



If I'm doing wrong, pray so that I change - Lungu

By Mirriam Chabala

President Edgar Lungu says if what he is doing as Head of State is wrong, Zambians should pray for him to change. And President Lungu says government will introduce contracts for Cabinet Ministers in order to synchronize their

performance and get rid of non performing ministers. Speaking at the launch of the 7th National Development Plan (7NDP) today, President Lungu said he was in Charge of Zambia while God was in control. "Talking of governance, I do

not know which government has no rules, no laws, no respect for the law, Let me emphasise that this morning I was talking to someone and I said 'look, what is your problem?' I am in charge of Zambia and God is in control. *Continues on page 5*

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Fight, protect Zambia's rule of law, Kasonde urges new lawyers

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WE JOINED PF TO EAT...

By Joseph Mwenda

Patriotic Front officials in Eastern Province have risen against senior government officers, demanding their immediate transfer from the region because they are giving government contracts to members

East PF rises against govt officials over contracts

of opposition political parties. In this audio, PF provincial secretary Joseph Kolosa demands that President Lungu removes Provincial

Permanent Secretary Chanda Kasolo, Deputy Permanent Secretary

Patrick Mwanawasa and Chipata District Commissioner, Kalunga

Zulu because they are "giving contracts to people who are not in

good standing with the party". *Continues on page 3*

Govt sends technocrats to learn nuclear management in Russia

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UPND urges Church leaders to resist PF intimidation

By Mirriam Chabala

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UPND Spokesperson Charles Kakoma says Church leaders in the country must stand firm against intimidation from the State.

In a statement, Kakoma commended the Church mother bodies who issued a strong statement on the breakdown of law and order in Zambia, saying the truth was the only virtue that would set Zambia free.

"The Church's truthful stance on the happenings in Zambia is a clear indication that indeed there is a total break down in the rule of law brought about by the Patriotic Front (PF) Party and its leaders. In the last few months, the people of Zambia have been looking to the Church to provide guidance on the way forward in relation to the political crisis facing the country," Kakoma stated.

"As United Party for National Development (UPND), we would like to thank the church mother bodies in Zambia for choosing to tell the truth. It is only telling the truth that shall set Zambia free. Unfortunately, the truth hurts."

Kakoma indicated that those criticising the statement by the three Church mother bodies and Bishop Telespho Mpundu in particular were

hurt by the truth contained in it.

"We have observed that some Zambians, who are hurt by the truth, have started criticising the leaders of the Church Mother Bodies who presided over the press conference to announce their decisions. We would

like to encourage the church leaders to soldier on. The stance they have taken will attract intimidation, threats and harassment from people who do not believe in the rule of law, human rights and freedoms, free media and democracy in general," he said.

Kakoma challenged those who were attacking the affected Church leaders to defend their arguments.

"Those who are attacking the church leaders should tell the nation whether or not the Church wanted to see President Edgar Lungu and State House declined

them and whether or not the Church had an agenda to discuss with President Lungu. They should also state if UPND President Hakainde Hichilema is incarcerated on treason charges or not. They should tell the nation if presidential election petition was heard

and who was declared the validly elected candidate," stated Kakoma.

"We therefore support the stance taken by the Church Mother Bodies to call for dialogue so that the country can have peace, unity and restore democracy to our country."

Police need anger management - Katanga

By Joseph Mwenda

In this audio, Copperbelt Province Police Commissioner Charity Katanga says those who hold lethal weapons in their line of duty need a lot of stress and anger management training.

Katanga's remarks come in the wake of a police officer Kelvin Kabaso of Luanshya who this

morning shot his wife a fellow police officer, before turning the gun on himself, following a marital dispute.

"Today around 09:45 hours, Constable Kelvin Kabaso, 25, of House number 138 Levi Chito police camps in Luanshya, left his point of duty and went back home. Apparently, Constable Kabaso

has been having marital problems, so his wife had called her mother to come and settle the problems because she had wanted to divorce," Katanga narrated.

"Both are police officers. So the woman and the mother were inside the house when Constable Kabaso came home. So the man came in and said

I am going to shoot her and shoot myself. Outside the house, there was another police officer Sgt Lungu. So he tried to calm the situation, but this officer said nalakushuta mudala (I will shoot you man). So as he was trying to move out, he shot the wife in the chest on the left side near the shoulder and she fell down."

Katanga narrated that Constable Kabaso attempted to kill himself but survived.

"After that Kabaso went inside the house and also shot himself in the mouth, but he was only injured on the cheek. He did not die, so he was rushed to the hospital where he is being attended to. The deceased is Febby Chabamba, 23, of the same house number," she said. She regretted the incident and told News Diggers! that there was need for police officers to undergo stress and anger management training because it was not possible to stop them using guns on duty.

"I think this gender based violence has had a toll on, not only the men and women in uniform, but the general members of the public out there. It's more about sensitisation and stress management, that's what I can say because it is very difficult for police officers to be prevented from using fire arms on duty. It's barely four days when we had a similar incident where, due to marital problems, when the woman wanted to back out of the marriage, the man felt offended and we lost three lives," said Katanga.

"This death could have been avoided, and I feel there is more that can be done to end gender based violence. We need stress management and most importantly anger management. I think also apart from our normal duties, we need anger management, that is very important. Especially for our men and women in uniform, anger management for these people who hold lethal weapons is very important. They normally resort to that and only realise later that the life which has been lost could have been avoided."

For audio visit [diggers.news](#)



Constable Kabaso(l) who shot dead his wife his wife Febby(r)

Kasonde urges lawyers to fight, protect rule of law

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

Law Association of Zambia president Linda Kasonde has called on newly graduated advocates to fight for the rule of law and good governance with professionalism in order to reverse the polarized state of affairs in Africa.

Speaking at the admission ceremony of lawyers at the Supreme Court in Lusaka today, Kasonde observed that the African continent was associated with massive corruption, social and political instability, rigged elections, and dictatorship among others, as cited by South African Chief Justice Mogoeng.

"Lawyers do not operate in a vacuum. We are a part of the society we live in and we must contribute positively to that society. As South African Chief Justice Mogoeng once said: 'Africa is generally associated with massive corruption, social and political instability, rigged elections, dictatorship, abuse of human rights with near

impunity, rampant non-observance of the rule of law, coup d'etat, sickness and disease, high mortality, abject poverty, economic underdevelopment, dependency and in general, the paucity of accountability, responsiveness and good governance. Yet economists say that the United Kingdom and Switzerland, which do not have the mineral and natural resources we have, with a very small population and a small piece of land, are each richer than all African countries put together. We must therefore play our part to reverse this unacceptable state of affairs' We must fight for the rule of law and good governance with the tools of our trade," Kasonde said.

She also urged the newly admitted advocates not to allow abuses of power, constitutionalism and the rule of law to take a foothold in the country.

"The mandate of LAZ under section 4 of the Laws of Zambia Act is to promote

and protect the rule of law, constitutionalism, good governance and social justice in line with our motto: justice, honour and integrity. We hope that all of you will do your part to uphold those values in whatever way you can. As former U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt once said, 'Do what you can, with what you have, where you are,' she said.

"We must not allow abuses of power, constitutionalism and the rule of law to take a foothold in our country. The future of our democracy and our economic prosperity depend on it. Our country is suffering from the scourge of division and hatred. That path leads to destruction. As lawyers we are trained to argue different sides of the law dispassionately; we are not afraid of ideas that challenge us and our positions."

Kasonde further encouraged the graduates to specialize in Constitutional law.

"Whilst I implore you to

get as much experience in different aspects of the law in the first few years of your career, know that contrary to popular belief lawyers, including State Council, are not jacks of all trades. Once you have firmly established what areas of the law you are most interested, I would urge all of you to specialize in that field of the law," said Kasonde.

"Following the substantial amendments to our Constitution, I would

particularly encourage you to specialize in Constitutional law. All advocates take an oath to uphold the Constitution as you have today. The constitution is the bedrock of our profession and the foundation of our democracy. The future of the rule of law and constitutionalism in this country rests on your shoulders whether from the Bar or from the Bench. You are the ones we are waiting for."

Lungu congratulates new Saudi Crown Prince

By Mirriam Chabala

President Edgar Lungu has congratulated newly appointed Crown Prince of the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed Bin Salman who is also Defence and Deputy Prime Minister.

The President has also congratulated His Majesty King Salman, saying Zambia was ready to work with His Royal Highness in consolidating the relationship of the two countries.

In a statement today, Special Assistant to the President for Press and Public Relations Amos Chanda said the Head of State sent a congratulatory message to Prince Mohammed in which he wished him the very best of luck in his duties.

"Your Royal Highness, I wish to convey, on behalf of the government and people of the Republic of Zambia and indeed on my own behalf my sincere congratulations on the appointment of Your Royal Highness as Crown Prince, and first in line to the throne of the Royal Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. On this joyous occasion, Please accept, Your Royal Highness my best wishes for your continued personal good health and the prosperity of your great Kingdom," said President Lungu.

"The Zambian Government stands ready to work with your Royal Highness in consolidating the strong bonds of friendship that exist between Zambia and Saudi Arabia in efforts to improve the welfare of the peoples of our two countries."

Civil Society group defends Telesphore Mpundu



CISCA officials at the press briefing - picture by Tenson Mkhala

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

The Civil Society for Constitutional Agenda (CISCA) says there is no amount of money that will purchase any of the three church mother bodies.

Speaking at a press briefing today, CISCA Chairperson Bishop John Mambo said he was saddened by the attacks on Archbishop Telesphore Mpundu over his recent statement.

He warned that those insulting Mpundu were indirectly insulting Pop Francis and the Catholic establishment at the Vatican where the Lusaka Archbishop draws his authority.

"No one will deny today that this country is bleeding out with fire. We have asked state house to give us an audience to speak to president Edgar Lungu but that has not happened. What do we do?" Bishop Mambo asked.

"We as CISCA stand shoulder to shoulder with the original three church mother bodies. We adopt their statement and they have our blessings. Since time immemorial, we have had three church mother bodies, but now am hearing there are more church mother bodies which are condemning Archbishop Mpundu."

He wondered how other bishops, who were disagreeing with the statement read by Archbishop Mpundu, would describe the situation in Zambia.

"I am repeating the words of Archbishop Mpundu that if this is not dictatorship, then what is it? Why do you want the voice of the church to be in the intensive care?" asked Bishop Mambo.

And CISCA representatives issued a winding statement about the political state of affairs

in Zambia in line with the Republican Constitution.

CISCA vice chairperson Pamela Chisanga, who read the statement said the lack of constitutionalism and disrespect of the rule of law by those in the ruling Patriotic Front was the underlying cause of the crisis that the country was facing.

She added that there was no law in Zambia that criminalised the act of failing to recognise an elected Republican President.

Below is the full statement by CISCA:

PRESS STATEMENT ON THE STATE OF CONSTITUTIONALISM AND RULE OF LAW IN ZAMBIA

Lusaka, 20 June 2017

Ladies and gentlemen, the Civil Society Constitution Agenda (CISCA) feels duty bound to add its voice to the calls for the leadership of this country to rise to the occasion and resolve the current crisis in our nation. We agree with sentiments expressed by various sectors of our society, including the three church mother bodies (ZCCB, CCZ and EFZ) that our country is in a crisis. It is no secret that the country is polarised, that the mood in the country is highly toxic with hate speech, tribalist sentiments becoming a regular feature on our discourse particularly on social media and other platforms.

