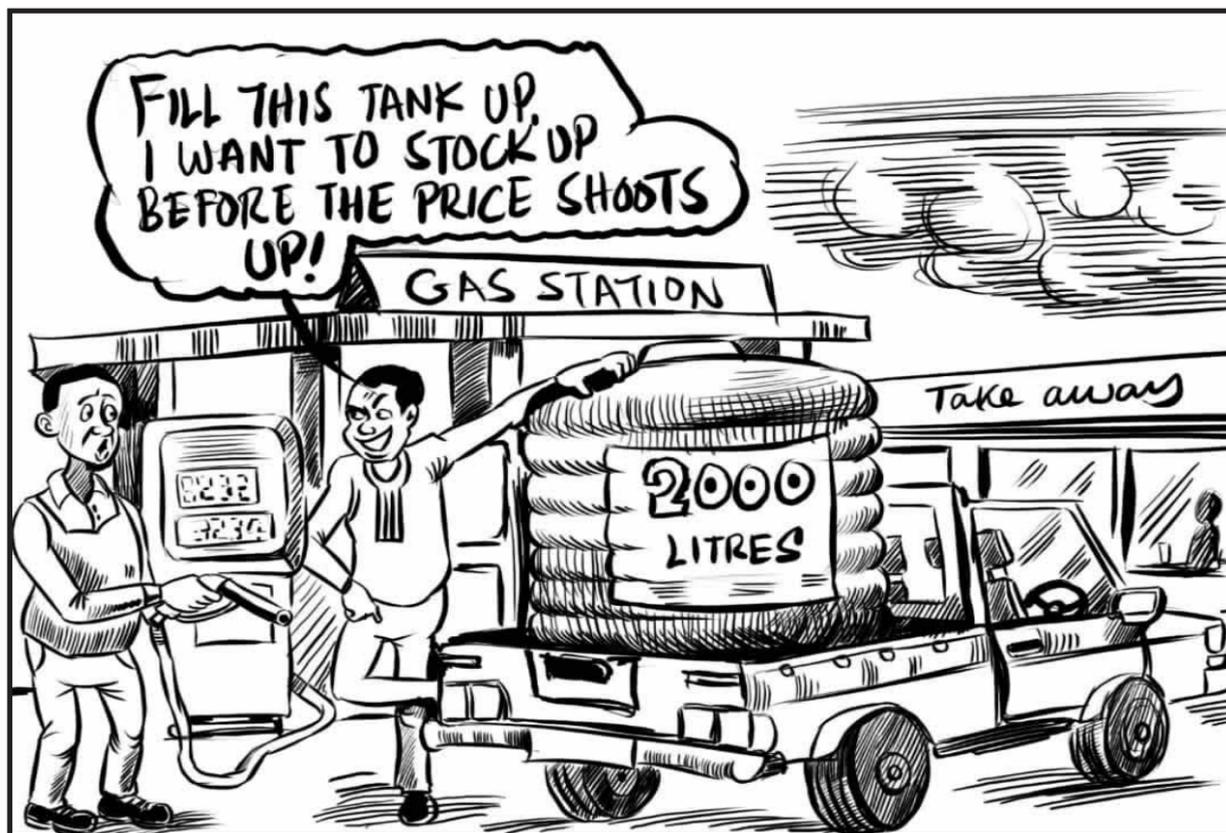
date the ladder is still LPM, KDK, RBB, FTJ, MCS to ECL. This is from the Best to the Worst. Rising a private state in a republican. Creating a class of tribal or regional rulership. NO TO THIRD TERM, NO AMNESTY. - Maila Ukwete

No amnesty for thieves except that which allows them to return that which they illegally obtained from us the people Before the law follows them..- Stone Silungwe

No one is above the law. Anyone found guilty of stealing from the poor no amnesty period. - Agrey Siyunda

These leaders especially presidents who abuse and loot government treasury through corruption and theft ,must be punished caged as a lesson to would be offenders - Mwinga Mwemba

No amnesty for thieves except that which allows them to return that which they illegally obtained from us the people Before the law follows them. - Stone Silungwe



