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ESCORT FALLS

President Edgar Lungu's motorcade has been involved in another accident, this time involving one of the escort police officers on a motorbike (a Sweeper).
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...after President threatens to declare State of Emergency



Police remove the damaged motorbike after a second presidential motorcade accident in Livingstone

By Sipilisiwe Nc'ube
Katondo Court building in Kabwe yesterday went up in flames in unclear circumstances. And in Choma, unknown people burnt down a makeshift ware-

Arson spreads as HH heads to court

house at Makalangu Market in Choma, destroying property worth thousands of Kwacha. Kabwe Mayor Prince Chileshe confirmed that the entire building housing the court had been gutted. "I arrived on the scene at 02:30hrs. The Zambia Police are investigating the cause of the fire but the guard on duty says he just heard a loud noise like a gunshot or fire work. The next thing the documents caught fire, the ceiling board and the whole building was on fire," said Chileshe.
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Picture courtesy of Jean Mandela

City council probs inferno that destroyed 120 shops

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

Lusaka City Council public relations Manager Habeenzu Mulunda says the local authority has counted 120 shops that were destroyed in an inferno last night, but are still probing the cause.

And Zesco spokesperson Henry Kapata says the utility company has nothing to do with the fire as none of the 120 shops were connected to the national power grid. Confirming the damage left by the inferno in an interview, Mulunda said the council will interview shop owners tomorrow to ascertain the cost of the destroyed property. "For now we can tell you that 120 shops have been completely gutted. Fire fighters have managed to contend the fire in one area. By tomorrow, we will be able to

interview owners of the shops that have been gutted and only then we can tell how much property has been destroyed," Mulunda said.

"We haven't established the cause of the fire, and investigations will start tomorrow. Fire fighters have been at the scene the whole night trying to quench the fire in

certain areas where there are some heat coming out."

And Kapata ruled out a Zesco fault, saying none of the affected shops were connected to the power utility grid.

"We have nothing to do with the fire because all the shops have no power. They are not connected to Zesco in any way," said Kapata.

ZICTA raid CEC Liquid Telecoms

By Mukosha Funga

A combined team of police and officers from the Zambia Information Communication Technology Authority (ZICTA) have raided CEC Liquid Telecom in search of phone tapping equipment.

The move comes in the wake of a leaked telephone conversation between President Edgar Lungu's spokesperson Amos Chanda and Inspector General of police Kakoma Kanganja in which the State House press aide is urging the police commander to use force when dealing with opposition political party supporters. The recording was released

anonymously, leaving the police and the technology authority to launch an investigation.

Today, ZICTA and police officers raided the Wholesale Internet Service provider to confiscate what they believe to be equipment used for phone tapping, in violation of the ZICTA Act.



The remains of Chishimba Kambwili's vehicle

Kambwili survives Mwense accident

By Mukosha Funga

Former information minister Chishimba Kambwili has been involved in an accident.

According to a report, which has not been independently verified by News Diggers!, Kambwili survived the accident which happened in Mwense district of Luapula

province today, but it is believed that the other motorist involved in the mishap did not survive the collision.

In an audio, former information minister Chishimba Kambwili narrates that as he was going to Kawambwa for a funeral, some boys on a bicycle suddenly emerged from the bush.

He says that despite trying to avoid the boys, his driver hit them and the car over turned five times.

Kambwili narrates that although he only sustained some body pains, his brother and the boys are in a critical condition and they have been rushed to Mwense Hospital.

Free our son: South Chiefs rise for HH

By Diggers Reporter

We the Royal Highnesses wish to express our disappointment and dismay over the raiding of the house and arrest of Mr. Hichilema who we consider as our son, say Southern Province chiefs.

In a statement read by chief Mukuni after they were denied passage to visit the incarcerated UPND leader yesterday, the traditional leaders petitioned government to release HH unconditionally.

The traditional leaders who travelled to Lusaka to demand the release of HH include Chief Macha, Chief Mukuni, Chief Chikanta, Chief Shakumbila, Chief Hamusonde and Chief Monze.

Other's are Chief Mukobela, Chieftainess Mwenda, Chief Chona, Chief Ishima, Chief Mwenda, Chief Mwenekandala, Chief Moono and Chief Chibuluma.

"The Police must take full responsibility for this action. We therefore demand the dropping of all charges against him and that he must be released immediately and unconditionally as these charges have no merit at law. Besides he is not well and needs to be taken to a hospital of his choice. Should this not take place and something happens to him, Mr Lungu and his government will bear full responsibility," said chief Mukuni at HH's house where the traditional leaders went to console his wife Mutinta.