Ladies and gentlemen, we are not surprised to hear that our head of state, President Lungu, sees no crisis in the country. President Lungu says this is because he is able to fly in and out of the country. Perhaps this is where the

problem is, that our President is not on the ground long enough to feel the palpable mood of anger and hatred that is now reaching boiling point in this country.

As a movement that is focussed on constitutionalism, we are saddened to see that in two years, our country has become a shell of a democratic state where those sworn to protect and defend the constitution and respect the rule of law are the ones at the forefront of mutilating it and disrespecting the rule of law without any restraint or shame. This is what happens when patriotism gives way to patronage and integrity gives way to greed and corruption.

CISCA believes that the lack of constitutionalism and disrespect of the rule of law by politicians, especially those in the ruling Patriotic Front is the underlying cause of the crisis that our nation is facing. It is for this reason that we, as CISCA would like to bring to the attention of the nation some of the violations of both the spirit and the letter of our constitution, disrespect of the rule of law and violation of human rights by the primary duty bearers, the state under the PF government. We believe that unless the constitution, the rule of law and human rights are respected, it will be difficult to for the PF government to erase the image of tyranny that is now firmly formed in the minds of many in our country and beyond our borders.

Constitutionalism and Rule of Law

CISCA believes that a people driven constitution and an expanded bill of rights is the

basis for a true democracy, for a just work and for peaceful co-existence in society. More importantly, CISCA believes that no one should be allowed to do anything outside the parameters and provisions of the Constitution at any time. While this applies to every individual and institutions in the land, it is even more serious when it comes to those who have taken oath of office to protect and defend the constitution.

When those sworn to defend and protect the constitution elect to defy it, they do not only go against their own oath, but also institutionalise lawlessness. This causes citizens to become disenchanted and disaffected and this ultimately leads to frustration and bitterness among citizens. CISCA believes this is where our nation sits, a nation where a significant proportion of our citizens are disenchanted and angry due to systematic breaches of our constitution, disregard for the rule of law, disregard of our national values and silencing of citizens voices. Allow us at this point to highlight some of the breaches that we have observed.

Recognition of the President Ladies and gentleman, allow us to start by highlighting an issue that is perhaps at the centre of the crisis that our nation faces today. Following the September 2016 elections, the United Party for National Development and its leader President Hakainde Hichilema refused to recognise President Edgar Lungu as the legitimately elected President of the Republic of Zambia. They have maintained that they will not recognise President Lungu as President until their election

petition is heard. We have heard a lot of pronouncements from government officials, Patriotic Front party officials and party cadres demanding that the UPND and Hakainde Hichilema concede defeat and recognise President Lungu as President. Hakainde Hichilema, UPND Members of Parliament, officials and cadres have equally been adamant about non-recognition of President Lungu.

As CISCA, we would like to clearly state that there is no law in Zambia which criminalizes failure to recognize the President.

We believe that article 103 of the Zambian constitution potentially provides for non recognition of a President on the grounds that a President has been invalidly elected or where the Zambian constitution or any law relating to the presidential election was not complied with. When this happens, the constitution mandates the Constitutional Court to hear the election petition to validate or invalidate the election of the President.

Ladies and gentlemen, the nation knows what happened to the petition lodged before the Constitutional Court by the UPND challenging the Presidency of the incumbent.

Rather than go down the route of analysing what happened as this will not lead anywhere, we want to suggest the following:

- That the PF use legal means available to them to prove to the UPND that President Lungu was legitimately elected to put this matter to a close.

- Another option is for dialogue. We strongly believe that if all parties to this challenge are reasonable, this is something that can be resolved through dialogue – even if that dialogue is to agree to disagree, it will help the two parties establish boundaries on how to express their disagreement. This will ultimately reduce the tension in our country. We want to believe both President Lungu and UPND President Hakainde Hichilema have the interest of this nation at heart and will demonstrate leadership through dialogue, peaceful and civilised resolution of this impasse.

Presumption of Innocence Until Proved Guilty

CISCA believes that a person does not lose his human rights simply by being in the custody of law enforcing agents. Even those proved guilty, while acknowledging some limitations in the enjoyment of their human rights, still retain fundamental rights such as protection against torture and inhuman treatment. Article 18(2)(a) of our constitution pre-supposes that every person charged with a criminal offence is innocent until he pleads or is proved guilty.

CISCA is deeply concerned that the police and prison authorities have exhibited blatant violation of this provision lately when dealing with those charged with Treason and other politically motivated cases. CISCA learnt with sadness that the police service attempted to bundle HH and his co accused into a vehicle filled with dog faeces and how Hichilema and co-accused were brutalised during their arrest and during their transfer to Mukobeko Maximum Prison. This is a violation of article 18 of the Zambian constitution because not even a convict deserves such kind of inhuman treatment.

The Zambian constitution, in line with other international and regional human rights instruments provides for the protection of individuals against torture and any inhuman and degrading treatment. Article 15 provides that "a person shall not be subjected to torture

or inhuman or degrading punishment or other like treatment". Sadly, CISCA notes that allegations of physical, mental and psychological torture are increasingly becoming an inherent feature of the police and correctional services.

This is unacceptable and must be stopped forthwith. We all know that protection from torture is a non-derogable right and therefore there is no justification in using dehumanizing tactics to mete out punishment or in the treatment of those who are under the care of law enforcement agencies.

We have heard comments from some people in our country that this is 'normal' treatment of accused persons in our country. It is sad that we as a country have been brain washed to believe that this is acceptable. The fact that the incarceration of Hichilema has exposed the blatant disregard of the rule of law in enforcing the very law does not make it right and does not make it acceptable. There has been a lot of speculation on the conditions under which Hichilema is detained. This is another source of anger for the supporters of Hichilema and his family.

To resolve this, CISCA suggests the following:

- The Human Rights Commission must urgently undertake an enquiry into the conditions under which Hichilema and others are detained with clear recommendations to address any challenges noted within an acceptable period. Additionally, the Human Rights Commission must conscientise citizens on their rights, especially rights of persons found in conflict with the law. The case of the ZAF officer who died in police custody is still fresh in our minds and if such tragedies are to be avoided, Zambians must be fully aware of their rights.

- Further, the Ministry of Home Affairs and the department of Correctional Services must put in place a plan to improve the conditions in our prisons and detention centres.

Protection of Freedom of Conscience

Article 19 (1) of the constitution provides that "except in his/her own consent, a person shall not be hindered from the enjoyment of the freedom of conscience, and for the purposes of this article, the said freedom includes freedom of thought and religion, freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom either alone or in community with others, and both in public and in private, to manifest and propagate his/her religion or belief in worship, teaching, practice and observance"

Clearly, the state has no constitutional right to determine how citizens should practice and manifest their beliefs as the PF government is trying to do today through the Ministry of Religious Affairs. CISCA calls on the ministry to desist from interfering with citizen's enjoyment and exercising of freedom of conscience.

CISCA therefore notes with dismay some of the pronouncements and actions of the Minister of Religious Affairs and National Guidance to regulate the freedom of conscience against the provisions of the Zambian constitution. The constitution does not prescribe the minimum of maximum number of people that may congregate to manifest or propagate their belief but strangely the Minister finds it necessary to go against the constitution by arbitrary introduction of a moratorium on the number of congregants that may be allowed to enjoy their right to congregate and worship.

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We joined the Patriotic Front to eat

From front page

"We are already poor, so we are ready for any consequences of our demands. We joined PF so that tikazipezako pamimba. We are in the ruling party to eat but our stomachs are shrinking," Kolosa said at a highly charged gathering attended by PF supporters.

"We are demanding the removal of Chanda Kasolo, Deputy PS Patrick Mwanawasa and Chipata District Commissioner, Kalunga Zulu from their respective offices. Bayende, they must go! we need to eat. As a ruling party in the province, we are pleading with massive pain and sorrow that these must go. They have not been working and supporting the party in any way. This has pained us, we

are not happy, they are not working with us, but they have continued to occupy these offices."

He said the three government officials were amassing wealth using private contractors who were not helping the party.

"These three have developed unstoppable appetite of personal wealth to the extent that they are working with contractors who are not in good standing with the party. We have no option but to demand that these unsupportive officers be removed from their respective offices," Kolosa said.

The party officials accused the trio of frustrating development in the region and frustrating efforts by Eastern Province

minister Makebi Zulu.

"They are giving government contracts to members of the Opposition... The efforts of Honourable Makebi Zulu to grow the party are being frustrated" said Kolosa as party supporters consistently interrupted him with ululating and chanting of "Abash Kasolo! Abash Mwanawasa! Abash uyo winango"

The party leadership in the province demanded that the top civil servants be removed from their offices and be replaced by officers that will respect Makebi Zulu as Provincial minister and who will give contracts to members of the ruling party.

For audio visit diggers.news

Pukuta on why he's close to Lungu

By Joseph Mwenda and Sipilisiwe Ncube

Evangelical Fellowship of Zambia (EFZ) executive director Reverend Pukuta Mwanza says he does not know why board chairman Bishop Paul Mususu and the vice board chairman Bishop Fortune Mwiza refused to sign a statement which was issued at the end of an emergency board meeting held today.

And Rev Mwanza says he is close to President Edgar Lungu because he prefers a diplomatic approach when giving criticism, rather than confrontation.

EFZ issued a statement distancing itself from the Friday statement made by three church mother bodies (Zambia Council of Catholic Bishops-ZCCB, Council of Churches in Zambia-CCZ and EFZ – represented by Bishop Mususu.

Reverend Pukuta Mwanza's statement was signed by Board members Bishop Martin Kamangala, Bishop Chrispin Zulu, Reverend Aaron Chilunjika, and Bishop Shemmy Kakelele, while the top two slots where board chairman Bishop Mususu and his vice Bishop Mwiza were supposed to sign were left blank.

When contacted to explain why the two senior board members' signatures were missing, Rev Mwanza said they had their own reasons for refusing to sign.

He explained that they were present at the emergency board meeting, but chose not to sign the statement.

"They have their own reasons why and I don't want to explain the reasons now. but that is the outcome of the meeting showing what transpired in the emergency meeting. They were available, both the chair and vice, but they chose not to sign the statement," Mwanza explained.

"If people have refused to sign, normally I wouldn't want to comment because it might require that we have to find another route like the general assembly or something."

When asked if he was unhappy with the statement made by Catholic Archbishop Telesphore Mpundu because he had a soft spot for President Edgar Lungu, Rev Mwanza said he has always been close to previous presidents and not President Lungu alone because he prefers a diplomatic approach rather than confrontation.

"It is wrong because all the regimes that I have worked with, part of President Rupiah Banda's regime, President Michael Sata's regime, and now President Lungu's regime, my approach has always been the same. If you compare the statements they are giving, they have always been inflammatory, emotionally charged, they are insulting, they are derogatory; I have never insulted any leader of the opposition because I take them as national leaders. My approach has always been to be diplomatic rather than confrontation," he said.

He charged that the Friday statement read by Archbishop Mpundu had created an inferno out a spark and the crisis was no loner with the politicians but with the church.

"They have created an infernal out of a spark, they have made a critical situation worse. They should never bring in people into their own problems. I am more suspicious why they left me out because I am EFZ persona," Rev Mwanza adding that there were other Catholic Bishops who were unhappy with Bishop Mpundu's statement.