It's high time Nawakwi's FDD was privatised

Editor

it's high time she and her fdd where privatised if not liquidated kikikiki - Callaghan Mwamba

Whats even there to fight for in FDD surely? Some people have time have time for doing nothing - Gladwell Habeene Snr

this Nawakwi has always been at the center of confusions in FDD. let the members deal with her and flush her out. let her join pf for her to be the running mate for ba Lungu. - Chanda Pochoko

U touched the anointed. Touch not the anointed madam. you see - Jambi Hu

I know mutaya Chalo is a very gud man and disciplined..I think this party is doomed for extinction.. - Joseph Kashiwa

'NRC issuance delay a PF gimmick to rig 2021 polls!'

Editor

I hope they will extend the days accordingly. In the first place the excuse that they are no materials for printing is unjustifiable and therefore unacceptable. People had all the time to plan and prepare for this exercise. What's the cause of non availabilty of these materials. - Asa Amisi

Even this purported concern issued by the senior registrar is meant just to blindfold people, she is aware of this deliberate move, she has no choice but pretend to protect her job. The Zambia we have today!!! - Dhanx Car Lee Mbwe

PF are trying all gimmicks to try and rig the elections before the votes are cast. The whole issue of registering all voters in one month is to disadvantage opposition strongholds after realizing that Bill 10 is not going anywhere - Mutinta Mulonda

It's not only in Mazabuka even ku Choma my relatives

told me there was only 1 machine working. These are the issues citizens are supposed to be talking about. - Betty Mutinta Nthani

Oppositions mukose otherwise mmmmm the big man knows very well what is transpiring on the ground. He has lost grip and because he's in control he'll make sure he uses whatever means in order to return the position. -Mathias Ngoma

EDITOR'S NOTE:

Go to our News Diggers! Facebook page, select a story you like and jot down your comment. We will pick that as your feedback and get you published on this page. The shorter the comment the higher the chance of getting published. Note that we block Facebook users who use abusive language.

Immunity for Lungu and his arrogant friends in the PF and his government is not an option in Zambia - post Lungu presidency. Plea bargains for all the current corrupt and criminal elements in the current regime will only be considered if all that was looted is accounted for and returned to the people. We are not interested in flooding prisons with plunderers of the economy. Our interest should be in recovering back what was stolen. For those that will be intransigent and refuse to take a plea bargain, these will be jailed and still have their stolen properties and proceeds of crime forfeited to the state. Whoever may have stolen or benefited from proceeds of crime right from the president, down through cabinet and senior party functionaries including irritant parrots in party media teams and such proxies like party user-friendly CSOs and party surrogates hiding behind the veil of opposition political parties will all be in the dragnet. This endeavour of recovery of stolen property will be a big project and the donor community will stand ready to assist with finances to execute the same as there will a huge international dimension to it considering that those think that they are clever have stashed the loot in off-shore havens. - Cephas M Kunda

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
KASEMPA UPND member of parliament Brenda Tambatamba says President Edgar Lungu's speech to Parliament was business as usual and nothing transformational came out of it.

And Mwembeshi Independent member of parliament Machila Jamba says President Lungu cannot

Poverty has only reduced for Lungu, PF – Jamba

talk about poverty reduction when only he and PF members are getting wealthier, while ordinary Zambians' suffering has increased.

Meanwhile, Roan NDC member of parliament Joseph Chishala says the mining industry

has faced tremendous job losses ever since the PF government was elected.

Debating on President Lungu's speech to open the final session of the 12th National Assembly a fortnight ago, Tambatamba lamented that

Kasempa constituents had not seen any development, which the President preached about in his speech.

"I didn't hear the President talk about the gains or the freedoms that the people enjoy when the youths of Kasempa are denied permits to go and protest about the state of their infrastructure, especially roads. Just for them to simply say that the roads are bad, they have to seek permission from police and they are not allowed to go and express themselves. It has just happened that a young person, who applies to go and express themselves about the state of the road, is not given permission to go and talk to the head of the government administration in the district," complained Tambatamba.

