



FEAR NOT - KBF

Challenge greedy, selfish, incompetent govt in 2019

By Mukosha Funga
Kelvin Bwalya Fube says Zambians must not fear to stand up and challenge the selfish, incompetent and greedy government in 2019, warning that the fear of doing so will keep citizens in perpetual poverty.
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Lusaka youths pour to the streets around East Park Mall to celebrate the New Year on the eve of 2019 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala



President Edgar Lungu with newly-appointed Zambia Army Commander Lt. General William Sikazwe after swearing in at State House on Monday - Picture by Salim Henry

Opposition Alliance to field one candidate for 2021 polls

By Mukosha Funga
The Opposition Alliance has asked Zambians to support its decision to present a united front in the 2021 elections, saying they are cognizant of the fact that together, they can remove PF and provide quality leadership in the country. And the Opposition Alliance has announced that it will this year tour all the 10 provinces of Zambia for various mobilisation activities.
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C/Belt PF takes on Lusambo for rubbishing recent polls

By Daniel Chansa
The PF on the Copperbelt has risen against Lusaka Province Minister Bowman Lusambo who allegedly branded the recently held provincial elections as useless. Prior to the intraparty polls, Lusambo de-campaigned Luanshya Mayor Nathan Chanda, who emerged winner of the provincial chairmanship.
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Lusaka youths during the New year count-down at East Park Mall - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

2021 election preps to start in 2019 - ECZ

By Geoffrey Zulu

The Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) says preparations for the 2021 general election will start next year.

In an interview, ECZ Public Relations Manager Margaret Chimanse said the commission would be ready by 2021.

"We have every system following the cycle; we'll be ready by 2021," Chimanse said.

She explained that in 2019, as per Constitution requirements, the Commission would start with a delimitation exercise with a view to create proper boundaries for voters in large constituencies.

"The exercise will involve all stakeholders, and people at district and community-level will make submissions that will be tabled in Parliament," she said.

"We expect to have more constituencies than we

have at the moment and more wards. The aim of this exercise is to make voting easier for people so that everyone who is voting can at least vote within the distance they can walk."

Chimanse said the commission was considering an online voter registration possibility.

She disclosed that by 2020, the full position on this possibility would be known depending on availability of funds from the Treasury.

"We look forward to having [the] Treasury releasing the funds for that. This is something that we are doing ongoing. When [we] say online registration, it does not mean the other [manual] registration will be done away with. We are looking at people who have capacity to use devices, and even at registration centres will have devices where people can also register online and the usual manual registration,

it will be done side-by-side," said Chimanse.

She further said there was still no provision for diaspora voting as no laws had been passed to legalize that specific function yet.

Chimanse also expressed confidence with the ECZ's previous experience in handling elections of such magnitude.

And in a statement, Monday, Chimanse disclosed the electoral roadmap.

"Elections are never a single day's event. There are various processes within a five (5) year

electoral cycle that are integral prior to the day

of voting. These processes include delimitation (the demarcating of boundaries for constituencies, wards and polling districts in order for voters to have better accessibility of polling stations), voter

registration, candidate nomination, accreditation of observers, election day, results tabulation, post-election review processes to learn and improve the process for subsequent (by) elections, amongst others. In view of this, the Commission intends to undertake the following processes leading towards 2021: a) Delimitation in 2019; b) Voter

Registration in addition to an online voter registration platform in 2020; c) General Elections on 12 August 2021 as per prescribed by the Constitution (Amendment) Act No. 2 of 2016," stated Chimanse.

"As a public and independent body, the Commission will be bound by the Zambia Public Procurement (Amendment) Act No. 15 of 2011 in regards to procuring of materials required to conduct an electoral process that is credible. Therefore, international competitive bidding will be adhered to and the

Commission will not have any preferred bidder in view of following the

stipulated law. Local and foreign bidders alike qualify to compete in an international

competitive bidding

process. The Commission endeavours to deliver an enhanced electoral process to the Zambian people and greater confidence in national systems. Further, as we enter the New Year the Commission looks forward to greater collaborations and support from stakeholders and the people of Zambia to deliver a better and inclusive electoral process."

Infant dies in New Year inferno

By Mukosha Funga

A two-year-six-months old child has died whilst his 10-year-old sister suffered severe burns when the

house they were sleeping in caught fire in Lusaka's Chaisa Compound in the early hours of January 1.

In a statement, Police

Spokesperson Esther Mwaata Katongo stated that the children's mother locked them in the house to go drinking.

"A two year 6 months male child has died while a female child aged 10 years has suffered severe burns when the house they were sleeping in caught fire in the early hours of today the 1st January, 2019 at about 03:20 hours in Lusaka's Chaisa Compound. The deceased child is Danniell Kaputula while the one hospitalised is Alice Kaputala. Brief facts are that the Father of the two children known as Royd Kaputula, a security guard left home for work on 31st December, 2018 at 16:00 hours leaving the two children in the care of their mother Babra Phiri aged 33 of Chaisa Compound. Preliminary investigations have indicated that Babra Phiri, the mother of the children has a tendency of locking the children to go out to drink beer whenever the husband was in night shift," Katongo stated.

"Today around 03:20 hours, one of the neighbours was alerted by distress calls from people who were shouting fire and when he went out, he found people trying to put off the fire. The members of the public managed to put off the fire but discovered that Alice was severely burnt while Danniell was burnt to death on a chair."

Katongo stated that a burning candle could have caused the fire.

"Their mother was not in the house. They later informed the police, the scene was visited in which it was observed that the deceased died whilst seated on the chair and it is suspected that he might have slept on the chair and was choked in deep sleep. The house is not connected to power and it is suspected that the mother could have left the candle burning when she went out. The Suspect has been apprehended and detained while the body of the deceased has been deposited at UTH mortuary," stated Katongo.



President Edgar Chagwa Lungu (right) watches as Zambia Army Commander Lt. General William Sikazwe (left) signs on the oath of office documents during the swearing in ceremony at State House on Monday, December 31, 2018.

- Picture by Salim Henry

By Daniel Chansa

The PF on the Copperbelt has risen against Lusaka Province Minister Bowman Lusambo who alleged branded the recently held provincial elections as useless.

Prior to the intraparty polls, Lusambo de-campaigned Luanshya Mayor Nathan Chanda, who emerged winner of the provincial chairmanship, saying as an elected official, he would give the party divided attention.

But Mpongwe PF constituency chairman Emmanuel Kasambo said it is unfortunate that Lusambo had failed to stomach the loss his group suffered.

C/Belt PF takes on Lusambo for rubbishing recent polls

Kasambo charged that even Lusambo's MMD style of campaigning, distributing money to delegates in the last hour, failed.

"We all know that Bowman wanted to be Provincial Chairman and when his attempt failed, he anointed his own and went on rampage in campaigning for his candidate. It's disappointing seeing

how much Hon Lusambo is panicking trying to discredit the newly elected Provincial leadership on the Copperbelt. Hon Lusambo tried to introduce the MMD style of campaigning of distributing money to delegates on the last hour, this attempt failed and we also saw it fail to work in the MMD in 2011. We are beginning to feel that

Bowman is being used by other unknown forces," Kasambo said.