"What we notice is a system of selective justice by the police where the opposition, independent media and other civil society organisations with dissenting views are criminalized while ruling party offenders are left scot free."

The traditional leaders lamented that the judicial system had failed to bring about justice in Zambia.

"We call for an end to intimidation and arrests of all dissenting voices including opposition leaders and their members. The judicial system has failed the people of Zambia," read the statement.

"We have arrived at these conclusions for the following reasons: In 2012, Known cadres in Ndola attacked Mr. Hichilema who had to flee from the radio station through the roof. Perpetrators of this attack have not been apprehended to date. In 2015, Patriotic Front cadres threw stones at the helicopter carrying Mr. Hichilema's presidential campaign team in Shiwangandu. The same was repeated in 2016 when the same cadres attempted to burn the helicopter on the ground. The member of parliament who led the attack was thereby rewarded with the position of Home Affairs Minister."

The traditional leaders claimed that HH had survived several assassination attempts.

"In 2016, ruling party cadres attempted to kill Mr. Hichilema at Moba Hotel in Kitwe and UPND security disarmed them and reported the matter to police. There has been no police action to date. On 8th July 2016, Davis Chama shot an innocent citizen in Mulobezi and he has since been rewarded with the position of Defense Minister. Boswell Nomuswa (correct surname is Namuswa), Officer Commanding, Lusaka Province, shot a UPND member at the high court and has never been reprimanded and now is in charge of most police operations such as the blocking of the UPND press conference at Chainama hotel and the raid at Hichilema's residence last Sunday," chief Mukuni said.

He said HH must be released unconditionally and officers

responsible for aggravated robbery at his house be brought to book. "The killers of Mapenzi Chibulo, a UPND member in the 2016 election campaigns have not been apprehended up to now. As custodians of peace and tradition, and leaders of the 15 million Zambians we are duty bound to call for law and order, peace, unity and stability in the country and we therefore demand that: Our son Mr. Hichilema must be released forthwith and those responsible for aggravated robbery at his residence be brought to book by the police

command, we demand that Mr Hichilema be availed urgent medical care and if his health deteriorates any further, Mr Lungu and his government will be held responsible," said chief Mukuni.

"Let the Petition be heard and moved to ICC so that tensions and regional divisions are thereby resolved. Ethnic insults and ridicule as expressed clearly by PF leaders, Davis Chama, Mumbi Phiri, Chishimba Kambwili, Frank Bwalya, Bowman Lusambo and others must be criminalised and ended forthwith."



President Edgar Lungu talks to Fisheries and Livestock Minister Michael Katambo

Kenyan aircraft crash-lands at KKIA

By Mukosha Funga

Transport and Communication Minister Brian Mushimba says he has received information that a Kenyan aircraft with seven people on board crash-landed

this morning at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport, forcing a closure of the runway.

A Lusaka bound passenger posted in the "Media and Sources" WhatsApp group

complaining that they were stranded in South Africa following information that the runway at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport had been closed off.

"I am at OR Tambo Airport

in Johannesburg. Our flight is delayed and the information we are getting is that the runway in Lusaka at KKIA is closed. I thought it would be interesting to know what's happening that side. Because these guys here don't know why it was closed," asked the unidentified passenger at 12:55 hours.

In response to the inquiry seven minutes later, Minister Mushimba posted the information he had received from Zambia National Airports Corporation at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport.

"Good morning Hon Minister. Please be informed that a small aircraft, which is Kenyan registered (5Y BLA, BE200), with 7 people on board had under carriage problems and has landed on the belly at Kenneth Kaunda International airport. The runway is closed. Officers are trying to remove the aircraft from the runway," Mushimba quoted the airport notice, adding "that is information from airport corporation sent to me earlier."

At about 13:08 hours, the Lusaka bound passenger confirmed that they were finally boarding at OR Tambo International Airport.

President Lungu's escort falls after collision with police vehicle

From front page

In a statement, Amos narrated that the driver of the police vehicle did not see the sweeper, causing an accident.

"I can confirm that a police rider, who was the lead sweeper of the presidential convoy heading to the airport, collided with a police vehicle that was returning from the airport. The car is the official vehicle for Southern Province Commissioner of Police Bonnie Kapeso who had been dropped off at the airport since he was in the advance party that left for Sinazongwe earlier. The driver of the vehicle seemed to have failed to observe the rider resulting into this accident. The rider got off the damaged bike and sat by the roadside to wait for the medics to assess him whilst the driver of the vehicle managed to stop and park his car safely," Amos narrated.