"In the vision of the country that the President stood for here to speak to us about, of course, the people of Kasempa and I know, generally, across the board, people are looking for growth. And growth for the people of Kasempa and generally many other areas is in the state of infrastructure. The Link Zambia (8,000) is a commitment of the PF government, the Kaoma-Kasempa road is an economic road and, indeed, Lufwanyama-Kasempa road [but] where are they? Why is the President not speaking about this? So, Mr

Speaker, none of us seated in this House would dare to pick up the President's speech made here and say, 'these are the gains we have made for our people in our constituencies' because that progress is not just there. So, Mr Speaker, the President's speech on that day was business as usual, nothing inspiring, and not transformational."

And Jamba said the cost of living had exceeded people's means, while only PF members were getting wealthier.

"Mr Speaker, in 2016, if you wanted to buy 613 units of Zesco, we used to spend K300, but today, to buy the same units, you have to spend K1,000 and the salaries of people in Mwembeshi have never increased since then. So, if you are saying that you have reduced poverty, I can agree with some of the people who, when they came in 2016, they were as poor as me, but today are driving big vehicles and building big mansions everywhere! Yes, poverty has reduced with them, but for a person like me and my people in Mwembeshi, you cannot talk about poverty reduction when the price of electricity has gone up three or four times higher," complained Jamba.

"Mr Speaker, if I am going to call my people of Mwembeshi and say, 'I am giving you this cash transfer money because you are unable to produce food, is that poverty reduction? Poverty reduction is to make someone produce his/her own food and put it on the table and manage to buy his/her own clothes. So, if you are giving cash transfers and you think that is poverty reduction, then I don't know. You cannot be giving fertilizer from 2016 until now. The idea should be that people must be able to buy their own fertilizer, then you are reducing poverty. Please, let us do things correctly. Poverty is high in Zambia. Let us not bury our head in the sand. There is too much poverty!'"

Meanwhile, Chishala observed that Zambia had recorded huge job losses in the mining sector under the PF government, further calling on President Lungu to give a road map on how to address challenges faced by mining companies.

"Mr Speaker, the people of Roan are concerned that if at all the mining industry has

contributed 75 per cent of total export earnings, the President was expected to give a way forward to the challenges that are in the mining industry, mainly Mopani Copper Mine has got a lot of challenges, KCM, Luanshya Copper Mine. The three mines that I have mentioned, Mr Speaker, are facing huge challenges in terms of production, and if at all the President said that the mining sector contributes to the GDP of this country, he should have given the road map on how we are going to sort out the problems that these mines are facing. We have also had the problem in the mining sector in terms of job losses. From the time the PF got into power, Mr Speaker, I think this is the period when we experienced a lot of job losses in the mining industry, and of late, nothing has improved in terms of employment in the mining industry. Therefore, the people of Roan expect that the President should have given a road map on how we are going to sort out this issue," said Chishala.

And contributing to the same debate, Monze Central UPND member of parliament Jack Mwiimbu bemoaned the increased number of street kids.

"Mr Speaker, we have been told that the poverty levels have reduced. As we leave this House, Mr Speaker, check what is happening at the robots (traffic lights) near here, you will find that small children with kids at the back are begging because they have no means! That just shows you that the poverty levels in this country are rising and that there is no care on the part of those in government. That is the truth. In Kanchibiya (District of Muchinga Province), the poverty levels are screaming! The people of Kanchibiya, Mr Speaker, are suffering. They have been asking for roads, employment, but it's not available. The people of Monze are saying that from the time of independence, governments have never provided a government hospital. There is no government hospital. We are surviving because the Catholic Church is providing the services. The government has failed to provide. In Kabwe, they are telling us that, come 2021, August, they are going to change the MP because they are always saying, 'hear, hear' to the things, which are not being provided," said Mwiimbu.

Inflation rises to 15.7%

By Diggers Reporter

THE annual rate of inflation has marginally increased to 15.7 per cent in September, up from 15.5 per cent recorded in August, mainly induced by price increases in non-food items, according to the Zambia Statistics Agency (ZSA).

Announcing Zambia's annual rate of inflation for the month of September, ZSA Interim Statistician General Mulenga Musepa said that the increased inflation this month was largely driven by price increases in non-food items, which include motor vehicles and higher household rentals.