"The conference we had on the Copperbelt was opened by His Excellency the President of Zambia, Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu and everyone who came saw it as a success and the real meaning of democracy manifested. It's extremely unfortunate for Bowman

to come and call such an occasion useless simply because his preferred candidate lost. That's very unfortunate and unexpected from a man of his caliber. Bowman tried all the means of making his preferred candidate win, he sent a bus to pick the people of Mpongwe which failed to work, he personally came to talk to me in the presence

of other people to convince me and he gave me a lot of wrong information just to convince me to support his preferred candidate. The people of Copperbelt have spoken, the party structures have spoken, councilors have spoken, MPs and so on."

Kasambo asked Lusambo to stop dividing the party on the Copperbelt.

"Us in the Copperbelt are wondering as to why the Provincial Minister for Lusaka has been working hard to see that there's a problem in the Copperbelt Province. We are saying this because he has been on record before elections to have alleged that chiefs in the Copperbelt had endorsed his preferred candidate when it was not so. We know his tactics of mentioning chiefs who are actually non partisan whenever he wants to manipulate the decisions of other people, this tactic has always failed," he said.

"I wish to advise Bowman to avoid issuing dividing statements, misleading statements because the president has a very powerful office to verify the information on the ground. The people on the Copperbelt can also see how peaceful and nice things are on the Copperbelt. We only had confusion and problems when Bowman was Provincial Minister. Let Bowman tell the people of Zambia if he has a personal problem with the current Chairman elect because Bowman was very personal in his campaigns and he seems to continue with that trend. His worship the Mayor of Luanshya, our current provincial chairman is now a member of the central committee, the highest decision making body of our party. He is senior than Bowman and demands to be respected."

Kasambo asked the Central Committee to advise Lusambo to respect the new leadership.

"I call upon other MCCs to advise Hon Lusambo to stop disrespecting MCC Nathan Chanda and realize that he is now the boss on the Copperbelt. We wish to assure His Excellency the President of the Republic of Zambia, Mr Edgar Chagwa Lungu that PF will grow even stronger with the current leadership and 2021 will be a walk over," said Kasambo.



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By Sipilisiwe Ncube

President Edgar Lungu says 2018 has ended on a good note because the performance of the economy has continued to be favorable.

And President Lungu says people had been able to access financial and technical support to engage in economic activities through various empowerment programmes implemented by government and other stakeholders.

In his end of year statement, President Lungu said government had successfully showcased the country's investment potential to the world through investment expositions in Central, Luapula and Northern Provinces.

"Looking back at 2018, the overall performance of our economy continued to be favorable, supported by our collective and positive contributions. We had stable electricity supply, relatively stable exchange rate and the single digit inflation rate, which were some of the factors that contributed to the positive performance of the economy. In 2018, we successfully showcased our investment potential to the world through the holding of investment expositions in central and Northern provinces. I am confident that these expositions will result in increased investments, as well as job and wealth creation for our citizens. Investment expositions will, therefore, be replicated in other provinces in 2019," President Lungu said.

He also stated that government and other stakeholders managed to give financial and technical support for people to engage in economic activities.

"We also continued to implement various infrastructure projects in agriculture, water and sanitation, health, education, energy, housing, and transport and communications among others. Further, our people were able to access financial and technical support to engage in economic activities through various empowerment programmes implemented by government and other stakeholders. We are up-scaling the application of smart technologies and streamlining business processes in order to reduce costs, as well as improve productivity and provision of quality services. I am positive that these measures will improve the lives and welfare of our people. In this regard, we will continue to ensure that development

Lungu says 2018 closed with favorable economy



President Lungu (left) greets 31 year old Beauty Kambasiyayo, a client at Chainama Mental Hospital yesterday - Picture by Salim Henry

is taken to all parts of the country," President Lungu further stated.

He stated that the country also experienced improved political atmosphere among political players.

"In 2018, we experienced an improved political atmosphere among political players. I wish to therefore thank all stakeholders who moved towards embracing one another and thereby contributed to deepening democratic tenets. In 2019, we all have a responsibility to build on these efforts to

make Zambia a safe and secure place for all. The gains recorded in 2018 must give us more impetus to do even better in the coming year. The responsibility rests on our shoulders as patriotic citizens to strive harder to make 2019, a year we can all be proud of. Despite the country having recorded some successes in 2018, a lot still needs to be done to achieve prosperity for all. We need to boost productivity at all levels. Our people, especially the youth, must seize every

opportunity to engage in more rewarding, innovative and productive ventures," the Head of State observed. President Lungu urged citizens to desist from engaging in bad vices.

"To this end, I urge all citizens to desist from engaging in vices such as gender-based violence, examination malpractices, misuse of social media, as well as alcohol and substance abuse. Concerted effort, is, therefore, required to enhance integrity and ethics, and uphold good

morals and human dignity in order to foster the desired societal transformation. A morally bankrupt society is a hindrance to national development. As we enter the New Year, let us do so with hearts of gratitude to the lord god almighty, who has made it possible for us to witness this momentous occasion. Let us renew our hope for better things to come. Let us transition to 2019 with optimism, renewed commitment and dedication to hard work. Let us embrace a positive

mindset in the way we do things. My wish for the New Year is that every Zambian should be optimistic and continue building on the progress we recorded in 2018," President Lungu stated.

He urged citizens to use their words to build each other and not to destroy in this New Year.

"Through our collective strength, resources, capabilities and hard work, we will indeed achieve our national aspirations, without leaving anyone behind. In the spirit of one Zambia, one nation, let us build on the efforts of all stakeholders towards continued peace and unity in our country. In 2019, let us use our words and deeds not to destroy, but to build and promote a positive image of our country. The bible in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 29 encourages us to use our words constructively when it says and I quote: 'do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed, so that what you say will do good to those who hear you.' End of quote. Let the call to national duty be louder and more urgent to each and every one of us. Let us all endeavor to make a positive contribution and share each other's burdens to the best of our ability," stated President Lungu.

Challenge greedy, incompetent govt in 2019, KBF tells Zambians

By Mukosha Funga

Kelvin Bwalya Fube says Zambians must not fear to stand up and challenge the selfish, incompetent and greedy government in 2019, warning that the fear of doing so will keep citizens in perpetual poverty. In his New Year message, Fube who is an election strategist, member of the PF but also a critic of the ruling party said citizens must not accept the 2018 confusion as they start 2019, adding that bad leaders in government must not be allowed to divide Zambia any further.

"We remain poor only because our mindset is full of fear and we accept it. How exactly do we remain poor you may ask? We accept to remain poor by allowing ourselves to be divided by incompetent, greedy and bad leadership. We have allowed poor leadership to divide us by tribe and political affiliation and

classification. We have allowed those, in who's self best interest it is to have a divided Zambia, to divide us and continue dividing us. We have many sell outs at various levels of leadership in our beloved country, all out of fear and unless we refuse to look beyond our political and tribal affiliations in this new year and beyond, we shall continue to chase our own tail as a nation. If we continue to act out of fear, we shall forever remain a poverty stricken people. In 2019, we must shake off fear and unite around the desire to see a better Zambia. We can only do this by standing up to selfish, incompetent, self centered, divisive leadership, by not being afraid. Zambia only gets better when we choose to get better at working together as a united people, regardless of ones tribe or political affiliation. I wish each and every

Zambian a fearless and patriotic new year," Fube said.