Chanda said President Lungu was safe as the main motorcade was a few minutes away when the accident occurred.

"Police will issue a comprehensive statement when they have spoken to the two officers involved, that is the bike rider and the Driver of the car that hit into the bike. When the accident happened the main presidential motorcade was several minutes away from the accident spot, moving at

below 40km per hour to allow the President to respond to the greetings from the masses who had thronged the roadsides between the hotel and airport. The President is now airborne enroute to Sinazongwe where he is officiating at a function to promote agricultural cooperatives," stated Amos.

Meanwhile earlier today the President said he is pushed to the wall, he can declare a State of Emergency and propose that it is only effected in areas where there is trouble. And President Lungu says he is not retiring any time soon.

Addressing Livingstone residents shortly after arriving at Harry Mwaanga Nkumbula Airport today, President Lungu said those setting public buildings ablaze were pushing him to consider declaring a State of Emergency.

"Please maintain peace, we need this peace. It takes just one foolish act to ignite trouble and it takes years before the trouble can be put to rest...so don't be swayed by these ruble rousers. How can a person do such things and say they want leadership? Set a market ablaze; there are citizens, woman and man who are suffering day in day out to toil to find something to keep them going and you go and burn the market. Hoping people will rise against Edgar Lungu. Is that the politics we want to play?" President

Lungu asked.

"Police, look out for these ruble rousers and trouble makers and bring them to book. You are forcing me to consider a State of Emergency. You know what that does? It just curtails your freedoms. You just have policemen and soldiers all over the place beating you up, your right to speak will be suspended, your right to gossip will be suspended, your right to assemble will be suspended, a lot of things. You are forcing me to do that so that the ordinary citizens suffer."

President Lungu said he would suggest that the State of Emergency be effected only in areas where there was trouble. "If they are not forcing me why are they burning markets? Why are they burning people's houses and government buildings? I think you should reflect. This is how wars start. Because of one idiot? We get into trouble? No! I will not allow that. As government we will assess the situation. If you force us to go the State of Emergency [way], we will go that way and I will say can we be selective? We can be selective in our State of Emergency; it can apply to regions and areas where there will be trouble," he said. The Head of State insisted that he would not be forced to break the law no matter the condemnation from the

international community.

"If you go and tell your friends in America, South Africa, in Europe, elsewhere, to condemn me thinking that you will bring me down, I have the mandate of the Zambian people to preside over this country. So those who think by harassing people they will force Edgar Lungu to do that which is not in the law, I am saying the law will take care of its own. I will not be forced to declare a State of Emergency but if you force me, I will do so," he said.

"I pity the ordinary Zambians because they are the ones who are suffering. Not these guys, these guys have got air tickets. It has taken me too long to deal with these issues and even the police have been very tolerant...now that they have acted, some people think that they can push me against the wall and I break the law."

And President Lungu said he was not retiring any time soon.

"I am not retiring soon let me tell you, I am still around. So those of you who think I am about to retire should watch this space. Secondly, I was telling people in Kasama that even those who wish me dead won't inherit because now, there is no room for that kind of arrangement because now, if I died today, Madam Inonge Wina will take over until 2021. That is what the law says in case you haven't read the Constitution so don't wish me evil because you will not achieve what you want to achieve. 2021, we will decide when that time comes," said President Lungu.

President Lungu also castigated ZANIS for over-editing their news clips and in the process removing important policy directions.

Arson spreads as HH heads to court

From front page

And in Choma, Southern Province police commissioner Bonny Kapeso revealed that a makeshift warehouse had been set on fire by unknown people at Makalangu Market in Choma in the early hours of today.

"This is a building where marketeers leave their merchandise after knocking off. The fire started at about 01:50 hours today and was put off around 03:00 hours by the Choma Fire Tenders. The situation is peaceful and police officers have been deployed to deal

with perpetrators of violence, should need arise. And police officers in all the districts of Southern Province have been placed on red alert following fears of destabilization in the province," stated Kapeso.

On Sunday, Chalimbana University in Chongwe and over 120 shops at Kamwala Market were burnt in similar circumstances. No arrests have been made so far and the causes of all the fires remain unknown.

Meanwhile, UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema is this morning expected to appear in court.

My life is in danger, HH's lawyer tells court



Kieth Mweemba (l) talks to former Chongwe MP Sylvia Masebo at the Lusaka Magistrates' Court - picture by Tenson Mkhala

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

One of UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema's lawyers Kieth Mweemba has asked for protection from the court saying the safety of his family is at risk.