When reminded that the catholic bishops he was referring to (Bishop Alick Banda of Ndola and Bishop Benjamin Phiri of Chipata) were from the same tribe as President Lungu and himself, Rev Mwanza said the EFZ statement was not signed in his capacity as a Ngoni.

"But you must understand that the statement which has been signed has not been signed in my capacity as a Ngoni. I don't think that anyone has the right to insult anybody. My view is that it is wrong to characterise me on the basis of whether the President comes from this region or that

region. When we were working with president [Nevers] Mumba last year, does that mean that Mumba comes from Chipata or Petauke?" he asked. When asked if he made an effort to contact the CCZ or ZCCB and Archbishop Mpundu to express the EFZ concern, Rev Mwanza said it was not up to him to go back to the other mother bodies to ask them why they did wrong.

"That is the matter that the EFZ board might decide because there was no way someone would claim that the EFZ was present at a meeting when I was not there. EFZ does not leave on the street, there must have been a way in which I could have been consulted. That statement was generated by the Catholic Church, hosted by the Catholic Church and Chaired by the Catholic Bishop, so where are the three church mother bodies in that statement?" he wondered.

"It is not up to me to go back to them and find out why they did wrong, it is up to me to organise my constituency and do what is write. EFZ can issue its own statement on the political state of affairs, outside the influence of the church mother body."

Asked if he felt President Lungu's strong reaction to the Bishops' statement was justified, Rev Mwanza said he was not a government spokesperson to speak on behalf of the Head of State.

"Well I am not a government spokesperson so I cannot speak on that," said Rev Mwanza.

In the EFZ statement, the Board members said the sidelining of the EFZ secretariat during the consultation stage before the church mother bodies issued a joint statement, was against the historic norm.

"When a joint venture or activity has been agreed upon, the three church umbrella bodies have always closely worked together through their secretariat offices in ensuring joint organization and mobilization from their respective umbrella bodies. We regret to observe that the recent joint press conference departed from that historical norm. For reasons unknown to us, the EFZ secretariat was bypassed and left out from all the consultation processes and preparations of the joint press conference and this is where the procedural departure was questioned by the EFZ Board. This also raised serious concerns with regard to the motive behind dealing with and dealing with an individual on the board of EFZ rather than with its established channels and structures," the statement read in part.

"The side-lining of the EFZ secretariat by the other church umbrella bodies (both the ZCCB and the CCZ) meant that there was no official representation of EFZ

at their joint press conference and therefore cannot claim that the joint press conference had the ownership and blessings of the three umbrella bodies, perhaps the two only. By not consulting and working through the secretariat at EFZ, it meant that EFZ had been excluded from a formal and official involvement in the joint press conference. Moreover a day before the joint press statement, an online advert likely to have been placed by the ZCCB announced the joint press conference in which the three General secretaries representing CCZ, EFZ, and ZCCB were going to be addressing the journalists even though the conveners knew very well that EFZ Executive Director had been deliberately left out. So what was the motive of taking such a move of Publicizing an individual's participation on a program on which he had not been consulted?"

The EFZ further said that the actions by the two church mother bodies were undermining the Board of EFZ. "Further, we observed that the conveners chose to only deal with an individual on the board of EFZ rather than corporately as an institution and as such we find the action wanting as it amounted to undermining the authority of the board of EFZ – a type of divide and rule. We Christian church umbrella bodies should cherish unity in spite of our theological difference and we should seek to work together

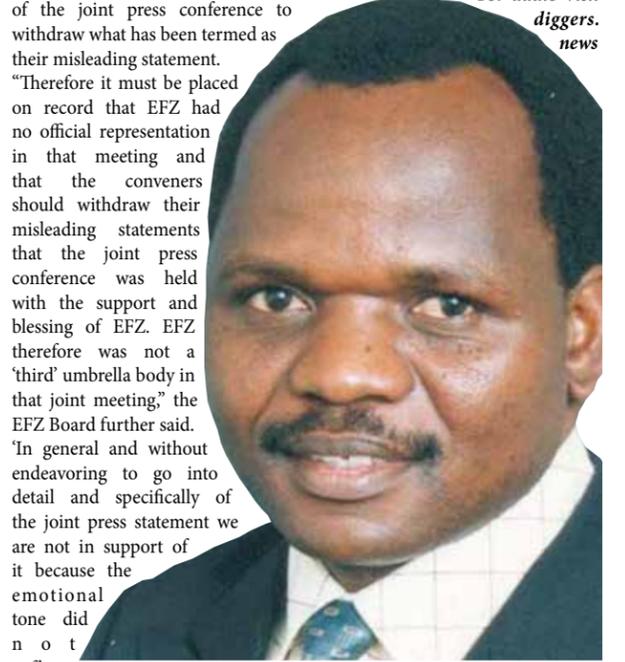
without undue suspicions and ill motives. Our strong convictions and differences in opinion should enrich our discussions and debate on national issues and our biblical hermeneutic differences should also be respected because they too form the bedrock of our distinctive identities," read the statement in part.

The EFZ has also urged the conveners of the joint press conference to withdraw what has been termed as their misleading statement.

"Therefore it must be placed on record that EFZ had no official representation in that meeting and that the conveners should withdraw their misleading statements that the joint press conference was held with the support and blessing of EFZ. EFZ therefore was not a 'third' umbrella body in that joint meeting," the EFZ Board further said. "In general and without endeavoring to go into detail and specifically of the joint press statement we are not in support of it because the emotional tone did not reflect

the spiritual nature of our work; although the statement described the challenges the country was experiencing, it failed to inspire hope for the people of this country and instead it left the people of this country in total despair. We strongly feel that it is our duty and responsibility to guide our nation by not only pointing at wrongs, but also providing well-articulated alternative solutions to the challenges of the country without being confrontational or antagonistic in our engagement," said the EFZ Board members.

For audio visit diggers. news



Civil Society group defends Telesphore Mpundu

From page 3

From the number of controversies that have emanated since the creation of this ministry, CiSCA recommends that President Lungu must immediately scrap or abolish the Ministry of Religion and National Guidance. This will not only put an end to the confusion brought by the creation of this Ministry, it will save this country much needed resources that can be applied to delivery of basic social services.

Protection of Freedom of Expression
The Zambian constitution provides for the protection of citizens freedom of expression and assembly and association in articles 20 and 21 respectively. Article 20 (1) states that "except with his own consent, a person shall not be hindered in his enjoyment of his freedom of expression, that is to say, freedom to hold opinions without interference, freedom to receive ideas and information without interference, freedom to impart and communicate ideas and information without interference, whether the communication be to the public generally or to any person or the class of persons and freedom from interference with his/her correspondence."

Our country has experienced unprecedented levels of detention of persons for expressing their opinions in public, on social media and other platforms. We have seen clamping down of media and harassment of the media. The story of the Post, Komboni Radio, Ithezithezi Community Radio, Muvi TV, among others, is well known. A recent example are the threats issued by Lands Minister Honourable Jean Kapata to Muvi TV reporter Innocent Phiri on Wednesday 14th June 2017 to the effect that she would deal with Muvi TV for televising a story linking her and other government officials to an alleged land scam in Lusaka West's Zombe area. The conduct of Ms. Kapata was clearly meant to intimidate and interfere with the free sharing of information which was in public interest.

Freedom of Assembly and Association

One would not be far from the truth to allege that the Public Order Act under the PF regime does not apply to the Patriotic Front party, PF cadres and PF patrons and associates. In what appears to be a PF scheme, the Zambian police service has time and again violated article 21 of the Zambian

constitution which provides for the protection of freedom of assembly and association which includes freedom to form or belong to a political party, trade union or association for the protection of a person's interest.

It is ironic that while the police have on several occasions prevented some individuals and groups of people from exercising and enjoying this constitutional right, the PF and their associates do enjoy this right, even to an extent of abusing it to infringe or threaten to infringe the enjoyment of fundamental rights by other people seen to be opposed to the establishment.

Further, CiSCA notes with dismay how the Zambia police services continually operate like a force contrary to article 193(a).

Zambians who want to peacefully express their concerns or displeasure, their solidarity with those they feel are being persecuted must be allowed to do so. Bottled anger and resentment of the establishment are not healthy for a democracy such as ours.

Our suggestion is for the Police Service to immediately allow peaceful assembly and put in place measures to ensure that such assemblies remain peaceful. Further, we urge a speedy repeal of this archaic law inherited from our colonial masters that is still glorified in an independent, democratic nation such as Zambia is supposed to be.

Sole Candidacy

More recently, CiSCA has watched with shock the debate on the candidature of the PF for the 2021 general election. It goes without saying that PF under President Lungu has been in power for the second term of office for less than 10 months now. Ordinarily, one would have thought that the regime would be now focussed on delivering on the campaign promises for improving the welfare of poor Zambians, but alas, the PF priority seems to be on securing a third term for President Lungu. This debate is logically misplaced, legally wrong and goes against the Zambian constitution. The eligibility of President Lungu is before the courts of law, why are the PF discussing it now? Do they already know the verdict?

Ladies and gentlemen, we all know that political parties are now a creation of the national constitution. Specifically article 60 provides for the rights, character, operations and limitations of political parties. Article 60 (1c) demands that

political parties must conduct primary elections for the selection of candidates while article (60 d and e) requires political parties to "promote and practice democracy through regular, free and fair elections within the party" and to "respect the right of its members to participate in the affairs of the political party," respectively. CiSCA believes that the current debate in PF about a sole Presidential candidate for the 2021 general election flies in the face of article 60 of our constitution. Note that these constitutional provisions apply to ALL political parties whether in power or in opposition.

Debt Contraction
CiSCA is concerned that the PF government has continued to seek contracting public debt without seeking the approval of parliament as provided by the constitution. Article 63(2d) and 114(e1) provides that "the national assembly shall oversee the performance of the executive function by approving public debt before it is contracted."

The Zambian government has contracted over US\$500 000 000 without the due Parliamentary processes as follows:

i. US\$600 000 000 from the World Bank for various developmental projects. US\$150 000 is direct budget support.

ii. In October 2016, the African Development Bank approved a US\$50 000 000 credit line to Development Bank of Zambia for small and medium businesses.

Zambia has signed up other loan facilities and has been a recipient of other grants over the last 12 months. Zambia is also courting the IMF for a bailout package in order to support its debt repayment.

CiSCA is saddened by the apparent interference by the executive in the matter of ZCCM-IH and FQM where ZCCM-IH has been forced to settle out of court the case against FQM (worth US\$1.5 billion). This, coming from an executive that has clearly stated that it cannot interfere in matters before the courts of law is highly questionable and must arouse the interest of every Zambian given the economic challenges the country is going through. Zambians must realise that without such careless debt contraction and careless management of our economy, we would still be able to enjoy cheaper fuel and cheaper electricity, even in the face of high costs of importing power caused by the low levels of water in the Kariba.

To address this, CiSCA proposes the following:

- The Speaker of the National Assembly to immediately take to task the Minister of Finance on debt contraction and to request the Minister of Finance to disclose fully the total debt exposure of the country including previously incurred debt.

- The Speaker of the National Assembly to immediately demand accountability on sue of debt incurred so far, including Euro Bond.