"The year-on-year inflation rate as measured by the all items Consumer Price Index (CPI) for September, 2020, increased to 15.7 per cent from 15.5 per cent recorded in August, 2020. This means that on average, prices of goods and services increased by 15.7 per cent between September, 2019, and September, 2020. The increase in the annual rate of inflation was attributed to price increases in non-food items," Musepa told journalists via video conference in Lusaka, Thursday.

He added that the increased annual non-food inflation rate, up by 2.3 percentage points, was largely driven by price increases in vehicles, higher rentals and household furniture.

"The year-on-year non-food inflation rate for September, 2020, was recorded at 17.7 per cent from 15.4 per cent recorded in August, 2020. The increase in the annual non-food inflation rate was mainly attributed to price increases in purchase of motor vehicles, household furniture and actual rentals for housing," Musepa added.

"The year-on-year food inflation rate for September, 2020, was recorded at 14.0 per cent compared to 15.5 per cent recorded in August, 2020, indicating a decrease of 1.5 percentage points. This development was mainly attributed to reductions in prices of food items, such as cereals."

Of the total 15.7 per cent annual inflation rate recorded this month, non-food items accounted for 8.2 percentage points, while the food and non-alcoholic beverages group accounted for 7.5 percentage points, according to Musepa.

ZSA data shows that Zambia's annual rate of inflation of 15.7 per cent recorded this month, peaked to a near four-year high since September, 2016, when inflation was at 18.9 per cent, reducing to 12.5 per cent in October, 2016, before it dropped to close that year at 7.5 per cent.

This month's inflation also represents the fourth highest this year after peaking at 16.6 per cent in May.

Asking for debt suspension an admission of bankruptcy – Musokotwane

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
UPND chairperson for finance and economic affairs Situmbeko Musokotwane says government's request for a six months suspension on repayment of the three Eurobonds is an admission to the whole world that the country is bankrupt.

And Musokotwane says government should not use COVID-19 as an excuse for failure to repay debt.

In an interview, Musokotwane said government's suspension request had shut the country from money lenders and investors.

"Yesterday (Tuesday) the Zambian government requested that interest on the three Eurobonds be suspended between October and March next year, meaning that it should be paid for that period of time. What is not clear to us is that after March next year, will they be able to pay or they won't be able to pay? But the broader meaning is that we are basically admitting to the whole world that we are bankrupt and unable to pay the our debts," Musokotwane said.

Musokotwane warned that the move would make it difficult for government to borrow when faced with emergency situations.

"We should not use COVID-19 as an excuse. COVID-19 is just an additional small element. The real reason why we have failed to pay our debts is because we have borrowed too much and now when it's time to pay, we are unable to pay. This is very sad because who knows about tomorrow? We might be faced with an emergence situation where we need to go back to the people and say 'look, I have a drought, I have too much flooding or I have this problem,

can I borrow money from you?" he asked.

"So, with the announcement yesterday saying that we are unable to pay, it means that we have shut ourselves to those with money to lend. On top of that, we have also shut ourselves to people with money to invest in Zambia. If anyone was thinking of investing in Zambia, investing in a hotel, a farm, manufacturing, they will be asking themselves a question 'is it wise for me to go and invest my hard earned dollars in a country that is bankrupt? The answer is most probably no. So, we have made the process of economic recovery harder because no one now can

trust us." And Musokotwane said the 2021 budget which is scheduled to be presented to Parliament today would basically be for emoluments and debt servicing because there was no money.

"This budget for 2021 is basically just a budget for paying salaries and servicing debt. There is hardly any money at all left for anything else. That being that, of course there is no country that wants a budget which is only for paying salaries and servicing debt when you also need to hire teachers, doctors and to provide all sorts of services. So, what I would have expected is can we have a clear roadmap

and policy by the government on how this debt crisis is going to be addressed because as long as it remains unaddressed, I am afraid the budget is only going to be for paying salaries and servicing our debt. If we don't pay the debt after March next year, it means that we are making the reputation of the country even worse and there will be no more access to borrowing and no more access to investment. Without that roadmap, all those promises which the president gave in his speech, and all the promises which the minister will give in his speech to parliament tomorrow (today) will amount to nothing," said Musokotwane.