And Vincent Malambo State Council has questioned the presence of police

in the courtroom, saying he does not feel comfortable presenting his submissions in those conditions.

When the matter came up before Magistrate Greenwell Malumani today, Mweemba said he was forced to move out of his house because some unknown people

have been trailing him for the past two days.

He said some unknown people in white land cruisers, whose details he availed to the court, have been hovering around his residence, forcing him to evacuate his family.

He narrated that the said Land Cruisers had

at one point rammed into his gate before driving off.

Mweemba said the defense team deserved protection.

Former Chongwe MP Sylvia Masebo with lawyer Keith Mweemba at Court-picture by Tenson Mkhala

"I feel I cannot continue

to be part of the defense advocates. Not because of fear, but for the safety of my family," said Mweemba.

And Malambo wondered what could have happened in the last two days to necessitate the presence of state police in the courtroom.

Malambo further wondered whether the court had invited the police into the courtroom..

He noted that their presence was meant to intimidate the defense adding that accessing the court was becoming impossible.

In response, state prosecutor Gamaliel Zimba said Mweemba's allegations were mere speculation as he had failed to identify the people who had been following him.

Zimba said there was a possibility that the people following Mweemba were his clients.

At this point, Malambo stood to object but Zimba continued standing.

But magistrate Malumani said called for order and asked Zimba to uphold professional etiquette in court.

"We ought to distinguish ourselves from members of the public because our duty first is to the court for the purpose of dispensing justice," magistrate Malumani said.

He also ordered four police officers who were standing behind the bar to leave the bar and stand in the sides of the court.

Zimba then proceeded to respond, justifying that the police in court were orderlies who were supposed to maintain order.

Meanwhile, Catherine Lombe Phiri, who joined the prosecution team today, said the State did not want to trivialise security issues by focusing on the well being of an individual (Mweemba).

Phiri said even the prosecution team had experienced some verbal intimidation when accessing court premises.

Magistrate Malumani reserved his ruling and summoned the lawyers to his chambers to further discuss the matter.

Meanwhile, security is still tight at the Lusaka Magistrates' Court.

By Diggers Reporter

Lusaka magistrate Felix Kaoma has granted Chilufya Tayali K5000 bail in his own recognizance after he pleaded not guilty to a criminal libel charge this afternoon.

Last week, Tayali, 42, was arrested following his Facebook post in which he stated that Inspector General of Police Kakoma Kanganja was covering his inadequacies by charging HH with treason.

The former Zambian Voice executive director, who is now leader of a political party called EPP, appeared before court yesterday but his case could not take off due to lack of a docket in court.

And when he was brought back to court this morning, his case was allocated to magistrate Kaoma where he denied committing the offence. It is alleged that Tayali

Tayali pleads not guilty to defaming IG

on April 13, this year with intent to defame Kanganja by means of print writing, unlawfully published on social media a

defamatory statement by saying 'Kanganja is just covering up his inefficiency to charge Hakainde Hichilema with treason otherwise

he should be an accomplice but maybe he planned to kill the president or frame him. The accused was granted K5000 bail in his own

recognizance with two working sureties in the like sum.

Trial in the matter is expected to commence on May 6.



Chilufya Tayali after appearing in the Lusaka Magistrates' Court-picture by Tenson Mkhala

ZRA waives outstanding taxes for all

By Mirriam Chabala

ZRA Commissioner General Kingsly Chanda says it is cheaper to be tax compliant than to be caught evading it.

Chanda was speaking to journalists when he launched the ZRA Tax Amnesty on interest and penalties for all tax payers with outstanding debts. Chanda said the Amnesty would run from April 24, 2017 to July 31, 2017 during which period tax payers wishing to access waivers, would be required to submit outstanding revenues for the period before March 1, 2017.

He said the establishment of the Tax Amnesty came from a realisation that tax payers faced a lot of challenges; resulting into payment of unnecessary penalties.

Chanda however explained that the Amnesty would not apply to cases under litigation and those under the association's investigation department; arising from audit or even relating to property transfer tax and those arising from determined court cases.

"I am proud to announce that with effect from today, 20th April, 2017, the Zambia Revenue Authority has launched an Amnesty on interest and penalties and in exercise of the powers vested in me, under various tax laws and with the approval of the Government of Republic of Zambia, through the Minister of Finance, I have today waived all interests and penalties of all tax payers with outstanding penalties and tax debt," Chanda said.