We are now aware that the Speaker has insulated himself against any public engagement with his recent pronouncements and so we call upon Members of Parliament who are the people's representatives and have the interest of this nation at heart to make this request in Parliament.

Call to Civic Duty

Ladies and gentlemen, the fall of our beloved country from being a beacon of peace and trend setter of democracy on the African continent popular to dictatorship it is today is testimony of what happens when citizens cease to exercise their democratic duties and constitutional rights after they leave the polling booth. It is reminder that the task to nurture democracy to its full maturity cannot be left in the hands of politicians alone. In fact, even the most democratic politicians turn into despots the moment citizens cease to demand accountability and participation in governance processes. CiSCA firmly believes that destiny of this country is the hands Zambian citizens and not those in power who only interest and preoccupation is to have more and more power. Time has come for Zambians to defend the democracy that we embraced in 1991 at whatever cost.

Way forward

While it is generally agreed that the law does not always respect human rights, principles of good governance and constitutionalism requires that each and every individual in the land follows the law to the letter and spirit. CiSCA is deeply saddened that this does not seem to be the case in our country today. The fate of citizens who came into contact with the law appears to be at the whims and fancy of those in power. This is a potential source of conflict and tension in the country.

Ladies and gentlemen, CiSCA believes that our national reconciliation and healing should be rooted in the respect for the rule of law, human rights and

constitutionalism. As primary duty bearers, the PF government has a both legal and moral obligation to provide tenacious leadership in ensuring that our lost democracy is fully restored. Indeed the restoration of our democracy entails respecting the sanctity of our laws in all political, social, economic and religious affairs. It is not too late for President Lungu to make amends. Finally, we wish to announce to the nation that a movement, we will continue to catalogue constitutional breaches and will therefore produce a regular bulletin highlighting these breaches. We will also set up a complaints mechanism for citizens to report any breaches or infringement of their rights and we will publicise these as necessary. We urge all citizens to support and participate in this nation for the betterment of our nation.

The road ahead of us, economically, is challenging. It will be made worse by an unresponsive government, inactive citizens who will not be able to hold government accountable for its actions. At the end of the day, we must all realise that it is not President Lungu that will suffer, it will not be Hakainde Hichilema, it will be ordinary Zambians that will suffer.

Ordinary Zambians are already suffering – paying more taxes than any other time in our history, paying more for fuel and electricity and this will continue to rise. Communities that depend on agriculture will still be subjected to the chaotic FISP and e-voucher system while our leaders continue to fight for power and recognition, while cadres continue to campaign for and support a useless third term bid for President Lungu.

The Finance Minister announced an ambitious Zambia Plus programme and convinced us as Zambians that an IMF programme is necessarily – many of us have no idea what is happening because of the political crisis our country is in. IN his budget speech, the Minister announced the free distribution of sanitary ware to girls in schools. A few months later, we are told there is no money for this. What else isn't there money for in the 2017 budget? ARVs? Teachers and nurses' salaries? These, ladies and gentlemen, are the things that should be pre-occupy us as a nation. Thank you.

Issued by:
Bishop John H. Mambo
Chairperson
-
#CivilSocietyConstitutionAgenda
#CiSCA



Diplomats at the launch of the 7th National Development Plan – picture courtesy of State House

If I'm doing wrong, pray that I change - Lungu

From front page

We are a Christian nation and we will remain as such and those of us who believe we will go on our knees every morning and ask God 'what am I going to do today?'. I am just in charge but God is in Control," President Lungu said.

"As a christian nation that's what I believe in, so just pray for me to do the right thing if what I am doing is wrong now. I think your prayer will touch me and I will change but so far so good I am on the right course. None of us here is special we are all the same, Dr kaunda, Mr Rupiah Bwezani Banda and Mr Edgar Lungu we are all the same. It's a privilege to serve. I am privileged to do this job and I will do both wrong and right for the success and failures, please let's not begin playing with people's lives, we have got 15 plus million Zambians to look after."

Meanwhile, the President has said government shall introduce contracts for Ministers in order to synchronize them and get rid of non performing ministers. He said government would want to gauge the performance of Ministers through contracts as Ministers critically needed to be held accountable.

"I will be glad if our ministers can have their contracts synchronized so that we can know when to let them go. There is no way a minister can be superintendent of a ministry and holding you accountable without them being accountable to anything. Very shortly I will be receiving reports from the ministers on their performances quarterly and I am sure we will see how far we are going on this line," President Lungu said.

"In line with all this all government ministries and institutions are expected to align their strategic plans to

the smart Zambia agenda and the 7NDP. All quarterly reports for ministries, provinces and institutions are expected to be in line with development outcomes of the plan."

And President Lungu said his performance shall be judged in 2021.

"I do not know whether the President has a contract... oh in 2021 you will be able to find out whether I have done it or not because the president is also answerable to some authority in some way and in 2021 you will be able to know if I have passed the grades," President Lungu said.

He expressed hope that the newly launched 7NDP would help in breaking the gap between the rich and the poor.

"I have heard people saying chimbwi no plan, we do not want to be chibwi no plan, we want to work according to budget and despite the poverty decline between 2006 and 2015 there is need for government to do more as rural poverty remains really high at over 70 percent," said the President.

And United Nations resident coordinator Janet Rogan said in her speech that now was not the time for partisan politics amongst political leaders but that it was time to represent the people who voted for them.

"The 7th National Development plan has to go everywhere in this country even as far as the famous Dundumwenzi because once a government is in place then what follows is hard work. All those who were elected last year must prepare to represent their electorates and deliver. I humbly suggest that this time to rise from partisan politics and focus on developing the country," said Rogan.

Meanwhile, Minister of



President Lungu at the launch of the 7th National Development Plan - picture courtesy of State House

National Development and Planning Lucky Mulusa said the 7NDP would generate more employment opportunities and incomes for the people of Zambia anchored on the formulation of policies that would

result in productive and measurable outcomes.

"The formation of the plan was guided by the national planning and budgeting policy with the revised national decentralisation policy of 2014 and took

into account the micro economic policies outlined in the economic stabilisation growth program called Zambia Plus. The plan which has been launched today is well poised to produce growth that will

generate more employment opportunities and incomes for the people of Zambia. This plan will anchor on the formulation of policies that will result in productive and measurable outcomes," said Mulusa.

Give dialogue a chance - Chellah

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

Former State House press aide and Michael Sata's spokesperson George Chellah says it is time political parties in Zambia put their cards on the table to address the rising political temperatures among stake holders.

In a statement, Chellah said it was no longer doubtful that the country was severely polarized and divided.

"It's no longer doubtful that our country is severely polarized, and as a consequence the political temperature is high too. So, it would be highly clumsy and politically, economically and socially suicidal for us to linger on with pretense like its business

as usual' yet the reality is that of 'business than the usual,' Chellah said.

"The bitter truth about our current state of affairs is that we are at a point where the parties responsible for this situation ought to put the country first and realize that we have tempted fate too far and its time we buried the hatchet, and discussed our differences flexibly."

He also urged the leadership of both ruling and opposition political parties not to waste the only opportunity for dialogue presented before them.

"In this case, the leadership on both ends of our crisis must not waste the opportunity for dialogue presented before us. They

must accurately read the prevailing circumstances i.e. the mood and tempo, and how such can be exploited to the benefit of the country and its citizens before the situation escalates. Identifying the moment for dialogue is of essence, if positive results are to be scored," said Chellah.

"We are all Zambians and we have a country to build, and more importantly, we must be cognizant of the fact that the dignity, growth and sovereignty we desire will only have meaning and guarantee if we split our problems into manageable portions, guided by the spirit of genuine brotherhood, patriotism and unity in diversity," said Chellah.

By Diggers Reporter

Lusaka magistrate Ireen Wishimanga has directed that her court order of June 15 2017, where she directed that Hakainde Hichilema must be remanded at Lusaka central Prison, must be obeyed without fail.

And Hichilema today asked the court to ignore the purported take over of the contempt case by the DPP's office.

Magistrate Wishimanga said if there were any security concerns requiring that HH is detained at Kabwe's Mukobeko Maximum Prison, they must be put in writing to her for consideration.

"The court has given an order whether orally or formally has to be obeyed. Indeed if there are concerns by the prisons they should make a formal application," said Wishimanga. The ruling came in the wake of the concern raised by Hichilema's lawyer Vincent Malambo at the end of hearing today when he asked the court to restate it's position on where the complainants must be detained.

Malambo urged the court to restate her orders as they wanted access to the complainants.

The court ordered that Hichilema and five others be detained at Lusaka central prison until the case was disposed and determined.

The case has since been

Court warns State against taking HH back to Kabwe

adjourned to Wednesday next week for raising of constitutional issues by the complainants lawyers who have objected to the decision of the DPP taking over the prosecution.

Lawyer Keith Mweemba said the purported takeover of the prosecution was illegal and unconstitutional as it was against public interest.

But the accused Godfridah Sumaili's lawyer Lubinda Linyama urged the court to refer the matter for constitutional determination which submission the court dismissed as she had not started hearing the constitutional issues.

After the case was adjourned to Wednesday 28 June the accused who is the National Guidance and Religious Affairs Minister was surrounded by some cadres who was offering her protection.

Sumaili was in the company of Commerce Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe.



HH driven away in a prison truck - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Police block GBM, supporters for an hour at Court



GBM with UPND supporters outside the Magistrate's Court complex - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

By Tenson Mkhala

Police today blocked a group of UPND supporters led by party vice-president Geoffrey Mwamba from entering the Magistrate Court complex.

GBM and the UPND supporters wanted to go and witness a contempt of court case in which party president Hakainde Hichilema is a complainant.

The police however stopped the official and kept the supporters outside the court complex for close to an hour before they finally allowed him in.

In this case, HH wants the Magistrate's court to cite Religious Affairs Minister Godfridah Sumaili for contempt after she made a statement that the UPND leader was facing treason charges because he pushed President Edgar Lungu too far.

HH was moved this morning from Kabwe's Mukobeko Maximum Security Prison and arrived at the Lusaka magistrate court complex around 09:30 hours. He was driven in a blue prison truck popularly known as Kasalanga, under heavy police guard.

The contempt case was scheduled to start at 12:00 hours before Lusaka magistrate Ireen Wishimanga.

When GBM and other UPND supporters arrived at the court complex around 11:30, police refused to allow them in.

GBM explained that he was willing to park his car outside the court premises so that he and his supporters could walk in, but the police officers said they could only allow him alone.

"I cannot go in leaving my security outside. These are my security people why are you refusing us to enter?" GBM asked. The officers however said they had enough security personnel among them that would provide security to GBM.

GBM insisted that he was not going to enter leaving the cadres outside, and at the time of writing he was still kept outside the Magistrate's Court complex.

At about 12:45 hours, GBM was then allowed access.

Mumba's ZNBC trespassing case closes, awaits judgment

By Diggers Reporter

MMD deputy national treasurer Malama Sokoni says police who were manning the entrance at ZNBC ushered Nevers Mumba and himself into the Mass Media Complex, contrary to the claim that they forced themselves in.

And the defense has since closed it's case in the matter pending judgment.

This is in a matter in which MMD president Nevers Mumba is facing a charge of criminal trespass and giving false information to a public officer.

Sokoni who was in the company of Mumba on the material night says when they reached ZNBC a police

officer saluted and greeted them after which he signaled his fellow cop to open the gate.