He insisted that getting rid of fear was the only way to make the country progress.

"We must be careful in this new year not to let fear rob us of our God given blessings. I say again, fear not Zambia. Aren't we blessed? Here we are in a new year after all. 2018 was a little rough, a little tough and perhaps a little up in the air and yet here we are. Who are we? Where are we and who should we be? A new year is upon us and it comes with a new chance, a chance of a new dawn. We can choose to remain stuck in our old ways and step into this new year with no hope, no ambition, no determination and no zeal for a better nation. Or we can look 2018 in the eye and say to it "Thank you for your trials, thank you for your challenges, thank you

for your problems. Thank you of your confusion but we as a nation have chosen to be victors, to be overcomes and having survived you, we shall not fear the obstacles and challenges of 2019. In 2018, I saw great failures out of fear by us as a people," said Fube.

"We failed to unite and have a common purpose for the nation. We failed to stare wrong in the eye and demand right. We failed to stand united against bad leadership and defend the little guy. We failed to speak up and speak out when the movements and moments favored us as individuals but did not favor the nation. We failed to stand shoulder to shoulder as brothers and sisters born for the purpose of leaving behind a better Zambia than we found, all this out of fear and preservation. I dare say again, fear not Zambians."

By Mukosha Funga

The Opposition Alliance has asked Zambians to support its decision to present a united front in the 2021 elections saying they are cognizant of the fact that together, they can remove PF and provide quality leadership in the country.

And the Opposition Alliance has announced that it will this year tour all the 10 provinces of Zambia for various mobilisation activities.

Meanwhile, the Opposition Alliance has raised over K200,000 for its activities.

Speaking at a fundraising dinner dance, Sunday, Alliance member Sean Tembo, who is leader of Patriots for Economic Progress, their decision to come together and present a united front in 2021 was an act of selflessness.

"The people are not happy with the PF so as opposition, we have a lot of potential to be ushered into office and properly run the affairs of this nation. But unless we come together and crystallize that potential and make it into actual substance which can propel us to win the election in

Opposition Alliance to field one candidate in 2021

2021, we shall only remain the way Zambia is, full of potential and nothing to show. So the decision by us to come together and unite and make sure that come 2021 we present a united force is one of the wisest decisions and one of the greatest acts of selflessness that could come from any political party among us," said Tembo.

And NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili, who called in from Luanshya, said the 10 parties had come together to fight President Edgar Lungu's dictatorship. "Our country is losing it's democratic status and if we are not committed as leaders of opposition political parties, Zambia will be a laughing stock. What is happening today under this dictator Edgar Chagwa Lungu is

unacceptable, that is why we the 10 political parties have decided to come together and make sure that we fight the injustice and make sure that we bring the country back to democracy. This is the time for us to unite and try to bring Zambia back to normalcy. We need your support from today, up to 2021 when we shall remove this undemocratic leadership of President Chagwa Lungu," said Kambwili.

ADD leader, Charles Milupi, said the alliance was not about UPND as some people were trying to paint it, but a united front which stood for justice.

"It is not so long ago that we came together but already, you can see the unity of purpose. The fight that owe have to salvage this country is not an individual fight, it

is not for Sean Tembo, it is not for president Lukuku, it's not for Chishimba Kambwili or Andyford Banda. It is collectively for all of us. Those who know that Zambia can do better than what they are going through at the moment. And that is why to fund the operations, whether it is to appear on television or radio stations, or whether it is as a group to visit, we felt we needed to have you the people to support these endeavors...this is for the benefit of this country. They will try to pick and isolate us, already you can see, despite of the fact that we have said there are 10 political parties, they keep saying this is just UPND, it is just Hakainde and so on...my brother, they keep mentioning you because maybe they are also seeing

your weight. That should not bother you and it should not bother any of us because the task before us is a lot more important than their hallucinations. We stand for truth, we stand for justice, we want integrity to come to the governance of this country, that is what is important," said Milupi.

Meanwhile, UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema asked Zambians to get rid of fear and join the cause to liberate Zambia.

"When I finished university, I only rested on Saturday and Sunday, Monday I had a job. This is because in the second, third and fourth year vacations, I worked for a firm that gave me a job ahead of my exams. How many kids today in your homes are able to get a job two days after writing their last paper? This country is

going down and nobody can reclaim the country other than yourselves. Do not front fear, no one achieves anything through fear. Not in business, not in social matters. If you got so afraid, you will even fear to marry your current partner because you don't know what they will turn out to be, then you will have no children and this country will not progress. Fear will not save this country from collapse," said Hichilema.

Other party leaders who were present were Fresher Siwale of NLP, James Lukuku of RPP whilst NAREP's Elias Chipimo, People's Party's Mike Mulongoti and PAC's Andyford Banda sent representatives to the event. The opposition raised over K200,000 during the event to go towards countrywide tours this year.

By Stuart Lisulo

Zambia faces downside risks to the four per cent economic growth prospects projected for this year, says Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe.

In a statement outlining the 2019 economic outlook, Mwanakatwe observed that the country faced downside risks to the projected economic growth, which included maintaining the fiscal deficit, weak credit growth and failure to address domestic arrears that may constrain

Zambia faces risks to 4% economic growth, cautions Mwanakatwe

growth, among others. She explained that domestic arrears owed to contractors and suppliers still stood at over K14 billion by the end of the second quarter of last year. "Downside risks to growth prospects include continued global trade tension, projected rise

in crude oil prices due to continue geopolitical tensions, climate change related effects, and maintaining the fiscal deficit, weak credit growth and any failure to address domestic arrears may constrain growth and delayed implementation of reforms that will support

growth," Mwanakatwe said. "In 2019, macroeconomic stability is projected to be sustained, aided by continued implementation of reforms and policies to support delivery of fiscal consolidation for sustainable and inclusive growth; robust growth

of at least 4 per cent is projected driven by both public and private sector investments, enhanced domestic revenues collection through continued implementation revenue boosting measures, among others." Mwanakatwe added that the domestic arrears

had continued to trend upwards last year mainly owing to escalating VAT refunds and heavy capital spending in the road sector. "Despite sustained efforts to dismantle domestic arrears, the figures trended upwards in 2018 mainly due to VAT refunds; and, capital spending - particularly in the road sector. As a result, domestic arrears were K14.7 billion at end of June from K12.7 billion as at close of 2017," she explained.

Man gets 2 years for stealing TV remote controller

By Zondiwe Mbewe

The Lusaka Magistrates' Court has sentenced a 48-year-old to two years' imprisonment with hard labour for stealing a TV remote controller and a black bag worth K230.

In this matter, Albert Njobvu was charged with one count of burglary and theft.