"This amnesty will run from 24th April, 2017 to 31st July, 2017. To access the waivers during this period, tax payers are expected to submit all outstanding tax returns to pay all their principle tax liabilities for the tax period prior to 1st March, 2017."

He emphasised that waivers would only be granted upon submission of outstanding returns and full payment of principle tax liabilities.

"However, it must be noted that all waivers, interests and penalties shall be granted upon submission of outstanding returns and full payment of principle tax liabilities. During the Amnesty period, tax payers can pay a lump sum or in installments. Where the tax payers are not able to settle principle liability by 31st June,

2017, they should apply for a time to pay agreement to enable them settle the outstanding principle liabilities by 31st December, 2017. Tax payers are reminded to submit factual and truthful tax returns as any falsifications of tax returns will not be tolerated," Chanda said.

"Ladies and gentlemen, let me announce that the Amnesty shall not apply to the following cases; firstly, cases under litigation and those that are under investigations by our investigations department. And also interests and penalties arising from an audit or investigations or interests and penalties relating to property transfer tax are not included. Interest and penalties relating to customs duty and interests and penalties arising from determined Court cases do not apply to the Amnesty."

Chanda warned of strict measures to deal with tax evaders, saying it was cheaper to be tax compliant.

"Please take advantage of this wonderful gesture, being non tax compliant is no longer an option and the consequences if we catch up with you will be surely regrettable. This is not an empty threat just ask transporters and smugglers in the last two weeks who have lost trucks and goods since we started the forfeiture

without penalties. We are no longer prosecuting or fining them, instead we are simply seizing and forfeiting their goods and the trucks being used in smuggling. We are

also blacklisting the clearing agents that are involved in such activities. So clearly therefore, it is cheaper to be tax compliant than to be caught evading tax," said Chanda.

"I would like to urge all Zambians to take advantage of this Amnesty because we are giving them a chance to start on a new page in terms of their tax accounts. ZRA has

an institution has a human face to everything it does and this clearly is demonstrated by our passion to serve the Zambian people who are the reason for our existence."



Marketiers at a market in Ibenga

By Charles Mafa

Energy Minister David Mabumba has admitted that the increment in electricity tariffs was to a larger extent determined by politics and emotions.

And Mabumba says it was the responsibility of the electricity consumers to make Zesco financially viable.

Featuring on ZNBC's Sunday Interview, Mabumba told programme host Grevazio Zulu that government saw it prudent to increase the tariffs by 75% for domestic consumers before the cost service study was concluded. The minister had earlier explained that the cost service study was meant to provide clear guidance of how much Zesco and independent power producers spend to produce electricity.

Grevazio asked the minister why the government was working in reverse; allowing a tariff increase before the study was done and wondered if

Minister admits: Zesco tariff hike due to politics

politics played a factor in the decision.

"Grevazio, I am going to answer you this question very straightforward. Politics, to a larger extent, has been a factor in this process... For now, probably the tariff setting in Zambia is characterised by emotions," Mabumba said.

And Mabumba said it was the consumers of power who were supposed to make Zesco financially viable.

"It is the industry that is supposed to make Zesco viable because they are the consumers of Zesco's power. So you and I and the Zambian people at large, we have got a larger part to play in terms of making the recapitalisation of Zesco because we consume their product," Mabumba said. Grevazio then asked the minister to explain why Zesco has not migrated staff tariffs

to regularised tariffs despite being ordered by ERB.

Mabumba admitted that Zesco had inefficiencies.

"We need as a country to accept some of our own inefficiencies. If we accept that even Zesco has got inefficiency levels that we can address, why don't we begin by addressing those inefficiencies? Because it is inefficiency levels that are going to make Zesco competitive and viable. I agree with you Grevazio about those weaknesses, but it is not a matter that we can deal with overnight," he said.

"The cost of service study that is going to be undertaken is going to tell us where we are in terms of that. When they go to Zesco, they are going to focus on how much is spent on transmission, how much is Zesco spending on distribution, how much

is Zesco spending on generation, including their head office. That is going to give government an empirical evidence as to weather the argument that is coming from people is genuine to say that the cost structure of Zesco is too high. But for now Grevazio, I wouldn't want to attach emotions. I would rather wait for the study, because that is going to give me facts.

Mabumba then struggled to categorically state whether or not the PF government was going to unbundle Zesco and stated in the ruling party manifesto.

"Zesco given its strategic importance in this country, whatever reforms that you want to undertake, you have to be very cautious as government. This is why if you remember government privatised other companies, but on certain strategic institutions, which are also of security nature, government didn't make those decisions," he said.