"A police officer came to Dr Mumba's vehicle and Dr Mumba then lowered his window and the police officer greeted him he recognized Dr Mumba and called his colleague who was in the guardroom who saluted and greeted us," Sokoni said.

Sokoni further explained to principal resident magistrate David Simusamba that Mumba did not need an appointment to go to ZNBC as it was a public institution.

"We didn't need an appointment at ZNBC, it's a public place just like UTH. I have been going to ZNBC

without appointments," Sokoni said.

He said after they went to the newsroom the environment was friendly and they joked with the three sub editors they found after exchanging pleasantries.

Sokoni says Joseph Nyirenda voluntarily showed them the story on soft copy which they wanted clarification on about the presidential petition.

"Joseph Nyirenda volunteered to take us to the computer terminal to show us the story. We were shown the story and Dr Mumba said the story was ok," said Sokoni

In their testimonies the reporters from ZNBC who include Barbara Malilwe and Anold Tutu, among others,

said they were annoyed by Mumba's remarks in bemba. The defense has since closed it's case pending judgment.

Kasama constituency petition fails to take off

By Diggers Reporter

The Kasama central constituency election petition appeal case yesterday failed to take off due to the absence of the appellants lawyer Mulambo Haimbe who is said to have been involved in an accident.

In this matter UPND losing candidate for Kasama central Sibongile Mwamba appealed against the high court judgement to declare patriotic front's Kelvin Sampa as duly elected member of parliament.

When the case was called before a panel of constitutional court judges the matter could not proceed as Sibongile's lawyer Mulambo Haimbe was reported unwell after being involved in the an accident.

Sianondo informed the court that Mr Haimbe had 28 stitches to his body following an accident and could not manage to come to court.

The matter has since been adjourned to June 26 2017.

Lusaka high court judge Susan Wanjelani had dismissed the election petition by Mwamba don grounds that she failed to substantiate the allegations of election malpractice.

Justice Wanjelani had ruled that Mwamba failed to prove how the allegations of satanic tag labeled against the presidential candidate Hakainde Hichilema could have affected the majority voters from voting for their preferred parliamentary candidate among other allegations.

Govt sends technocrats to learn nuclear management in Russia

By Mukosha Funga

Minister of Energy David Mabumba says Zambia has sent technocrats to learn nuclear management in Russia, as the country steps up efforts to venture into atomic energy production. In an interview, Mabumba said nuclear energy was very complex and government needed to build capacity before taking any further

steps towards nuclear energy production.

"Nuclear energy is something that is very complex all over the world, not only in Africa, even in the advanced economies where science and technology is advanced, it is very cautious, it is a very cautious investment any country has to exercise. Even in Zambia, that is what we are doing. Of course a direction

has been made and that is the direction but in the context of the pronouncement, what Zambia is now doing is to try and build nuclear capability within our state institutions and within our people," Mabumba said.

"You cannot go to the international nuclear agencies and say we want to venture into this when you do not have people

who understand it; the state institutions who do not have the capability. So in terms of the cautionary measure, what we are now doing after the announcement is to build capacity, people have been sent to Russia for training, we have a MoU with our colleagues in China and in Russia, just to try and see how they can help us to build that capacity," Mabumba said.

Mabumba said ZNBC would soon start airing programmes sensitizing people about nuclear energy so that people could have their questions clarified.

"That capacity also includes publicity, there will be a time when things will come on ZNBC, and a number of other events just to try and give Zambians the clarifications that they need. So at the moment, it is at its infancy stage, we are trying to build capacity just like any nation would do before they make a decision and the investment is made," said Mabumba.

Recently, The Russian government pledged to help Zambia construct a Nuclear Science and Technology Centre.

Russian Foreign Affairs Minister Sergey Lavrov disclosed this in Moscow, during official talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Harry Kalaba.

Lavrov said the Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology would be constructed under the Inter-governmental agreement on nuclear cooperation between the two countries for peaceful purposes.

And Kalaba said Zambia would continue to focus attention on pursuing alternative sources of Energy including the nuclear technology as part of a diversified energy mix to power the Zambian economy. According to the

International Atomic Energy Agency, proof exists showing that the development of nuclear power and related infrastructure has a positive impact on the social and economic conditions of a country and in adjacent regions.

Besides being a source of clean energy, the atom is also instrumental in solving a number of crucial issues in guaranteeing social and economic development.

"Nuclear power is a driver of scientific and technological progress. Its contribution to sustainable development is substantial. Nuclear technologies are widely used both in the energy sector and in many non-energy spheres. Its' application in production processes helps dealing with various challenges of global development, such as ensuring environmental, energy and food safety and facilitating the advancement of science," said Yukiya Amano, Director General of the IAEA at the 60th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

"Over the last 60 years, nuclear science and technology have been essential to the sustainable development of countries. By guaranteeing the availability of nuclear science and technology, we make a valuable contribution to the improvement of people's lives all over the world."

Mutati outlines Zambia's remaining path to IMF package

By Charles Mafa

Finance Minister Felix Mutati says government will have to address the higher than projected budget deficits, accumulation of arrears, and increased debt levels before the IMF staff presents Zambia's bailout request to the board in August 2017.

And the minister said in the first five months of the year, the revenue underperformed by 10 per cent compared to the budget.

Mutati was speaking in parliament this afternoon when he presented the state of the economy address and gave an update on the ongoing negotiations with the IMF.

He said although the country had made tremendous social and economic progress, risks remained high on the external side.

"Based on the need to support the external side, increase market confidence, enhance investment flows and to leverage more resources of cooperating partners, government has engaged the IMF on a possible programme. In this regard, Mr Speaker, we hosted the IMF in discussion from the 29th of May to the 10th of June. Mr Speaker, during these meetings, the government and the Fund agreed on the remaining actions needed to reach a staff level agreement on a programme that could be supported under the IMF's Extended Credit Facility. With the required actions agreed to have the programme presented to the board in August 2017," said Mutati.

"Mr Speaker, let me take this opportunity to emphasise that the position with regards to where we're in our discussion, the major issues required to be addressed for us to proceed to the conclusion, mainly relate to higher than projected budget deficits, accumulation of arrears and increased debt levels."

The minister said key policy structural measures aimed at mitigating the above challenges include reforms in the energy and agricultural sectors.

"Further, recognising the reforms may have adverse effect on vulnerable members of our society. I did state Mr Speaker, that government will scale-up the social protection programmes, in addition to increased resources that government has committed to the programme. Our cooperating partners have also augmented these resources for social protection," he said.

On the state of the economy, Mutati said "the economic performance has rebound with inflation down to single digit, the exchange rate remaining largely stable and the GDP starting to recover". "GDP growth Mr Speaker, in 2017 is projected to rise to 4.3 per cent against an initial focus of 3.4 per cent. This is as a result of increased agricultural output, recovering generation for electricity and higher mining output supported by better prices and power

supply. Other sectors that are supporting the growth are construction, wholesale, trade and tourism," Mutati said.

"Mr Speaker, inflation closed at 7.5 per cent in 2016 but has now reduced to 6.5 per cent in May 2017. This was supported by the continuous ability of the exchange rate, lower food prices in view of the good harvest and improved market confidence in the country's economic policy direction. In the external sector, the country's current account deficit narrowed to US \$257 million in the first quarter of 2017, against a deficit of US \$ 574 million in the fourth quarter of 2017. This was largely explained by an improvement in the trade and income balances."

"Mr Speaker, Zambia's external debt stock as at the end of May 2017 increased to US \$ 17.2 billion from US \$ 6.9 billion in December

2016. The increase on stock was on account of new disbursements. The domestic debt stock was 38.6 billion in May 2017 compared to 33 billion in December 2016."

The minister said the fiscal performance in the first five months of 2017 was challenging.

"Revenue underperformed by 10 per cent compared to budget. This underperformance on revenue has been on account of lower tax compliance by tax payers and delayed implementation of budget measures such as land titling, installation of fiscal devices to improve VAT collection, implementation of electronic equipment in the communication sector to improve the performance of excise duty and the introduction of a single window at entry points to reduce the turnaround times at borders and boost revenues," said Mutati.



Arcades Shopping Complex in Lusaka

MultiChoice celebrates years of successful Public Private Partnership

By Diggers Reporter

IN 1994, MultiChoice set up its operations in Zambia as a joint venture between the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) and MultiChoice Africa.

This joint venture has been hailed as one of the best known successful Public Private Partnership (PPP) significant to shaping Zambia's broadcasting landscape through the provision of Satellite services, Digital Terrestrial Television ("DTT"), provided by GOtv Zambia Limited under the GOtv brand. The integration of digital technologies into various aspects of life is a global trend that is widely thought to have numerous benefits including, increased productivity and economic growth. MultiChoice has played a noticeable role in supporting government's effort towards achieving digital migration.

While analogue switch off has not occurred in Zambia, progress has been made towards encouraging the DTT network in partnership with ZNBC, and educating the public about digital migration. In 2015, GOtv Zambia launched the GOtv Lite service, which allows Zambians with GOtv decoders to watch the TV1 and TV2 ZNBC channels and several other Free-to-Air channels in digital quality without the need to pay a monthly subscription. So much has been achieved under this partnership that



over the years, the joint venture has extensively grown in providing a variety of world-class programming and entertainment to Zambian

customers.

In 2016, the Zambia Presidential inauguration was aired live on Zambezi Magic, providing expert analysis of Zambia's

democratic progress since 1964 and transmitted in quality HD coverage in conjunction with ZNBC.

This ground-breaking

operation further accentuated the partnership between ZNBC and MultiChoice, the country's successful model of the PPP advocated by the Zambian government.

The partnership also takes into account the necessary support required to promote ZNBC's role as the nation's sole public service broadcaster. Hitherto, MultiChoice picks up the ZNBC signal and sends it to its satellite uplink sites in Randburg, South Africa, from where it's uplinked to satellites that rebroadcast the content to ZNBC transmission sites across the country.

As part of its commitment to promoting the Zambian creative industry, MultiChoice continues to invest in empowering more local talent to ensure that they get exposed to the rest of the content and the world through Zambezi Magic, a channel dedicated to Zambian content.

Zambezi Magic is giving local

talent an international platform for the first time to be seen around Africa. Programmes such as the Zambia Film Festival, Zambian Music Awards, and the Poetry Challenge, are some of the Zambian productions to feature on Zambezi Magic.

With the launch of Zambezi Magic, more local content producers including filmmakers, script writers and actors are being encouraged to produce quality content for the Pan-African and global audiences. In the first year of Zambezi Magic launch, over 16 new Zambian productions aired on the channel, giving an opportunity to more than 15 production companies to produce local television entertainment on DStv.

Other local productions to air on Zambezi Magic includes the Kool Rock Show, Kumwesu, My Story Zambia, Our Perfect Wedding Zambia, Fever, Njila and many others.

MultiChoice added \$200M to Zambia's GDP – Report

By Diggers Reporter

The latest Economic Impact Assessment report by Deloitte shows that MultiChoice Group made a significant contribution to Zambia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), estimated at over USD 200 million between 2011 and 2015.

The report says the Pay TV Company contributed \$65.5 million to the Zambian GDP in 2014/15 financial year alone, amounting to 0.2 percent of the total national GDP.

"Between 2011/12 and 2014/15 this amounted to a total of \$201.2 million," reads the report in part.