Particulars of the offence alleged that during the night of October 29, 2018, in Lusaka, Njobvu broke into a house and stole a black bag containing documents and TV remote all valued at K230.

He had pleaded guilty, but his plea was equivocal after he told the court that he entered the said house, but did not take the items.

It was alleged that Njobvu broke into the said house with three other friends, but when the owner of the house saw them

and shouted for help, the others managed to run away, while he was apprehended alone.

After he was apprehended, no items were found on him.

When the matter came up for judgement, Magistrate Silvia Munyinya convicted him after finding him guilty of the offence. She said although Njobvu did not take the items, the four went to the said house with intent to commit a felony considering the circumstances surrounding the whole matter.

"And for sure, things were taken. The accused did not state that his mission to that house was not to take anything. He cannot distance himself from the taking of the items. His friends got away with the things when he was apprehended. I find Njobvu guilty of the offence," she ruled. In his mitigation, Njobvu said he did not have much to say as

he was already serving another sentence.

"I have left everything in your hands," he submitted.

However, Magistrate Munyinya sentenced him to two years imprisonment with hard labour. She added that the sentence would run on the expiration of the sentence he was currently serving.

Meanwhile, two Congolese men have been sentenced to two years' imprisonment with hard labour for being in possession of counterfeit notes amounting to US \$2,200.

In this matter, it was alleged that Kangolo Kapeya and Paul Emmanuel Kasamba on January 9, 2018, Lusaka, did possess forged bank currency notes amounting to US \$2,200 without lawful authority, knowing the same to be forged. The said counterfeit notes were

found in a safe at the accused's house in Northmead area by some DEC officers.

They had pleaded not guilty to the charge.

And when the matter came up for judgement, Magistrate Munyinya convicted them, saying the accused knew of the presence of the counterfeit notes in the safe and they had control of the said counterfeit notes.

She added that the prosecution had proved the case of possession of counterfeit notes beyond all reasonable doubt.

In mitigation, the two asked for forgiveness from the court, saying they were looking after their families.

Magistrate Munyinya, however, sentenced them to two years' imprisonment with hard labour with effect from the date of arrest.

On the 2018 budget performance, Mwanakatwe revealed that government expenditure was two per cent above their own target. "Budget execution in 2018 was broadly in line with annual target despite some fiscal challenges. Expenditure was also above target by 2 per cent, mainly due increase in interest payments on debt and spending on assets. Consequently, fiscal deficit outturn for the year is expected to be around 7 per cent," stated Mwanakatwe.



DP



Let's believe again!

Why the people of Zambia should vote for DP Presidential Candidate

Zambia is a country richly endowed with natural resources. However, its greatest resource are the beautiful people who unfortunately are not benefiting from the natural resources of the country. Mismanagement of the country's resources by successive governments has relegated Zambia to being one of the world's poor countries with a condemnation of its people to generations of poverty.

Zambia's economy from 2000 to 2014 had growth average at best of about 6 percent per annum. With the current administration, economic growth has been more sluggish with less than 4 % growth. The rising debt burden stressing Zambia's public financing and further compromising our economic effort is of great concern. At the end of 2011, when the PF government took over, Zambia had an external debt of just under \$2 billion. By end of 2014 when President Michael Chilufya Sata died, Zambia had a debt of \$3.1 billion. President Edgar C. Lungu took over the presidency in January 2015 and by the end of 2017, President Lungu had tripled Zambia's external debt to \$9 billion. The apparent lack of a clear strategy to adequately address the debt burden and lack of transparency and accountability in debt contraction and utilization is of further concern.

Lack of formidable and coherent policies on management and utilization of natural resources is another challenge to development. The people of Zambia have been left confused with the apparent corruption and exploitation of the natural resources by a select clique walking the corridors of power including resources for which exportation and trading has been declared prohibited. There is also discrepancy with declared amounts for exportation of natural resources and those declared by the buying markets.

Copper continues to be the main export in its raw form 50 years after independence. The mining industry is owned by multinational corporations, hence Zambia does not get the full value of owning the natural resource. Zambia continues to import copper ornaments from Zimbabwe and other neighboring countries. Lack of diversification, an enabling environment and policy commitment to industrialization continues to hamper Zambia's productive capacity and value addition for major commodities and raw materials.

Lack of enabling environment to grow and support the domestic private sector run and owned by the local people is a challenge that could perpetuate Zambia's underdevelopment for generations to come. This is further compounded by the exportation of jobs and services to foreigners at the expense of resource owners, the Zambian people. Unprecedented levels of youth unemployment

present a serious development challenge and a potential security risk.

The few Zambians in employment can hardly meet the cost of living as the government continues to impose unnecessary taxes and levies, leaving insufficient disposable income for basic needs and services, and turning the common worker into a vulnerable working poor class.

Government's procurement of services is deeply flawed and shrouded in over inflated costs for both goods and services as well as loans. Corruption and state capture characterize the procurement processes.

Zambia faces the biggest challenge ever of widening divide across gender, tribes, regions and political affiliation.

Millions of Zambians, eligible and ineligible voters, are understandably in a quandary as who to vote for in the 2021 general elections. Better put, Zambians seem to be in a political predicament as to who should drive the mantle of responsibility for this resourceful country, come 2021. The argument for the political indecision, at least going by popular public responses or whispers, is that all politicians are the same – they never fulfill their electoral pledges. It's undoubtedly depressing that politicians have been given that tag of dishonesty.

Ordinary citizens are not to blame for this perception as successive politicians have continued to perpetuate a sequence of political acts that have eroded citizen's confidence and aspirations, leading to the unfortunate common belief of politics being a means to politician's self-aggrandizement.

Undoubtedly, the past offers the quickest and best routes to the future no matter how dark and gloomy it may be, as it offers unforgettable experiences and lessons to inform decisions of the future.

The future therefore is profoundly important to make good of the choices we make to transform the political field through generational change of politicians, political attributes and values and the political landscape. The past as the best teacher gives important lessons to make a difference for the future and not indifference.

Zambia needs to regain its lost glory and expedite its social economic development. This can only be done when we Believe Again. Not all is lost. The past has armed us with critical information to demonstrate our capacity for resilience and turn things around by believing in ourselves as real game changers. Let's believe again!

Let's Believe Again is more than just a political mantra! It speaks fundamentally to the need to have faith in our abilities to make a difference. Let's Believe Again is a voice of hope during intense suffering occasioned by the people we trusted to

facilitate our wellbeing and to put more money in our pockets. It's a voice of hope for the many unemployed youth to work with us to create a Zambia that takes care of its own.

54 years after Independence, Zambia should have been able to demonstrate leadership in human development and social economic growth. We have generated adequate lessons and knowledge to guide our development trajectory. We have best practices for economic diversification and value addition. We have ways and means of raising the social protection floors and insulating the underprivileged from shocks. Yet poverty and social exclusion continues to rise at the back drop of self-aggrandizement by the political leadership which overshadow national interest. Unbridled corruption and incessant theft characterize political leadership interested only in owning a multiple mansions and plush businesses at the expense of a well-equipped public clinic in Kalabo, an up-to-standard school in Luano, a public dip tank in Kalomo, a road in Chadiza and other public infrastructure every other corner of this great country, Zambia.