"For me I like using the word competition and not unbundling. What is important, whatever terminology you attach to the issue of institution separation... because when you talk about institutional separation especially in the energy sector, you have to have a company that is in generation, a company that is transmission and a company that is in distribution. This is what our Kenyan colleagues have done."

But Grevazio pressed the minister to give a clear position on the proposed unbundling of Zesco, to which Mabumba struggled to explain.

"As government, we don't want to attach emotions to this concept of creating competition in the electricity subsector. We would like a study done that can inform government in terms of the way forward. The question of copy and paste, this country has sometimes run itself into problems. We concessioned Zambia Railways, you know what happened," he said.

Grevazio then quoted a 2009 Parliamentary Committee on Economic Affairs: "These are expert opinions coming from Economics Association of Zambia, Zambia Development Agency and even the parliamentary committee minister and I quote: 'Zesco which is a major player in the sector is inefficient and undercapitalised with a bloated management structure. Zesco needs to be restructured by unbundling it into generation, supply and distribution. In the PF manifesto, 2011 to 2016 you committed that you were going to unbundle Zesco, 2016 to 2021, the same. Is it just lip service? Six years in power and you still want to commission studies, is this not just lip service?' asked Grevazio as the minister fumble for words.

"Government is committed to the modernization of Zesco and that modernization is going to happen between 2017 and 2021. I don't want to use the words unbundling, but its going to happen. This minister you are talking to is a minister who likes to do things differently. So as long as I have the backing of the people and my colleague in Cabinet, we are going to do it," said Mabumba.



The treason charge leveled against Mr Hakainde Hichilema, president of the opposition United Party for National Development will be for the courts to adjudicate. Therefore the rest of us, especially those who did not witness the April 8 road rage between Mr Hichilema and Mr Edgar Lungu, President of the Republic of Zambia, must present our comments as general opinions without prejudice.

In that regard, it is our opinion that before arresting Mr Hichilema, the Inspector General of Police Mr Kakoma Kanganja deliberately ignored very important information, released by Mr Amos Chanda, the State House press aide and President Lungu's spokesperson.

To those who have not followed this matter closely, the summary of it is that; Police broke into Mr Hichilema's residence on the night of April 10, 2017, arrested him the following day before charging him with treason, among other offences. Reason -

he did not give way to the Presidential motorcade during the Kuomboka ceremony in Mongu. Many arguments have already been thrown back and forth and notable among the questions raised are:

1. Protocol demands that a Head of State must be the last to arrive at any event where he has been invited to officiate; why did President Lungu find it important to arrive five minutes before Mr Hichilema?

2. It is the statutory duty of the police, in accordance with the law, to clear all vehicles or moving objects before the Head of State uses a selected road; why did the police fail to clear off any of the vehicles which were behind on the UPND entourage before attempting to bump off Mr Hichilema's car which was in front of the convoy?

3. Why was the window to the President's bulletproof, armoured vehicle lowered when overtaking Mr Hichilema - exposing the Head of State to imminent danger in the face of hostile opposition?

Meanwhile, it is public

HH is not the only one on trial

knowledge that Mr Hichilema does not recognise the election of Mr Lungu as President of Zambia, and it is also visibly clear that Mr Hichilema's driver did not pull over for the Head of State to pass.

On all these matters above, we leave it to the courts to decide and expect fair judgment from the judicial system. But it is the role the police played in this matter that we believe has not been debated exhaustively.

Since the role of the State Intelligence is incognito in circumstances such as the Mongu road incident, we believe that the responsibility to safeguard

give way to a Presidential motorcade are tantamount to obstruction of road way as well as endangering the life of the President. The officers acted in a reasonable way by overtaking Hakainde Hichilema's motorcade to avoid loss of life. As Zambia Police, we are not going to sit and watch such lawlessness in this Country. However, I am still waiting for a full report on what transpired from officers who were on the ground and appropriate action will be taken in accordance with the State Security Act."

In this statement, the Inspector General is proudly announcing to the nation that his primary source of information, which prompted his comment, was social media.

The IG further says "If the circulating picture was a reflection of what truly happened, then it was unfortunate" - again confirming to Zambians and to the Head of State that he had no idea about the incident involving his Commander-In-Chief until he saw the photo on Facebook, WhatsApp or Twitter.

Assuming that, for whatever reason, all the police officers in the Presidential convoy did not care to call and inform him about the "unfortunate" incident, and the so-called "officers on the ground" were too slow

to avail him a report, why did the IG choose to make a statement contrary to information that had earlier been provided by State House to the public?