PF warns its members against extorting money from unsuspecting people

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

PATRIOTIC Front (PF) national youth chairperson Kelvin Sampa says the party will not tolerate any member who uses the name of the party to extort money from the public.

And Sampa has warned that he will not hesitate to crack the whip on anyone found wanting, regardless of position.

Speaking at a press briefing in Lusaka, Thursday, Sampa also said youths who wish to conduct any party activities must only do so with permission from executive committees and while wearing approved party regalia.

"I addressed all youths of the Patriotic Front to reiterate a call from our Republican President, His Excellency Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu who is also our party president and the party secretary general Honourable Davies Mwila. Sadly, it has come to my attention that some youths have chosen to deliberately overlook this directive and friendly guidance of togetherness and understanding

the importance of coexistence among our youth affiliate, and have opted to championing violence. I want to take this opportunity and remind our youths that the Patriotic Front Constitution classifies such behaviour as gross indiscipline. As national youth chairperson, I will not hesitate to crack the whip on anyone found wanting, regardless of the position or whoever they may claim to be connected to," Sampa said.

"All youths should pledge their allegiance to the party president and not to anyone else, not even myself. When the president speaks, we should all adhere and operate within our parameters. I want to address and condemn the following behaviors that have taken shape with a growing trend: The party will not tolerate anyone using the name of the national youth executive committee and the party to extort hard earned money from our local businessmen and women and any other person. This kind of act is criminal and if anyone is found wanting, he or she

will face the wrath of the law.

He said any youth who claim to belong to the PF should not conduct any political activities without the authority from elected party structures.

"Any youth who claim to belong to the Patriotic Front party must never conduct any political activities without the authority or approval of elected party structures or leadership at any level. Disregarding of party protocols is a serious breach and the consequences for breaching protocol will be grave from now onwards," Sampa added.

He also said any party youth groupings wishing to conduct party activities should wear party colours and regalia going forward.

"Using unapproved party regalia including foreign national materials and military combat is unacceptable as we as PF are identified by our colours. Therefore, all PF youth groupings will wear party colours and party regalia when conducting party activities going forward as we don't

want criminals to take advantage of this situation as we heard towards the 2021 General elections," said Sampa.

"Lastly, I want to see a strong relationship, love peace, harmony, and unity amongst our dedicated youths at all levels of our party, especially starting from the national youth executive committee, the provincial youth executive committees, the district youth executives, and the Constituency youth executives. Remember politics is all about numbers and the mighty Patriotic party keeps growing. We need to keep guiding our youths to be in the right lane. Youths are the image of the party and a reflection of the future, hence let us remain a disciplined united youths that respect the party constitution whether appointed or elected. We are the image of the President His Excellency Dr Edgar Chagwa Lungu. It is for this reason that we should demonstrate loyalty to His leadership. Besides, the pride of every parent is dependent on the attitude of his children."

Get us back into stadia - fans

By Abraham Kalito
CHIPOLOPOLO Boys Soccer Fans Association chairperson Yotham Mwanza says authorities should allow fans back into stadia as soon as the season opens to help clubs obtain revenues from gate takings.

Mwanza argues that it would be extremely difficult for clubs to sustain themselves without the necessary support from fans in monetary form from gate takings.

He said authorities should allow a certain number of supporters into the stadium while ensuring that they were properly spaced to avoid spreading COVID-19.

"It's our considered view that fans should be able to draw back to different stadia so that they can watch games. You need again to understand that clubs do recoup funds or revenue from fans that are entering the stadia. Much as these clubs have sponsors who help with their day to day administrative costs, the gate takings contribute immensely to the money that clubs make to be able to sustain themselves," said Mwanza

"So in a way, we do need to have a certain approach to allow fans to get back into the stadiums. Let's take for arguments sake the Heroes Stadium, it's 60, 000 capacity.

If, for argument's sake, let's say 5,000 people could be allowed, I think that could help. They could be able to

space themselves because the stadiums are quite big. We can look at Nkoloma stadium, it takes in 10,000.