Let's Believe Again epitomizes the hardworking Zambians to create wealth and jobs for all. While the PF political leadership and government has closed its doors on equal and equitable social economic gains, the Democratic Party presents a key to collective action for shared prosperity.

The DP hopes to build a transformed, united and developed Zambia with shared prosperity for the people of Zambia as well as for future generations.

The DP presents a generational transformative agenda to positively change the political systems and to re-establish trust in our government by having value driven political leadership who will promote equitable and sustainable development. A leadership that will be true to fiscal responsibility, remain engaged and accountable to the people of Zambia, and hopes to build coherency and transparency of systems.

The DP has a people centric agenda and believes in government leadership as delegated leadership on behalf of the people of Zambia. We ask for your commitment to rally with us up to and beyond 2021 to ensure that we build a just and equitable Zambia that we will all be proud of. A Zambia that addresses the needs of the poor the same way it addresses the needs of those who walk the corridor of power. A Zambia where Social protection will be safeguarded and not pillaged through wanton abuse of the Social Cash Transfer. A Zambia that will make us all stand tall and be Proud to belong to this great nation. We ask you to join us as we embark on this journey.

Talking Business with Chibamba Kanyama
 Chibamba Kanyama is founding partner of Bridges Limited; Corporate Leader; public speaker; communication specialist and strategist
 ...Only in **Diggers!** Ear to the ground

Your business footprint

It is 2019 and we are all opening a new page of enterprise: new ideas, new prospects, new partnerships and possibly renewed passion. I find it useful sharing my old thoughts about building legacy businesses, something I encourage Zambian entrepreneurs to do this year. Legacy wealth is not necessary about gigantic moves we make. Legacy wealth concerns itself with how a small seed we plant begins to multiply beyond one's generation. You are, therefore, well positioned to start something new this year for a huge impact in future.

When we commit our activities and investments for the benefit of the future, we are building a legacy. Our forefathers equally had foresight. They acquired assets not for their immediate benefit but for the benefit of the generations to come. Unfortunately, much of whatever they passed on withered along the way. What are the necessary factors that will help entrepreneurs build businesses that outlive them?

FOUNDATION: I once hired a professional contractor to build a house on a completed slab. His assessment revealed serious compromises to the foundation. It had cracks that he feared would seriously compromise the superstructure. I had no choice but to pay for extra works to redo the foundation. How you start your business has a strong bearing on how long it will last. Legacy businesses are built over a period of time; starting small but with every step well measured. One generation focuses on building the formula, accumulating capital, defining the business focus and investing in the necessary skills. The foundation should, therefore, start on self-generated capital.

I recently discovered businesses that have lasted generations started with someone who put aside one ngwee from every pay-cheque, accumulating capital by making huge sacrifices so that 30 years later, the first taxi is born. Never be in a hurry; let your children inherit that taxi as initial seed that

has no debt around it. Businesses that have crossed generations started organically but with a solid foundation of capital, business knowledge and right values, and much more critically, a brand. Since legacy businesses run through families, brands that the founders create become part of the heritage. Legacy businesses have a clear genesis story that will resonate through generations. **MORAL QUALITY:** Many people know how to acquire wealth but do not have the right values to keep it. Most of us in Zambia easily get disoriented with wealth. We erroneously consider wealth as the end and not the means for lasting goals that have generational impact. Wealth goes with many trappings of life and indulgences. Some use the businesses to get into politics and come back

"Businesses built from stolen money collapse shortly after your burial"

heavily bruised. Politics and business can be the worst enemies when political competitors target your treasure to compromise you.

In short, legacy businesses are corruption free and operate on clear principals of moral quality, discipline, transparency, accountability and fairness. Businesses built from stolen money collapse shortly after your burial.

BUSINESS PHILOSOPHY: In the past seven decades, Zambia has had plenty successful entrepreneurs. In the Southern Province, we had

the likes of Simon Dimba who was rumoured to be the first African to have contemplated buying an aeroplane in the days after independence. His chain of shops is today completely erased largely due to the changing economic landscape (favouring the public sector) in the late 60s. Businesses that succeed for generations have a very solid business philosophy. First, they are focused on a single brand that they build overtime. If its transport, they will invest and reinvest their money in transport. Legacy businesses do not fit in the Richard Branson philosophy of getting into whatever is trending.

Second, legacy businesses exist for profit, sustainability and contribution to larger community. Third, they have defined parameters for partnerships. This is what I read from the CEO of Sasser Family Holdings, a Chicago-based firm, "Every relationship has to be mutually beneficial for good times and the bad. If something about that relationship compromises your company values, dissolve it--before it dissolves you." Sasser celebrated its 85 years of existence in 2015 as a railroad company and it is being managed by a fourth generation family member.

Fourth, you should be clear about the business model; are you going to be your own supplier of inputs through subsidiary companies or you will stick to what you know best? Sticking to what you know best has been proved to be most effective for legacy businesses. Fifth, your debt-equity ratios at every level of the business must be kept in the right balance to avoid the business tilting into non-redemptive positions.

Sixth, as said earlier, legacy businesses generally adopt an incremental (slow-but-sure) expansion model. Lastly, but non-exhaustive, legacy businesses are usually built around the family; but bringing on board the best professionals that will help you leave a generational footprint. Have a successful year.

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

An investigation has revealed a theft scandal at Chibombo District Council in Central Province, where top local authority officials have pocketed over K205,000 donated by the Chinese.

And Council Secretary Reuben Simfukwe has allegedly threatened to spearhead transfers for any staff who will be heard discussing the issue with anyone.

An inside source has revealed to News Diggers that during the ground breaking ceremony to mark the construction of the Jiangxi Multi Facility Economic Zone in Chibombo last month, a named Chinese firm gave K204, 801.87 to the council to facilitate the smooth hosting

Central Province officials in K205,000 theft scandal

of the event as the president going to be the guest of honour.

But to the turn of events, it has been revealed that council secretary Simfukwe, council clerk Gerge Mwanza and council chairperson James Ntalasha shared the funds simply because the local authority had coincidentally paid for everything.

According to the information revealed, when the money was available and ready for collection from the Chinese

firm, Simfukwe and Ntalasha sent Mwanza to collect it.

It is further reported that Mwanza was also made to sign a document at the Chinese firm as proof that he collected the cash.

After Mwanza collected that money, he took it straight to the council secretary and the chairperson who in turn are accused of having paid Mwanza K40, 000 from the same money for him to shut his mouth.

The scandal has annoyed some

staff officials but management has threatened to facilitate transfers for anyone who will attempt to leak information surrounding the subject.

According to the General Receipt number 1354454 dated November 20, 2018, the said Chinese firm paid the full pledged amount totalling K204, 801.87 to the local authority.

But during the full council meeting which was held on Friday, the council secretary and the chairperson are said

to have defended themselves saying the money was not meant for Chibombo as a council but that it was Provincial money.