Immediately after the road rage incident, the President's spokesperson wrote a statement which was distributed to the media in which he said:

"Route lining was done. HH passed major checkpoints in good time but slowed down so Eagle One (President Lungu's car) can find him on the way which happened. We had two options: to slow down and allow him to reach Limulunga or to bump him off and create some scene of sorts, which is what he (HH) wanted. A decision was made to by pass him and in our mind we were clear [that] no danger was posed to H.E, unless HH himself would ram his car into Eagle One. A split second decision would be made to prevent that... Secondly, as per established security and protocol orders, a decision to bump off all strange objects was made but a quick consultation upwards resulted into a different option, which was undertaken."

We find this information very relevant because, in this statement, Mr Chanda is confirming that Police made the necessary route lining and mounted checkpoints on the road which was to be used by the Head of State, but went ahead to allow the UPND convoy of over 40 vehicles to pass, on the assumption that the Head of State would not find them. So who allowed the "unfortunate" incident to happen? Is it Mr Hichilema for driving slowly or the Police for driving the President too fast?

Most importantly, and this is where we would like to draw the attention of the Inspector General and the Director of Public Prosecutions; Mr

Chanda says "a decision to bump off all strange objects was made but a quick consultation upwards resulted into a different option, which was undertaken... in our mind we were clear that no danger was posed to H.E." A consultation upwards would mean, either the Inspector General or the President were consulted, but since the IG says he learnt of the incident from social media, we can assume that under President Edgar Lungu, police are advised to consult him on how to safeguard his life. But when Mr Chanda says "WE WERE CLEAR THAT NO DANGER WAS POSED", who is he referring to? Who came to this conclusion that there was no danger posed? If it's the police or State House, then why is HH facing treason charges?

Being that we are not experts at law, we cannot speak authoritatively about the need to subpoena Mr Chanda to help the court understand; who consulted who and who decided what? But our only prayer to Ms Lillian Shawa Siyunyi, the Director of Public Prosecutions is that, as she takes Mr Hichilema to court today to prove his innocence, she must consider this matter as her biggest career test and challenge as a chief government prosecutor.

We know Ms Siyunyi has handled several complicated criminal matters before, but in this very high profile political case, the UPND leader is not the only one facing trial. The moment Mr Hichilema enters court to take plea, Ms Siyunyi must take that as a commencement of her own trial as DPP and that of the Inspector General of police.

News Diggers!
Ear to the ground

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the life of a Head of State lied entirely in the hands of the Police, with the Inspector General at the helm.

In the case of any transgression, especially bordering on treason, we believe that it is the duty of the police to first investigate a case before making any arrests.

Our view is that, if before arresting Mr Hichilema the police command investigated what transpired in Mongu and made conclusions without liaising with State House, then the Inspector General is presiding over a very incompetent law enforcement wing.

Before arresting Mr

Hichilema and charging him with treason, the Inspector General made the following statement:

"If what is portrayed in the picture circulating on social media concerning the motorcade of Hakainde Hichilema is a reflection of what truly happened, then it is very unfortunate because such actions of failing to



Dr. Vernon J Mwaanga is an accomplished diplomat who served as Ambassador of Zambia to Russia and as Zambia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations. He served twice as Foreign Affairs minister and four times as Information and Broadcasting Minister under various regimes.

New Era: My heart bleeds for the journalists

As we prepare to mark World Press Freedom Day, my heart bleeds for the journalists, newspapers, radio and television stations which have become victims of tyrannical, intolerant and dictatorial regimes around the world which continuously arrest, torture, kill and close them down for merely doing their jobs.

Press Freedom is essential in any democratic country. Closing down radio, television stations, social media and newspapers as we have witnessed elsewhere and here in Zambia with regard to The Post Newspaper which has kept every government on its toes, is unacceptable and a threat to the democratic dispensation the people of Zambia fought for in 1990.

The value of an independent media is indisputable, especially in countries like ours where we have a tame public

media which acts as a propaganda mouth piece for those in power and blacks out independent or opposing voices. The people of the world are entitled to divergent views and are intelligent enough to make up their own minds. The worlds just like countries, are not a monolithic entities. They are multi cultural, multi ethnic and multi dimensional. They cannot be fed with only one menu of news. They thrive on diversity which is based on robust debate and interrogation of ideas, governments and institutions. Some dictatorial governments even go so far as shutting down the social media just to suppress dissent.