If we could be able to allow a 1,000 or 2,000 people to be able to enter that stadium, I think that will be able to help.

So in my view, in a way, fans should be allowed back to the stadium at the start of the season."

Pruned and forgotten, as teams move on with new legs

By Tim Zulu
Those in construction will tell you that there is always a time when builders start searching for broken bricks and most often, it is that same half brick that, when rightly fixed on the gap, completes the work at hand.

Factor that scenario to football teams whose tireless efforts of their committed players with different character and skills wins their teams' promotion to the Super league! But again, there comes a regrettable time at the end and beginning of new season

calendar when the true picture of who remains with the team and who goes under, beckons. There now lies the bone of contention! Much as it is time for players to celebrate their efforts of qualifying their respective sides to the country's top tier football, the other side of the brain gets mutilated with fear of being left out to where they wanted to be - the holy land of elite football.

While it is soothing to hear here and there where civil authorities promise certain players some kind of city status privilege, which in itself is commendable. But again, what is it that these civic leaders, and to some extent clubs themselves from these very cities, are doing for their now heroes after winning them promotion to the super league to honor them with something tangible before their boots are deemed unfit?

Perhaps, this is where Zambia Correctional Service Commissioner General and Patron of newly promoted Prison Leopards from the Eden University League, Doctor Chisela Chileshe, scored a first when he employed all the footballers, including coaches, as fulltime Prison Officers. What a gesture!

This simply entails that whether some players make it in the team or not, they will care less, knowing very well that their monthly take home is well guaranteed. At least, such players will walk with their heads high knowing very well that come what may, they

have full employment under their belt with their life and future of their families well positioned.

We also look forward to hear what good plans Kitwe United, Indeni and Young Green Eagles under the chairmanship of Lieutenant Colonel David Chinunda, if not the civic leaders of Kafue town, have in store for the players that won them promotion for the first time in history and hand a return to the super league respectively.

For instance, Kafue town will be hosting big teams next season and that translates into some good economic spillovers to the town in many sectors and thanks to the players who made it possible.

But just in case these same faithful generals are not in the roll call, what would become of them, especially if they can't find new teams or even get reasonably honoured in respect of their efforts?

Will they go in the heaps of history without any meaningful appreciation and become like those broken bricks that are ignored, thrown away and probably forgotten for good as they pave way for other legs to take up that which they worked hard for?

May be yes, maybe not, but it is high time these teams started honouring these boys who worked hard for the image and badge of their respective teams or let them become laughing stocks and destitute, not even with land to point at after giving it their all.

Suarez: Koeman wanted me out but Barca exit very hard

LUIS Suarez claims to have known that he would be pushed out of Barcelona by Ronald Koeman, but the Uruguayan admits bidding farewell to Camp Nou is still "very hard" after six memorable years.

The Uruguayan striker, who has been deemed surplus to requirements by a new coaching regime in Catalunya, is preparing to cross a Liga divide and link up with Atletico Madrid.

Few could have predicted that such a switch would be made, with Suarez having recorded 198 goals in 283 appearances for Barca.

Koeman, though, is eager to start afresh on the back of a disappointing 2019-20 campaign for the Blaugrana and there is no room in his plans for an experienced South American striker.

Suarez leaves with four Liga titles and a Champions League triumph to his name and says he will take many happy memories with him to a new chapter in his career at Wanda Metropolitan.

At a press conference to confirm his departure, the 33-year-old frontman - who arrived at Camp Nou in 2014 serving a ban for biting Italy

defender Giorgio Chiellini at that summer's World Cup - told reporters: "It is very hard to say goodbye but I am very grateful after the club trusted in me in the complicated moment I was living when I arrived.

"My team-mates were always fantastic and everyone knows about my sacrifice here, I am proud of leaving that way.

"Playing here was a dream and I never imagined I could reach these numbers because at Barcelona you always must perform at the top and you will never know how long you will stay.

"There were amazing moments in those years, my best memories are the first Liga championship, the Champions League, the goals and playing with these amazing players I knew before from the PlayStation. I must enjoy these moments."

Suarez added on his exit and the manner of it: "I already accepted leaving in that way, now I must change my mind and focus on the new challenge.