And council employees have wondered why the receipt was issued to Chibombo district council if the monies were truly provincial funds.

Sources have further revealed that after the manual receipt was given upon receipt of the monies, orders were given to staff on Friday that an electronic council receipt be

issued which was done.

And it has further been revealed that the document which was signed by George before collecting the money has been hidden by management for safekeeping just in case things backfire in future.

"From what I hear, that issue is quiet big because permanent Secretary Chanda Kabwe got a share and most leaders at provincial level. And we hear Council Secretary Reuben Simfukwe is well connected to powers that be especially at the Local Government Service Commission. I also hear that the DC was also given a share. The District Treasurer Mr. Jeremiah Ng'uni has not been in support of this issue because the money was not banked," the source revealed.

There is one advantage that an older person has over a younger person. It is that an older person has been young before. But a young person has never been old before. That advantage that an older person has is what we call experience. Experience should be able to inform an older person's decision making. It's easier to forgive a young person who makes a mistake because we can blame it on inexperience. But an older person who makes a mistake that they should not, is very difficult to forgive.

This is the situation that we find ourselves in when we look at Vice-President Inonge Wina. This is a person with a lot of experience. We can safely say she has seen it all. Others would say 'she has been there, and done that'. Her presence in President Edgar Lungu's government should have assured us of her sober influence upon the government. But that does not seem to be the case. She seems to have chosen to ride with the flow. This is very unfortunate.

A young person who makes a mistake, may well have time to correct that mistake. But an older person like Madam Inonge Mutukwa Wina may not have the luxury of time to correct her mistakes, if they are mistakes at all. Her time in this government, especially being the first female Vice-President, should have accorded her an opportunity to define her legacy. But at a time when she should have

How Wina betrayed her legacy in 2018

NEWS Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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been making her most critical contribution to Zambia's history, she chose comfort over principle.

Apart from corruption and the massive abuse of power that characterizes this regime in 2018, the desire for a third term is the one issue that is going to define Mr Lungu's Presidency and the character of those around him. This is an issue that madam Wina ought to have stood strong on. It is a path she knows very well. She has fought this battle before, and therefore, her decision to support President Lungu's third term bid, is a shameful capitulation.

It is unfortunate that as a people, we don't seem to document our history very well. It is not the first time that a Zambian President has decided to give himself a third term. President Chiluba tried, but the people stopped him. By people,

we are not referring to the international community. It is "bo Ma", Inonge Wina, who played a very significant role.

When Frederick Chiluba wanted a third term, it was not the political parties that stopped him, it was civil society and many ordinary citizens who stood up and said it could not be done. Today, we have what is called the OASIS Forum, but many people have forgotten or simply don't know where this came from. The OASIS Forum drew its name from a meeting that was held in a restaurant called Oasis Restaurant near Arcades Shopping Center.

The meeting at Oasis Restaurant brought together the three Church mother bodies, the Law Association of Zambia and NGOCC, which was then headed by a woman who is now Vice-President Inonge

Wina. The Oasis meeting culminated in what was called the OASIS Declaration, which resolved to mobilise the public to stop the third term, with Her Honour Mrs Wina at the helm of the agenda.

We are not here to give all the credit to madam Inonge Wina. We know that there were many other well-meaning individuals in the civil society movement that stood behind Mrs Wina. Notable among these were Emmily Sikazwe, Lucy Muyoyeta, Grace Kanyanga, who was at the time Executive Secretary for NGOCC. They stood historically and fought until the third term was defeated.

We say that the OASIS Forum stopped Chiluba's third term, which is correct, but in fairness, it received a lot of help from Chiluba's own Cabinet. When it became obvious that Chiluba wanted to go for a third

term, his own Cabinet revolted against him. His Republican Vice-President, the late Lt. General Christon Tembo and his party Vice-President Brig. General Godfrey Miyanda refused to endorse this wrongdoing.

It was probably that principled stand, by Lt. General Tembo, Brig. General Miyanda and 19 other MMD MPs and Cabinet colleagues of Chiluba that put a death nail in Chiluba's project. Chiluba tried to expel these 'rebels' from the party and consequently give himself an opportunity to change the complexion of parliament so that he could push ahead with his attempt to amend the Constitution, but the courts with help from the Law Association of Zambia stood in the gap.

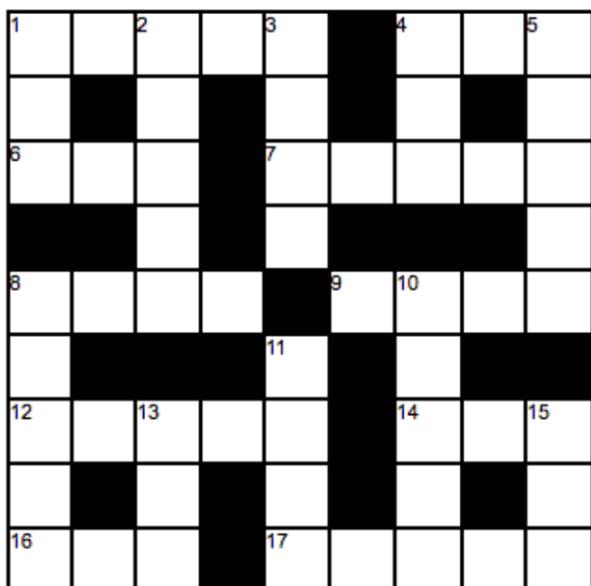
Our current Vice-President did not have a front roll seat when this history was unfolding,

she was right in the ring, fighting. She supported then Republican vice-president and the MMD vice-president on their stance to stop Chiluba with his agenda. What is different today when Mrs Wina is in that office? Why is she afraid of the consequences of revolting against a President who is committing a wrong?

Many who were very close to Chiluba paid a price for refusing to support him, Edith Nawakwi continued in the political wilderness, probably because of her very strong stance against Chiluba at the time. Chiluba was so angry with her that he unleashed the wrath of State police on her. When she tried to run in the bush, they set the bush on fire to smoke her out. There were others like Mike Mulongoti who were fired very early for being perceived as being against Chiluba's third term. Ackson Sejani was another. Why is madam Inonge Wina betraying her legacy?

This is not very distant history and it is a shame that Vice-President Wina can turn her back on her country like this. It is unfortunate that she can turn her back on such a great cause of maintaining the rule of law. It is easy to forgive President Lungu because he is younger and we can blame his mistakes on inexperience, but madam Wina has been young before and she doesn't have the luxury of time.

Crossword puzzle 263



"Hit the reset button. Whatever happened yesterday, forget about it. Get a new perspective. Today is a new day. Fresh start, begins now." - Germany Kent

Across

- 1. Sum
- 4. Dole or Marley
- 6. Rip off
- 7. Some sculptures
- 8. Took off
- 9. Quite a few
- 12. Raring to go
- 14. Petroleum
- 16. Bathroom fixture
- 17. Whole wheat or rye

Down

- 1. Black sticky substance
- 2. Dining surface
- 3. Connection
- 4. Abbott, Lou's partner
- 5. Overly assertive
- 8. Naval force
- 10. Discuss loudly
- 11. Catch
- 13. Shoot the breeze
- 15. Unhappy

Solutions to puzzle 262



Reader's feedback

EDITOR'S NOTE:

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

Note that we block Facebook users who use abusive language.