The number of journalists being murdered, brutalised and imprisoned as they go about doing their work around the world and bringing uncensored news into our living rooms has been

growing in the recent past. The time for citizens of the world to stand up and defend press freedom in Zambia and in the world is now. If we as world citizens fail to do so, we shall become part of the culture and conspiracy of silence against press freedom all over the world.

Zambia needs a vibrant independent media and a diversity of voices for our nascent democracy to survive. Closure or threats against newspapers, radio, television and social media outlets, is against the spirit of our constitution and the bill of rights which clearly state that everyone has the right of expression and association. Any threats to press freedom anywhere in the world, is a threat to press freedom everywhere in the world. Press freedom is a breath of fresh air to the world, which is witnessing traumatic and deeply troubling times.

Nkana finally win

By Diggers Reporter
 There was a sigh of relief from Nkana on Saturday after the 12-time champions beat Napsa Stars 2-0 at National Heroes Stadium in Lusaka to end their two-match winless start to the 2017 campaign. Goals from Austin Muwowo and Shadreck Musonda gave coach Zeddy Salleti his first league win in charge. Muwowo struck first in 55th minute the before Musonda sealed the win deep in stoppage time.

Nkana had picked up just one point from their opening two games to put the early pressure on new coach Zeddy Salleti. Furthermore, the victory comes a massive relief for the team ahead of the big Copperbelt derby against Zesco United next Sunday at home in Kitwe. Meanwhile, the result dispatched Napsa to their second successive league loss after losing 1-0 away to Power Dynamos in Kitwe on April 16.



Nkana celebrates after beating NAPSAs Stars 2-0 at Heroes Stadium

Rix Mweemba is new FAZ vice-president

By Diggers Reporter
 The Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) has promoted its treasurer to the position of vice-president with immediate effect. According to a statement issued by FAZ Communications Manager Desmond Katongo, the decision was arrived at during

an executive meeting today. "The Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) has with immediate effect elevated FAZ treasurer Mr Rix Mweemba to the position of FAZ vice-president. The Association reached the decision to appoint Mr Mweemba

to the position of vice president at an executive meeting held today at Football House," stated

Katongo. "Mr Mweemba assumes the role of FAZ vice president taking over from Mr

Richard Kazala. FAZ has further co-opted Mr Lombe Mbalashi as FAZ executive committee

member. Mr Mbalashi has since relinquished his position as FAZ deputy general secretary."

Chilufya joins U-20 World Cup squad

By Diggers Reporter
 Zambia Under-20 striker Edward Chilufya has equated the teams 2017 FIFA U20 World Cup preparations to an army preparing for a decisive battle. Beston Chambeshi's side is in its last days of domestic training in Lusaka before shifting to Spain where it will set-up a month-long base en route to the tournament in South Korea which will last from May 20 to June 11, 2017. Chilufya, whose 4 goals inspired Zambia to the 2017 U20 AFCON title in March, said the team was feeling very bullish about their chances in South Korea. "Training is going on well and we can do well at the World Cup. The competition is hard and everyone is working hard, we are like soldiers preparing for a big battle," Chilufya said. The 18-year-old striker joined camp this week after returning from Sweden where he has signed a pre-contract agreement with Djurgardens. Zambia are in Group C in South Korea where they will play Portugal, Costa Rica and Iran. They open their campaign on May 21 against Portugal in Jeju. "The group is very fair but we will work very hard to ensure that we can equally match the different levels of each of our opponents at the tournament," said Chilufya.





CHILUFYA IN U-20 WC TEAM



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Rix Mweemba is new FAZ vice-president P7

Zambia demolish Mauritius in Rugby Africa Cup opener

By Diggers Reporter

Hosts Zambia got off to flying start in the 2017 Africa Cup Group 1 C Rugby tournament after downing Mauritius 69-3 in Sunday's opening game in Lusaka. Simon Nyangu placed two tries while his team mates David Birdrock, Emmanuel Daka, Laston Mukosa, Israel Kalumba and Oscar Bwalya chipped-in with a try each.

Thadeus Chipoya, Jubilee Chisenga and David Chimbuluku also added five points each.

Mukosa went on to convert seven out of Zambia's 11 tries on the day.

Mauritius got on the score sheet from the spot when Pierre Noel successfully kicked a penalty.

Zambia lead the log on 5 points while Mauritius return to the field on April 26 to face Rwanda in the

latter's first match of the three-nation round-robin event.

The hosts will complete their outing on April 29 against Rwanda.

Winner from the Zambia tournament's promotion to Group 1 B will be decided by a goal difference tally against the victor of the Group C North tournament that will involve Nigeria, Cameroon and Algeria.

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