"It was a crazy month, the last one, many wrong things were published which made me angry but everyone knows about my relationship with [Lionel] Messi. When I arrived I knew all about him and after six years we have an amazing relationship, I leave very proud.

"I already expected Koeman's call because I was warned about that, I could accept this even though I had a contract, we must accept that decision. **GOAL.COM**



Barbara target golden boot

By Ngosa Chalwe
CHINA-BASED Copper Queens striker Barbra Banda says she is aiming to win the golden boot in her maiden season in the Chinese Football Association Women's Super League.

Banda, who is also

national team captain, has been enjoying good form since joining Shanghai Shengli from Spanish side Logrono, scoring 12 goals and providing six assists.

Speaking when she appeared on Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation's

(ZNBC) TV Sport On programme, Thursday, Banda said her aim was to emerge top scorer.

"My target is that, since now we are playing four games in which we are playing the top four teams and I am only having 12 goals and six assists, I think my target is to get the top scorer award of the league. I have 12 goals, I think I have an advantage in the top four remaining teams. I just have to work extra hard and get some more goals as possible," said Banda, who added that she is enjoying her time in China, rating the Chinese league as the best in the world.

Zesco to unveil new coach

By Ngosa Chalwe
THREE Days after parting ways with George Lwandamina, Zesco United are today set announce their new coach ahead of the next season.

Zesco communications officer Desmond Katongo stated in a notice, Thursday, that the new coach would be announced today at Trade Fair Grounds in Ndola.

"Good afternoon colleagues.

Tomorrow (today), ZESCO United will be unveiling the club's new coach. You are all invited," the brief notice read.