Chipimo on State House privatization probe being a witch-hunt

Editor,
"You are telling the truth! PF is a failed govt. Zambians are just waiting for election to vote it out!" - Davy Nyoni

"Well spotted, Chipimo!" - Chisenga Kalenga Annmarie

"Powerful statement." - Terence Daniel

"It seems government has achieved its objective of swaying citizens from discussing issues that are currently affecting their lives. We are not against the probe into privatisation, but what value is it going to add to our daily lives today? In fact, it will just gobble the much-needed resources to improve education and healthcare in the country. My fellow countrymen, let's not forget that some people's primary goal is to maintain power and not to improve the economy of this country." - Manda Masiye

"PF is shifting away from national dialogue in order to remain in power." - Gilbert Mulena

"What will be the Inquiry question? It cost so much just to find out whether we should stay in the Commonwealth or not!" - Lubasi Lubasi

"Why is everyone sweating over this issue? Looks like there is really some hidden gold somewhere. Let us know the truth. The simple saying that, 'there is no smoke without fire' may be true here. Besides, I haven't read anywhere where it's written that the Inquiry will target Mr X and Y. We just need to know in detail what happened to our assets. As long as we have these doubts suspects will always be held at ransom." - Mazabuka Mwanakalando

"We've got a lot of ex-ministers still living, who were attending Cabinet meetings over the privatisation, namely: Nawakwi, Kavindele, Katele, Newstead Zimba, and many more who can assist us to know the truth. The Inquiry should be at Heroes Stadium so that we hear ourselves: who plundered our resources from 1991 to 2018; no sacred cows!" - Julius Mayambo



Lungu on Zambia needing Christian leaders who won't touch Treasury

Dear Editor,

Mwangani

"Don't tell me it's already April's Fool's Day!" - Benny Katongo

"Zambia just needs a serious and normal President!" - King Har

"Where did he get his mountain of wealth?" - Musonda Banda

"Yes, you are correct, Mr President, but that's not urgent; what Zambia is in desperate need now, as priority one, is a new President! A Chief Government Civil Servant, who will look beyond a 'name blame' and unite the whole country, and have a listening ear." - DrCharles Sinkala

"2018 joke of the year!" - Stephen Chibawe

"This kind of hypocrisy should remain in 2018; 2019 jokes aside, deliver on your campaign promises, boss!!" - Turbin Mwaakwe

"Who allowed government to buy fire engines at US \$1 million each?" - Killian

"When the actual sheep in the wolves clothes exposes himself!" - Proud Aushi Musamba Mumba

Sampa on LCC to soon arrest vendors & confiscate goods

Editor,

"Ba Mayor, simply levy these money transfer vendors." - Kasumpa Mwansa

"For mobile money booths, I am 100% in support; they are just too much!" - Emmanuel Angolwishe

"Money booth removal; please take them out! But tell your overzealous metro police to exercise some degree of human rights observance while performing their duties; street vendors are not criminals." - Muraad Mulenga

"Chase these vendors, especially on Cairo Road; they irritate me!" - Shepherd Shadunka

"Whilst you are at it, bring sanity to the roads leading to Kulima Tower Bus Station. Why have you allowed buses to be parking in the middle of the roads?" - Zak Zim

"Let us invest more in human resources; we need enough offices to patrol the central business area, and this should not be seasonal, your worship." - Innocent Pwele

"Just allow them to trade, but at a clean environment. Are you going to give them jobs?" - Humphrey Sichali

North Korean leader Kim Jong-un has said he is committed to denuclearisation, but warned he will change course if the US continues its sanctions. He made the remarks during his closely-watched annual New Year's address.

Last year's speech set the country on an unprecedented path of international diplomacy with South Korea and the US.

Mr Kim met US President Donald Trump to discuss denuclearisation in June 2018 but with few results so far.

Last year's rapprochement came after a turbulent 2017 marked by North Korea testing missiles that could reach the US mainland and an escalation in rhetoric between Pyongyang and Washington with both sides trading insults and threats of nuclear destruction.

The annual New Year's address is a tradition Mr Kim picked up from his grandfather, founder of the communist country, Kim Il-

Kim Jong-un warns of change in direction on denuclearisation

sung.

The speech is aimed primarily at a domestic audience and, like in previous years, focussed largely on the economy, but international observers scan every line for clues to Pyongyang's international agenda as well.

In this year's speech, broadcast on state television early on Tuesday, Mr Kim said "if the US does not keep its promise made in front of the whole world... and insists on sanctions and pressures on our republic, we may be left with no choice but to consider a new way to safeguard our sovereignty and interests".

The BBC's Laura Bicker in Seoul says this could mean that North Korea is waiting



for the US to act in 2019 and unless it does, the current pause on nuclear weapons testing could be over.

North Korea is subject to various sets of United Nations Security Council sanctions related to its

banned nuclear and ballistic missile weapons programmes.

Mr Kim said that North

Korea had already pledged not to make, use or spread nuclear weapons and had taken concrete steps to implement this.

He also said he was ready to meet Mr Trump again at any time.

"The tone was what many had expected," Oliver Hotham of news site NK News, told the BBC.

"In all, a speech that boosts his standing at home on key issues while sending a conciliatory but firm message to the US, all the while continuing to woo Seoul with the prospects of renewed cooperation."

It was in last year's New Year's message that Mr Kim announced North Korea would take part in the Winter Olympics hosted by the South, which led to a thaw in relations.

After a flurry of diplomatic activity, in April Kim Jong-un met South Korean President Moon Jae-in for a summit at the inter-Korean border. **BBC**

Why Jada, Will Smith don't celebrate wedding their anniversary together

Jada Pinkett Smith's Red Table Talk didn't take a holiday on New Year's Eve.

The actress, mom Adrienne Banfield-Norris and daughter Willow Smith posted a fresh episode Monday of the candid Facebook show that touched on Jada's marriage to Willow's father, Will Smith. The subject was appropriate because Jada and Will's anniversary is Dec. 31. They tied the knot on the last day of 1997.

As the women discussed the end of another year, Adrienne asked her daughter, "So Jada, I know that for us it was always a time of celebration, but it was also the time that you and Will decided to marry. And since that has changed ... do you look at it differently now? That day?"

Jada, who was noticeably wearing a Hillman College sweatshirt as a nod to her days on *A Different World*, said she does look at it differently.

"Oh, yeah, definitely, because it's more of a life partnership. So it's not steeped in... that day," the *Girls Trip* star said. "We don't really celebrate that day, you know what I'm saying, anymore in that sense because the context of our union is totally different. Usually, Will on New Year's likes to be in an adventure, in the world somewhere. There's no telling where he's going to be. And I like to be inside. I don't want to be in the world. He now has the freedom to go and have an awesome adventure of some kind."