This estimate consists of the impacts resulting from the MultiChoice Pay TV Group's spend in terms of wages, taxes, and dividend payments, as well as its expenditures in the supply chain, and the ripple effects resulting from additional demand created in the economy through MultiChoice Pay TV Group's expenditure in Zambia.

During the 2014/15 financial year, MultiChoice made a direct contribution of \$35.9 million to the Zambian GDP in form of taxes, wages and profits paid into the economy.

"The majority of this impact is made up of tax payments made by MultiChoice Pay TV Group to the Zambian

government, amounting to \$26.2 million in 2014/15," says the Deloitte report, adding that these consist of VAT payments, corporate tax and import duty payments and have more than doubled since 2011/12.

MultiChoice Zambia Group also paid wages of \$5.3 million in 2014/15 to its more than 190 direct employees and contractors.

"The direct impact further includes dividend payments to MultiChoice Zambia Group's shareholder ZNBC, which amounted to \$4.4 million in 2014/15, an almost 50 percent increase from the 2011/12 level of \$3.1 million," reads the report.

Over the last six years since June 2009, total dividend payments of \$20.1 million were made to the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation.

"The dividend payments earned from MultiChoice Zambia, make up around 20-23 percent of ZNBC's revenues," says the Deloitte report.

In other areas of the economy, MultiChoice PayTV Group spent an aggregate of \$16.7 million in 2014/15 in its supply chain, which has more than doubled since 2011/12.

The report further says MultiChoice Pay TV Group has contributed to the process of digitalization and digital

switchover through its investment in the digitalization of broadcasting services.

"The GOtv service is provided using the DTT network which was rolled out in partnership with ZNBC across ten locations in Zambia with further locations planned for the near future," says the report.

MultiChoice supplies 67 out of ZNBC's 69 analogue transmitter sites with signal, using its satellite network to rebroadcast ZNBC's channels to ZNBC transmission sites across the country.

MultiChoice also provides live television streaming services on phone, tablet or computer

Mwepu joins WWF celebrity clean water campaign

By Diggers Reporter

Under-20 midfielder Enock 'Computer' Mwepu says he shudders to think of a world without clean water.

The U-20 Africa Cup winner toured World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Zambia head office in Lusaka where he learned about the organisation's Journey of Water Campaign and concluded his visit with a group photo and selfies, much to the delight of staff.

"I am happy about the campaign; Zambians must know the importance of water and the need to care for it. I understand the importance of water because it is one of the most consumed resources on the pith that cools us off and re-energizes us during games. So I know how difficult it must be for people not to have access to clean water," said the Napsa Stars winger.

WWF Zambia has mobilised a number of influential Zambian personalities, among them boxer Catherine Phiri, musicians Petersen, Maureen Lilanda, Wezi among

others, as well as media that will next week undertake a 63-kilometre walk to raise awareness on sustainable water stewardship and call for better care and preservation of the resource.

The Journey of Water Campaign was unveiled in Lusaka on Wednesday May 10, 2017 at a breakfast launch graced by Minister of Water, Sanitation and Environmental Protection Lloyd Kaziya and Permanent Secretary Bishop Edward Chomba, among other stakeholders.

Although it covers 70 per cent of our planet's surface, only 3 per cent of all water on Earth is fresh water. Further, only a meagre 1 per cent of this is accessible for human use. Despite its significance and scarcity, water is perhaps one of the most underappreciated resources.

Mwepu was the heart of the Zambian side that secured a historic quarter-final berth at the recent FIFA U-20 World Cup in South Korea.

His well-placed strike against Iran in Zambia's dramatic come-from-behind 4-2

win earned the 19-year-old a nomination among the goals of the tournament.

The nomination has put Mwepu in a unique category of promising young stars in the likes of Germany duo of Phillip Ochs and Suat Serder, Portugal's Diego Goncalves, South Korea's Lee Seungwoo and Rodrigal Amar of Uruguay whose goals have also been nominated.

Voting for the best goal is currently ongoing on the FIFA website and will be announced later.

WWF Zambia head of communications Eneya Phiri who took the young star through the tour meeting smiling staff said he was encouraged by Mwepu's appreciation of the importance of water. He thanked Mwepu for the visit and urged him to remain focused on his blossoming career.

"It's very good to see our local celebrities take ownership of the campaign given the importance of water. We feel encouraged knowing that we are not alone," said Phiri.

Why build when you can print a house?



House-printing inventor Nikita Chen-yun-tai with his printer

middle of the building with a crane.

The house cost \$ 10,134 or \$275 per square meter including windows, doors, wiring and finishing, which is very cheap by Russian standards. Although this particular house was small, the company claims that the printer is big enough to construct a 132m² building. House-printing inventor Nikita Chen-yun-tai boasts, "We are ready to be first to start building on Mars". Of course just going to Mars is a far-fetched dream for a

Zambian who can't afford a house on Earth, but that's not all his technology is offering. "Our goal is to become the biggest international construction company to solve problems of accommodation around the globe. We plan to start printing houses in Europe, Asia, North and South America, Australia and AFRICA" – yes that's where my landlord should get concerned. The day Nikita and his house printer will arrive in Zambia, I will definitely remind him of this trip and demand that I get the first penthouse.

But wait... this was supposed to be a Nuclear Expo, so I started looking back wondering how all this tied in with nuclear energy production. Then I remembered that

during the round table discussion earlier, Rosatom Innovations Division deputy director Aleksey Dub was mumbling something about how 3D printing increased efficiency in productivity.

"Today more and more technologies will be designed with the help of innovative ideas. Some cases make us to move forward from traditional manufacturing to production of new generation. The use of 3D printing can also produce complex objects like inner components of nuclear reactors. 3D printing makes it possible to increase efficiency of final products at the same time reducing time and resourcing," I remembered Dub saying.

It then dawned on me: Nuclear energy experts want to tap into 3D printing to develop the nuclear energy power industry. Apparently, Russia's State Nuclear Corporation Rosatom already uses industrial metal 3D printers for the country's nuclear technology.

What can I say? Well done Russia for hosting a successful ATOMEXPO event. I wish the next event can be held in Zambia so that the Russian printing company can demonstrate its technology by printing several hydro power stations for our embattled ZESCO.

By Mukosha Funga

In the next 20 years, people may be able to print food, a Russian Academy of Science Professor Iskander Akhatov said – finally catching my attention.

I had been sitting in a round table discussion on how 3D printing can be used as an innovative tool to develop the nuclear power industry. For over an hour I had been hearing scientific talk about atoms and related chemical terms without really relating any of my faculties to the topic. Instead, the journalist in me was admitting the 'noise' in one ear and letting it out through another. I was lost!

Just as I was about to abandon the discussion to find another exhibition forum that would probably be within my level of comprehension, I heard this professor loud and clear.

"It would be possible for people to print food in the next 20 years."

Now don't judge me, even trees need food to survive. So I started picturing my little HP laserjet printer in my office back in Lusaka and thinking 'I might have been underutilizing that gadget, there is potential food in there'. Apparently, Prof Akatov was responding to a question by moderator Gary Pitch, a journalist of Nuclear Intelligence Weekly in the United States, who was keen to know the capabilities of technology in future.

"In 20 years, we may be able to print food," Prof Akatov said as the entire audience burst into laughter – bringing me to the realization that the statement was pretty much impossible. But at least he got my attention now.

"I doubt such machines will be used at household level, maybe in their garages but people will definitely be able to print things like jewelry and we will see a lot of such things emerging," he added.

I was suddenly enjoying the topic and my mind was even preparing some questions when the moderator announced that it was time up. Coming from a country

where texting is still amazing technology, I couldn't help but turn to my laptop to Google what else these Russians have achieved with technology so far. Who knows maybe I could download fish and chips on my iPhone while in Moscow.

Well, I wasn't far from the truth. A Russian company recently printed a house!!

In simple terms, 3D printing is the processes used to create a three-dimensional object in which layers of material are formed under computer

control. Using this technology, Apis Cor Company successfully printed a 38 m² house as a demonstration project.

The machine printed the entire house in 24 hours, after which the printer was lifted out of the



A 3D printed house by Nikita Chen-yun-tai



Mind your language Mr President

Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu, the President of the Republic of Zambia is a perfect example in life that even the most downtrodden, the most ignored by society can one day ascend to power and lead a county of powerful rich people. President Lungu is living testimony that God can allow a common man, a sinner (like all of us) to be in charge of a country known and respected for its Christian values. Why? We don't know and we leave that explanation to Church leaders who claim to be closer to God.

What we are sure about is that Mr Lungu is a unique President, and some Zambians are yet to come to terms with that fact. Some think he does not fit to be Head of State because he is not a good public speaker. They expect him to be a sensational orator like Frederick Chiluba with dictionary-assisted English on his lips when he addresses the nation.

But that is not what makes a good President. You can stammer in your speech (like Kaunda did), but after three broken sentences, citizens will eventually pick that you are asking them to unite and love one another. You can be physically disabled, using the aid of a wheelchair to move from your office to your car, that does not make you a weak leader. You can be rich with lots of cars and beautiful houses, that still doesn't make you a strong or likable leader.

We are reminded of Michael Sata's uniqueness. Many Zambians who voted for Sata in 2011 associated with him because they felt he was a poor common man. They felt he was struggling to put food on the table for his family just like they did – he made them believe that. But that was not exactly true. Michael Sata was

not a poor man; it will take the beneficiaries of his estates a while to exhaust what he left behind for them. However, he was humble, and that is what makes a big difference.

We are not asking Mr Edgar Lungu to be like Michael Sata, he can never be like him. There will never be anyone like him. We would like Mr Lungu to be unique to himself; to continue being a living testimony that, a nobody can become a somebody and lead the some of us.

Just like Michael Sata, President Lungu managed to convince people that he was a humble, God-fearing man. People believed that they were voting for one of their own – a president who is not shy to say that he enjoys his beer but he is prayerful and humble.

However, we are worried that President Edgar Lungu's true colours are beginning to show, and in a very dangerous way. Well, he hasn't started showing those colours today. Since his first election in January 2015, his language has been that of threatening to fall on people like a tonne of bricks, whipping his opponents with a long stick which he moves with etc. We thought he was merely trying to assert himself against the people who had colluded to prevent him from ascending to power. We never thought he was a proponent of physical violence.

His statement at Simon Mwansa Kapwepwe on Saturday has proved us wrong. President Lungu said he is ready for violence. He did not say he is ready to STOP violence; he said he is ready for it. That statement alone gave Mr Lungu away as a President who is capable of warmongering. In that statement alone, President Lungu indirectly ordered the party youths on the Copperbelt to be ready for violence and to take on Chishimba Kambwili as well as Mwenya Musenge who are seen

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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to be disloyal to him.

It has never happened anywhere in the world that a Head of State can show open willingness to engage in violence for the sake of commanding respect from his foes. Strangely, President Edgar Lungu is not known to be a physically tough man. We have seen him jogging, but we are not sure if he can stand a physical fight. That is why he was telling the police to be on standby to protect him if the violence he was anticipating erupted. But Kambwili and Musenge don't have police to protect them. They don't have soldiers to fight for them. They may own a gun or two but they can't take on the heavily armed police whom the President is pitting them against. The Church may have contributed to the genocide in Rwanda, as President Lungu told congregants in Ndola on Sunday. But it must be noted that the section of the church that is accused of contributing to the mass murders of the Tutsis in that country was the Catholic wing which was too close to the Hutu-led government, and not those who were condemning government high-handedness. President Lungu should therefore be wary of those in the Church who are cheering all his

actions without criticism, they may promote state-sponsored tribalism.