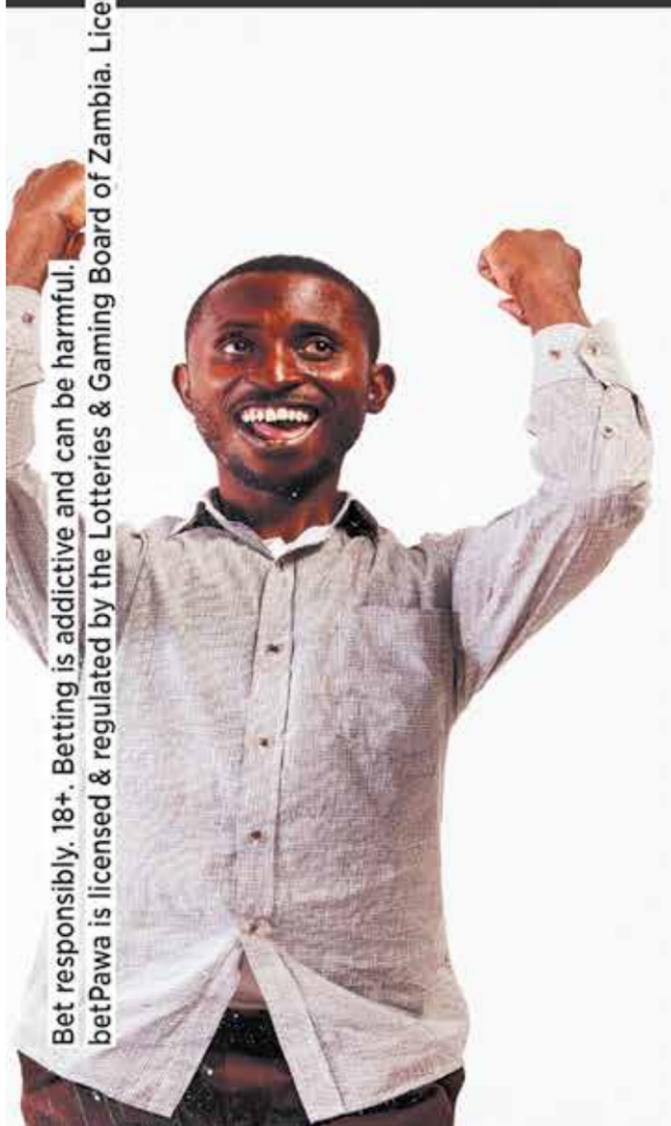
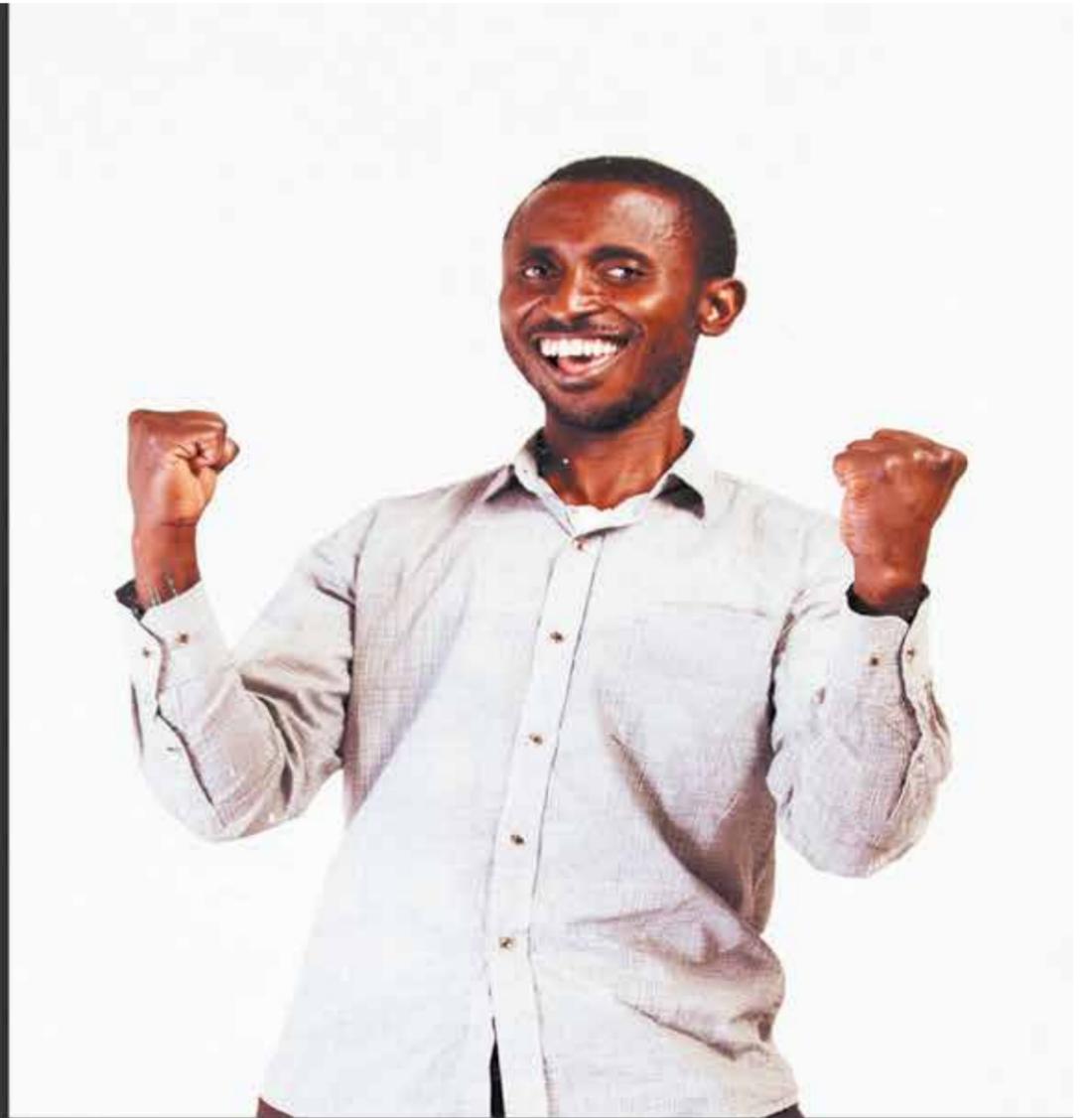
On Tuesday, Lwandamina left his post after an unsuccessful

attempt to defend the league title in the 2019/2020 season.

The new coach would, however, have a huge task taking over a coach who had won four of the club's eight league titles.



BIG winner
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