Although the two have dealt with split rumors for years, both have said that they never considered divorce as an option. Will opened up about a rocky time in their marriage during an October episode of *Red Table Talk*. He described a period several years ago, after Willow had a hit with the 2010 song "Whip My Hair," that he realized his family members, particularly Jada, were

unhappy.

"The house was too big, there was always too many people here, she didn't want to travel the way we traveled," Will said. "She didn't want all of her kids to be getting trolled on Twitter. She didn't want any of that."

"To have to let go of the picture, to have to let go of the dream was devastating," he said. "We essentially had to destroy our marriage."

The *Aladdin* star explained that he was "devastated even worse than a divorce. We broke up within our marriage and got back together again. We had to rebuild with new rules and something way, completely different."

Whatever else is different, the love between the two has stayed strong, as evidenced by photos of their family together over the holidays. **Yahoo**



Kane Brown performs onstage during Dick Clark's New Year's Rockin' Eve With Ryan Seacrest 2019 on December 31, 2018 in Los Angeles, California - AFP



Christina Aguilera performs during the Times Square New Year's Eve 2019 Celebration on December 31, 2018 in New York City - AFP



AFP Forum
Catherine Ivill / Getty Images / AFP



AFP Forum
Catherine Ivill / Getty Images / AFP

Tim Ream of Fulham battles for possession with Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang of Arsenal during the Premier League match between Arsenal FC and Fulham FC at Emirates Stadium yesterday

Andre Schurrle of Fulham battles for possession with Granit Xhaka of Arsenal during the Premier League match between Arsenal FC and Fulham FC at Emirates Stadium yesterday - AFP



Body first, ranking later says Nadal after ankle surgery

Spanish superstar Rafael Nadal insisted Tuesday he is not chasing the world's top ranking as he prepares to make a comeback from ankle surgery, with taking care of his body a key priority.

The current world number two has not played a main tour event since a knee problem forced him to retire during his US Open semi-final against Juan Martin del Potro in September.

The 32-year-old had surgery on his ankle in November to remove a loose intra-articular body and only resumed training three weeks ago.

He played the opening round at an exhibition event in Abu Dhabi last week, where he lost to South African Kevin Anderson, and gets his season proper under way in the second round of the Brisbane International on Thursday.

The 17-time Grand Slam winner said he hadn't been worried about the world rankings for the past two years.

"My goal is just to be happy doing what I am doing and be competitive all the weeks that I am playing," he said. "I want to feel myself competitive every week that I am on court and I want to keep fighting for the things that really make me feel alive, you know, for the things that motivate me.

"So I will not (chase) the number one because it's not my main goal.

"Of course, I prefer to be number one than number two, and I prefer to be number two than number five, that's obvious," he added. **AFP**

Venus wins three-set thriller against Azarenka



The ageless Venus Williams launched her 25th year as a professional by outlasting Victoria Azarenka in a three-set thriller on day two of the WTA Auckland Classic Tuesday.

In the showdown between the two former world number ones, the 38-year-old Williams overcame Azarenka, nine years her junior, 6-3, 1-6, 6-3.

The two hour 10 minute marathon was packed with power and precision, and in the end Azarenka's nine aces were not enough.

Williams' superior accuracy in the opening stages gave her the first set, before Azarenka took the second by blasting winners as she moved her opponent from side to side.

In the deciding third set there were two breaks by each player in the first six games before Williams opened a gap to go 5-3 up when Azarenka was wide with a cross-court forehand. The American then served for the

match.

"I love my job, I love what I do but tonight was not easy and maybe one of the toughest first rounds I've ever played," Williams said, adding it was what she needed to start the year.

"My goal was to get past the first round, did you see who I had to play, and we need these matches going into the Australian Open," she said, referring to the year's first Grand Slam which begins in just under two weeks.

"Now I'm hoping the next round will be fruitful for me."

Defending champion Julia Goerges coasted through her first match with a 6-0, 6-4 win over Sweden's Johanna Larsson, while fifth seed Barbora Strycova was forced into a three-set battle to survive Taylor Townsend. Strycova raced to a 5-1 lead over Townsend before the American lifted her game to force the match to a deciding set in which the Czech

prevailed, to win 6-2, 6-7 (5/7), 6-3.

"It was very tough, I thought I was playing well at the beginning and she couldn't find the court in the first set," Strycova said.

"But then she started to serve better and with the wind and (her) a lefty, this mix wasn't good for me and I couldn't close it up at the end of the second set."

Fourth seed Petra Martic and injured eighth seed Alison Van Uytvanck both bowed out in the first round.

American Sofia Kenin produced the first upset of the tournament when she knocked out Martic 7-5, 2-6, 6-2. Van Uytvanck retired with an ankle injury when leading Dutch qualifier Bibiane Schoofs 4-3 in the first set.

Top seed Caroline Wozniacki will make her first appearance on Wednesday after a weather-delayed flight from Florida saw her match against Laura Siegemund of Germany pushed back a day. **AFP**

Roger Federer took the honours in the much-anticipated mixed doubles clash with fellow great Serena Williams in what the latter described as the "match of her career" at the Hopman Cup in Perth Tuesday.

In the biggest mixed doubles drawcard in the 31-year history of the tournament, in what is expected to be its final edition, Federer teamed with Belinda Bencic to win the match in straight sets under the Fast4 format and win the Group B tie for Switzerland.

With 43 Grand Slam singles titles (Williams 23, Federer 20) and more than US\$200 million in prize money between them, the two 37-year-olds had welcomed the chance to face each other on the court in an official match for the first time.

As it turned out, the tie was decided by the mixed doubles, after both Federer and Williams won their earlier singles matches.

A capacity crowd of 14,064 turned out for the tie, and they saw Federer and Bencic largely capitalise on the mixed doubles inexperience of Williams' teammate, Francis Tiafoe, to clinch the deciding rubber under the Fast4 format, 4-2, 4-3 (5/3). AFP

Federer gets bragging rights over Williams in hugely anticipated match



Serena Williams and Roger Federer pose for a photo after their match

VANDENBROECK TO FINISH CONTRACT

By Alex Chilumbwe

With rumours rife over the immediate future of Chipolopolo coach Sven Vandembroeck, FAZ vice president Rix Mweemba has moved to stop the speculation. "Sven remains the national team coach until the last AfCON qualifier game against Namibia in March. That is when his contract will expire and we will

discuss with government which is the main stakeholder, the way forward. I hope speculations surrounding his continued stay will be cleared by this clarification," he said. Many football fans had expected the talented young team to make easy work of their opponents in the qualification group but Chipolopolo fell short after

underwhelming performances under the Belgian coach. Indeed to say that the coach has not impressed would be an understatement. However, as things stand the former Cameroon assistant coach will continue in his capacity, at least until the final qualification round which will be a formality for the already eliminated copper

bullets.

And Mweemba further implored the media to make use of the working relationship with the association adding that media practitioners should feel free to advise the association where they feel an improvement can be made especially when the transitional two tier league kicks off.

"The media is very observant and where you see that we have missed out something as an association, feel free to advise us so that we keep making improvements or so that we can correct something that is wrong. What we have is an open working relationship that should be used to help one another," said Mweemba.