In fact, that was just in Rwanda where 800,000 people lost lives. But in nearby Congo DR, over 5 million people have died as a result of war in that country since 1998, yet the church did not fuel the turmoil that continues to ravage old Zaire. It is arrogant, pompous selfish leaders who played the role of war mongering. The same was the situation in neighbouring Mozambique and Angola. Therefore, the President should stop blaming the Church in Zambia for the fall of democracy and rise of violence; the Church in this country has always stood on the side of ordinary citizens – protecting their rights and freedoms. The church has never advocated for tribalism in Zambia. No Church leader has ever said they are ready for violence. But the President is technically pitting church leaders against one another so that he can share the blame with them for what will remain of Zambia after his time in State House is over.

The President cannot continue to claim that the Church is confusing him by speaking different voices, when he has

the power in his hands to command the leadership of all the church mother bodies to a meeting. The church mother bodies claim that they issued a strong statement against the PF leadership because State House didn't grant them access to the President's office when they wanted to offer their counsel. To date, President Lungu has not attempted to prove Archbishop Telesphore Mpundu wrong by inviting him to go to State House for a discussion. Now, if a church leader as powerful as the Catholic Archbishop of Lusaka can fail to seek audience with the Head of State, what more us ordinary citizens? Where is the open-door policy that the President keeps talking about? If Elias Chipimo of NAREP says he has tried to meet President Lungu to share his Twenty Percent Generation plan – for free – and the Head of State has no time for him, what kind of agenda does one need to flaunt to the President in order to capture his attention?

In case the President of Zambia has not realised, the incident where his PF cadres violently clashed with UPND supporters at a graveyard in Lusaka, leaving four seriously injured, happened at the exact time when he was

declaring his readiness for violence in Ndola. Zambians are still waiting for him to order an investigation into how it all started. That is if indeed he detests violence – but does he?

We feel a President needs to be more careful with what he says, taking into consideration that his statements are government policy and official position of the political party that sponsored him into power. President Lungu should not be proud when he makes statements which discomfort people including those in his political party. At the moment, he is making the job of those who are paid to defend his statements very difficult. If we are wrong, we challenge Mr Amos Chanda and Mr Sunday Chanda to explain to the Zambian people what the Head of State meant when he said "I am ready for violence".

As a small group of young citizens who are trying to make a small contribution to the governance and development of Zambia, we are disappointed with our President. He is forcing us to see him as an arrogant and pompous President, a dangerous one for that matter, who is ready to sponsor violence between the police and those citizens who don't agree with him.

Cultural conservatism is once again rearing its ugly head in Zambia, in strange and somewhat contradictory ways. First there was that bizarre bit of news, which we later heard was fake, where Zambia Police spokeswoman Esther Katongo was accused of issued a statement that police will start arresting any members of the public found to be indecently dressed. The statement was labeled a fake, essentially an April Fools joke, though nothing has been heard on the punchline.

Then a week later, Joseph Mwenda's in-depth interview with the Minister of National Guidance and Religious Affairs had the minister claiming that foreign visitors should be able to see that Zambia is a Christian nation and "respectable" by judging "how decent the women look, the way they talk..." Ummm, excuse me, Honorable?!

More recently and again on the News Diggers website, we read a response to Minister Godfridah Sumaili in which the number one priority of the author is to decry the "skimpy dress code" in Lusaka. "Today those of us that are old fear going into town and streets alike because of the nudity we are exposed to," claims "Muntu ushiya" (honestly, I'm not making this up, click this hyperlink to see for yourself). As someone a bit "older" who goes to town and walks the streets often, I can tell you the things to fear most are exhaust fumes and congestion,

Against Cultural Conservatism

drunken louts bingeing on illicit alcohol, and traffic police on the lookout for lunch. The last thing anyone has to fear is a girl in a miniskirt.

In fact, the idea that we should police other people's clothing, condemn them, and even assault fellow citizens whose style of dress we disagree with is not only morally wrong, it's also ironically an attitude that is deeply colonial. Worse, cultural conservatism if widely unleashed has the potential to drag this country toward authoritarianism. And we don't want that, do we?

Make no mistake about it: cultural conservatism should be understood, critiqued, and rubbished by all well-meaning Zambians. Luckily we have an historical precedence for challenging such dictatorial attitudes.

In April 1969 the extraordinary technocrat, statesman, and visionary, Valentine Musakanya,* wrote a memo to then-President Kenneth Kaunda, entitled "Memorandum on the Dangers of Cultural Conservatism". An excerpt of this private memo was reprinted in The Musakanya Papers, truly a must-read for anyone looking for an alternative to the "sanitised" official history of post-Independence taught in Zambia's schools.

Musakanya took issue with the notion that government should restrict how its citizens dress, and particularly challenged the violent public stripping of young women in miniskirts:

"Those who desire that as a public policy that our national dress comes down to the knees or ankles are unfortunately looking at us through the eyes of the colonial era... On their arrival the colonisers and missionaries found our nudity incompatible with their trade and contrary to the religious doctrines preached by the missionaries. Accordingly, they dispensed calico either freely or for little labour... As time went on, we copied and accepted the Bwana's dress."

The period of history described by Musakanya is only a few decades ago, at most 100 years and in some cases still in the living memory of some elders. Yet we seem to have lost any semblance of understanding of what Zambia was like before Europeans. Regrettably, those who chose to see our nation through the "eyes of the colonial era" will fail to aid in the development of Zambia, and can even hinder such progress.

"To pronounce that our cultural heritage before colonial invasion was absolutely glorious is not only

a sign of ignorance of human history but [also a] public deception which, if successful, could set the nation on the path of irredeemable stagnation," Musakanya warned all those years ago.

"[Cultural conservatives] assert that the 'mini-skirts' are indecent, violate African culture, and Zambian modesty and sense of values. What is our customary and cultural modesty as regards dress? The truth is that even in my lifetime I have seen my grandmother and her sisters virtually in the nude without this state raising the slightest eye-brow."

This re-writing of history and cultural norms has profoundly negative implications for the development and social welfare of our nation. To quote Musakanya again:

"My thesis is that cultural conservatism is in inverse proportion to economic and technological development; the more culturally intolerant a nation is, the less capable it is to advance."

This point is demonstrably true. Even a cursory look at the world's most and least developed countries proves that those at the top are the most free and accommodating when it comes to religious and social tolerance, while those at the bottom are so intolerant as to be extremist theocracies.

If Zambia wants to be a prosperous middle-income nation, clearly we cannot afford to slip into cultural authoritarianism.

In Musakanya's time and ours, there have been countless women beaten and stripped for wearing "indecent" clothing. The perpetrators of these violent assaults are hysterical men who in their attitude and behaviour are indistinguishable from the "moral guardians" of ISIS who attack people on the streets of the territories they control.

Furthermore, any political figures or officials who condemn "indecent" dress are signaling to those same vigilantes types and should be held culpable in courts of law for any assaults committed by the thugs they enable.

Simply put, the State has no business criticising citizens for how they dress, particularly in this globalized world. Sumptuary laws and the policing of dress codes have no place in modern society, and any incidents of public stripping should be treated as a serious assault not only on the victim but also on our civilization at large.

For those who claim that Chiluba's "Christian Declaration" gives permission to such conservatism, ask yourself: What would Jesus

do if he saw a young woman being stripped of her clothes at Kulima Tower by a gang of thugs? Would he join in the condemnation? What about you, would you throw the first stone?

There is no question that Zambia is a Christian-majority country, however, we should all refuse to accept our nation sliding into a "Christian caliphate" based on the whims or dictates of the State.

* If you have not heard of Valentine Musakanya or have not read his memoirs, the Musakanya Papers, go out and buy yourself a copy. He is without a doubt the most extraordinary Zambian of all time, IMHO.



David Julian Wightman is a Zambian-Canadian journalist and human rights activist.

The wholesale suspension of UPND MPs: legal but undemocratic

On 13 June 2017, Speaker of the National Assembly Patrick Matibini suspended 48 opposition United Party for National Development (UPND) members of parliament for 30 days for missing President Edgar Lungu's state of the nation address to the National Assembly on 17 March this year. The UPND MPs had boycotted the event on the grounds that they could not listen to someone whose election was a subject of a petition in the High Court.

To recap: while the ruling Patriotic Front (PF) retained power by winning both the presidency and the majority of seats in the National Assembly last August, the election was marred by serious irregularities that resulted in a presidential petition and more than 80 parliamentary petitions. The decision on the presidential petition was inconclusive



Sishuwa Sishuwa is the last Zambian nationalist. He is obsessed with all things Zambian, particularly politics and history which he teaches when UNZA is not closed. Sishuwa is a cadre of Nkana Football Club and has a PhD in History from Oxford.

as the Constitutional Court disposed of the matter without ever hearing the evidence and fell short of declaring Lungu the winner as required by the Constitution. To the extent that the petitioners' case was not heard, they petitioned the High Court on the constitutionality of being denied their right to be heard as stipulated in Article 18 of the Constitution. This case remains before the High Court and the UPND argues that the party will not recognise Lungu's election until its legal challenge is conclusively disposed of – a position that appears to greatly inconvenience the governing authorities.

In his ruling regarding the decision by the opposition MPs to abscond the state of the nation address, Speaker Matibini found them guilty of abrogating parliamentary rules and challenged them 'to resign on moral grounds if you do not recognise that there is a legitimately-elected government'. During the suspension, which is without pay, the MPs will not be allowed to enter Parliament grounds or access accommodation and facilities at Parliament Motel. Broadly speaking, there are two ways of looking at this development.

First, it must be conceded that in suspending the 48 opposition UPND MPs over their decision to boycott President Lungu's speech, Speaker Matibini acted within the limits of his power, as conferred onto his office by the Parliamentary Committee on Privileges, Absences and Support Services. This Committee is an 8-member group that has the exclusive power to examine:

'...every case where a member [of parliament] has been absent for any period from the sittings of the House or any

sessional committee without the permission of the Speaker or the Chief Whip and reports whether the absence should be by resolution, either direct the Speaker to reprimand such a member or suspend him from the services of the National Assembly for such a period as it may determine.'

The Committee, which is constituted by the Speaker at the onset of every parliamentary session, currently comprises the Deputy Speaker, Catherine Namugala (chairperson), and MPs from the ruling PF (3) the opposition UPND (2), Forum for Democracy and Development (1) and Movement for Multiparty Democracy (1). A quorum is formed when four members are present.

It is worth noting that when the UPND MPs boycotted Parliament in March, it was the second time they had done so. The first was on 30 September 2016 when the lawmakers shunned Lungu's address to the official opening of Parliament on similar grounds. On that occasion, their action was referred to the Committee on Privileges, Absences and Support Services, which subsequently asked the Speaker to reprimand them, a recommendation that Matibini promptly effected.

Following the March boycott, ruling party MPs raised a complaint to the Speaker against the affected UPND MPs and their party leader Hakainde Hichilema, who, on March 28, asked Matibini to resign for alleged unprofessionalism and partisanship in his conduct as the presiding officer of the National Assembly. As per the earlier case and procedure, Speaker Matibini referred the latest complaint to the Committee on Privileges, Absences and Support Services, which examined the case. This

time, the Committee, dominated by pro-PF members, determined that the action by the 48 opposition MPs merited a 30-day suspension from the National Assembly, a recommendation that the Speaker has now enforced.

I must pause here to state that there are a few questions that are taxing my mind. What alternative did Speaker Matibini had to suspending the disaffected UPND MPs from the National Assembly? Could he have delivered another reprimand? How does one counter the argument that the opposition legislators possibly knew what would happen if they boycotted Lungu's address again? Why didn't the UPND MPs exercise caution and restraint, given that they were treading on weak ground, are dealing with a Speaker who, to put it kindly, can never claim to be above reproach, and are operating in a repressive political climate that is highly intolerant both to their very existence as a political force and, more generally, to dissent? Going forward, it might be wise for the UPND to consider understanding the context within which they are working and rethinking their political strategy.

Second, although the Speaker acted within the bounds of the law as he has the authority to suspend any MP who stays away from the House without permission, the mass suspension of 48 opposition MPs is punitive, unprecedented and a brazen assault on parliamentary democracy. The UPND is the leading parliamentary opposition party with 58 MPs (10 of whom had permission to be absent from the National Assembly on the material day), and suspending such a high

number of lawmakers, especially at a time when its leader is in prison on a non-bailable charge of treason, suggests an organised effort to weaken the party. We now have a situation in Zambia where the president of the main opposition party is in indefinite detention and where there is effectively no opposition party in the National Assembly. Ba PF, muletutwala kwisa?

Boycotting presidential addresses is a legitimate form of protest and a commonplace tactic practised in many functional multiparty democracies around the world. It is simply unheard of in the Commonwealth to suspend from the National Assembly such a large number of lawmakers from the main opposition party. To treat the action by the UPND MPs as a major offence only serves to highlight Zambia's slide towards authoritarianism, where any attitude towards the President except craven support becomes illegal. With this move, Zambia has taken another step on the road towards a defacto one-party state and dictatorship. The decision to suspend the UPND MPs appears to be motivated by a desire by the authorities to coerce the opposition lawmakers into recognising Lungu as the legitimate President, something that they and their party leadership have been unwilling to do while the court case on the election remains pending.

Increasingly, all forms of critical political expression are regarded as essentially illegal. Matibini made an additional ruling that Hichilema's comments on his conduct as Speaker amounted to disparaging insults on his office and, rather than ignoring the comments from the UPND leader as part of normal political debate, referred the case to the Inspector General of Police and the Director of Public Prosecutions for possible prosecution. Matibini's move suggests a deliberate attempt to intimidate citizens, restrict freedom of speech and curtail criticism of any parliamentary deliberations. By assuming prosecutorial powers not assigned to his office, the Speaker appears to have inadvertently confirmed Hichilema's point that he is unprofessional and partisan.

In addition to exercising restraint, Speaker Matibini should have been measured and conciliatory in his language. To challenge the affected opposition lawmakers to resign on grounds that Lungu was 'legitimately-elected' was most unnecessary. In addressing himself to the issue of the non-recognition of Lungu by the UPND, or the reasons for the walkout, Matibini exceeded his authority and interfered with a case properly decided by the judiciary. His mandate is to maintain discipline in the National Assembly and nothing more. Matibini could have simply said that while he understands the concerns of the UPND MPs about the election petition, the existing rules of the National Assembly relevant to their case leave him with no alternative but to reprimand or suspend them.

As Speaker, Matibini has nothing to lose by speaking in a polite manner. That does not mean that he should not continue to express his views as clearly as possible, but he should at least moderate his choice of words and consider working on the tone of

his sometimes divisive language. The democratic backslides in Zambia under both Michael Sata's and Lungu's PF are real. Although the wholesale suspension of UPND MPs alongside the recent violent arrest and subsequent detention of Hichilema are perhaps the most obvious and serious breaches of democratic principles under Lungu, they are merely the latest in a series of what appears to be organised and concerted efforts to destroy, coerce or co-opt potential alternative sources of power and authority in the country. Previous efforts have quite successfully targeted other key political institutions such as the Electoral Commission, police, judiciary, critical free press, and, more recently, civil society organisations. This is a dark time for Zambia. I hope it will not be long before our country returns to happier times, when it would not be the subject of bad international headlines and embarrassing breaking news. For I must admit that the Zambia I have returned to is different from the one I left. The one I have returned to is draped in silence and whispers, perhaps for fear of reprisals. A couple of months back, when I made the easy decision to return home soon after completing my doctoral studies at Oxford, a well-meaning fellow citizen who previously urged me, rather unsuccessfully, to stop criticising then President Michael Sata and other powerful leaders in my weekly commentaries in *The Post* for fear that 'You might be sorted out by the powers that be', said to me on learning about my final departure from Jeremy Corbyn's country to Kenneth Kaunda's land: "I hope you will be silent this time around when you return home". I responded to his advise with a quote from Aimé Césaire's *Notebook of a Return to the Native Land*:

"I would arrive sleek and young in this land of mine. And I would say to this land whose loam is part of my flesh: 'I have wandered for a long time and I am coming back to the deserted hideousness of your sores'. I would go to this land of mine and I would say to it: 'Embrace me without fear... And if all I can do is speak, it is for you I shall speak'.

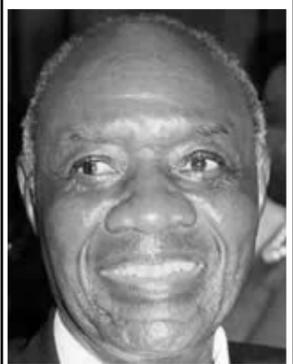
And again I would say, 'My mouth shall be the mouth of those calamities that have no mouth; my voice the freedom of those who break down in the prison halls of despair; and if all I know how to do is speak, it is for you that I shall speak. My lips shall speak for miseries that have no mouth'.

And on the way I would say to myself, and above all to my body as well as my soul 'Beware of assuming the sterile attitude of a spectator, for life is not a spectacle, a sea of miseries is not a proscenium, a man screaming is not a dancing bear.'

We have a duty to refuse to assume the sterile attitude of a spectator. We should not be afraid. In fact, fear and ignorance are the tools dictators (like all bullies too!) rely upon to survive. If we succumb to fear, and allow ignorance to be the guiding darkness in our lives, then we are doomed, for a very long time. Can we cast away our fear and equip ourselves with the weapon of knowledge necessary to win our freedom? We must.

Africa has a leadership crisis

Africa Freedom Day is an important day set aside by our founding fathers to mark the day when the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) – now known as the African Union – was founded on 25th May, 1963, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to launch among many other objectives, the



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struggle against colonialism and apartheid on the African Continent.

It is a day for honouring the brave men and women on our continent who lost their lives, were maimed for life or made supreme sacrifices for our continent to be free from the humiliating yoke of colonialism, apartheid and oppression. The founding fathers of our continent such as Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Modibo Keita of Mali, Gamal Nasser of Egypt, Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya, Ahmed Sekou Toure of Guinea, Patrice Lumumba of Congo, Ahmed Ben Bella of Algeria, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania and our own Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia, wanted to see a peaceful, prosperous and democratic Africa, which would be tolerant of divergent views.

Sadly, our continent has been through difficult and disappointing phases of failed states, military coups, one man dictatorships, wars and conflicts, downright economic mismanagement, corruption, abrogation of press and individual freedoms which have made

it impossible for the African people to get out of their cycle of poverty. We have seen newly elected leaders amass unexplained wealth together with their subordinates in the shortest possible times of being in power and build houses, flats and complexes which their normal incomes cannot reasonably justify. We have also seen an erosion of democracy and human rights, the arrest and imprisonment of their opponents on trumped up charges. These are disturbing and retrogressive developments which have also induced a culture of silence and fear among ordinary citizens for fear of imprisonment. Africa's GDP growth has slowed down and unemployment particularly among young people has become a time bomb waiting to explode with all the attendant consequences.

What has gone wrong with the vision of our founding fathers? We obviously have a leadership crisis which requires to be scrutinised more seriously, if we are to arrest the present downward trend of these selfish leaders who are not afraid to tamper

with oil procurements, fertiliser procurements and other public procurement contracts to enrich themselves and their minions at the expense of their people, who are struggling everyday just to put food on their dinner tables. Yes, we should celebrate Africa Freedom Day, which was a commitment by our founding fathers to eradicate colonialism and apartheid, which has been achieved and also to honour those gallant sons and daughters of Africa who sacrificed so much for our political freedom. Sadly, we should also remember that the struggle against bad governance, human rights abuses, dictatorship, poverty, corruption, shrinking space for press as well as civil society space and intolerance remains on going. The people of Africa must stand up and defend their democratic rights and speak out against injustice, so that we can lay down a much firmer foundation for generations yet unborn. Africa is an important continent and we all have a duty to give it a better image, which all of us can feel justly proud.



DESTINY NOW IN OUR HANDS - MUMAMBA

By Diggers Reporter

Zanaco coach Mumamba Numba says destiny is in their hands in the 2017 CAF Champions League following Wednesday's historic away win in Cameroon over Cotonsport.

Zanaco beat Cotonsport 1-0 to become the first Zambian club to win a continental fixture away in Cameroon.

Furthermore, the victory saw unbeaten Zanaco take full command of Group D on 10 out of a possible 12 points with two matches left.

A second half stoppage time goal from midfielder Saith Sakala handed Zanaco the triumph against the 2008 CAF champions League runners-up and in the process eliminate their winless hosts from the quarterfinal race in Group D.

"This win is a motivation for us to even push more in the remaining two games. It has put us in a good position to qualify to the quarterfinals," said Numba.

A draw on July 1 at home against the record 8-time African champions Al Ahly of Egypt will suffice to confirm Zanaco's debut qualification into the final knockout round of the CAF Champions League.

Al Ahly are 2nd on 7 points, one point more than 1992 winners Wydad Casablanca of Morocco who beat them 2-1 in Casablanca on Tuesday.

Zanaco will travel to Wydad on July 9 for their final Group D match.

Numba's side began their Group D campaign with a 0-0 away draw against Al Ahly on May 12 in Alexandria.

Zanaco then stunned Wydad 1-0 in Lusaka on May 24 to collect their first Group D victory.



Nchanga fires Mwape

By Diggers Reporter

The 2017 FAZ Super Division Season has claimed its fifth coaching casualty following the sacking of Nchanga Rangers coach Bruce Mwape.

The veteran coach joins Zeddy Sileti at Nkana,

Elijah Chikwanda at City of Lusaka, Mathews Phiri from Nakambala Leopards and Soliman Ahmed at Mufulira Wanderers to be fired this season.

Mwape was fired on Thursday after 15 months at the helm and was replaced by his assistant

Evans Sakala.

He rejoined Nchanga in March 2016 following the death of Fighton Simukonda.

He saved broke Nchanga from demotion in 2016 when they ended the campaign in 12th place.

Nchanga later suffered

a 2017 pre-season exodus that saw only Zambia defender Isaac Shamujiompa, midfielder Bwalya Kasonde and goalkeeper Pascal Kasonde remaining faithfuls as Mwape was forced to recruit untested talent.

Mwape's last match in charge of the Chingola club was on June 21 in a 1-0 away loss to promoted Buildcon in Ndola.

