



Kampyongo marshals police into Sesheke ahead of by-election...

By Thomas Mulenga
Home Affairs Minister Stephen Kampyongo has told the police command in Western Province to ensure that political parties participating in the Sesheke parliamentary by-election apply to be included on the campaign schedule to avoid conflict.
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ARREST VIOLENCE

MISA mourns another year without ATI Bill

By Geoffrey Zulu
MISA Zambia says the year 2018 closed with no major shift in policies to enhance media freedoms as the Access to Information Bill had not been enacted into law, among two other key pieces of legislation. In a press statement,

MISA Zambia secretariat national director Austin Kayanda stated that media freedom remained vital for democracy and good governance as it offered checks and balances on those entrusted with power and management of public resources.
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Govt may lose revenue on Kasumbalesa border closure, says ZACCI

By Geoffrey Zulu
The Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) says the temporary closure of Kasumbalesa, Mokambo and Sakanya entry points due to the presidential election in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) will negatively affect revenue collection given the absence of border taxes.
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Water blues: Residents of Lusaka's Kalikiliki Compound wait in line to draw water from a community borehole - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Lusambo must respect Nathan Chanda - Kamba

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Aspiring PF Lusaka Provincial Chairperson Kennedy Kamba says Bowman Lusambo should respect the will of the people and rally behind newly-elected Copperbelt PF Provincial chair Nathan Chanda to avoid divisions.
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Lusaka girl in court for walking past police station in a mini skirt

By Zondiwe Mbewe
A 16 year-old Lusaka juvenile has appeared in court for allegedly walking past a police station while skimpily dressed. In this matter, it is alleged that on December 22, 2018, the juvenile in the company of her auntie, 28 year-old Miriam Mwanza, publicly conducted themselves in a manner likely to cause a breach of the peace.

It is alleged that on the material day, the juvenile wore a short skirt as she passed by Kamanga Police Station in the company of her auntie.
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Goods on promotion may be expired, ZCSA warns consumers

By Geoffrey Zulu
The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has warned the general public to be conscious when buying consumable products that are on promotion because some may be expired. In an interview, ZCSA Public Relations

Officer, Lee Haamunji said the Agency is deeply concerned that like any other past years, in the first quarter of this year, a lot food products are on promotion, and people are buying in bulk without taking any precautionary measures to guard against expired products.
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By Milimo Namangala
The Bankers Association of Zambia says the Tax Payer Identification Number registration process has reached a compliance rate of 43% and has urged the public to take advantage of the extended deadline to register. Chief Executive Officer of Bankers Association of Zambia, Leonard Mwanza, said in an interview that more bank users needed to register their T-Pins. "We have seen progress but that progress is not good enough. As at the end of the 2018, the compliance levels across the banking sector was at

Banks record 43% T-Pin compliance rate

43%. So we are making progress but the progress is not good enough so we would like to thank the Zambia Revenue Authority for extending T-pin registration and submission deadline," Mwanza said. "If you look at the total numbers of customers across the commercial banking sector as well as the other non bank financial institutions who offer banking services, we are talking of a number somewhere close plus or minus two million. So currently, the compliance

rate in terms of those that have submitted is at 43%." He said the deadline extension should be seen as an opportunity by clients from banking and non banking sectors to take part in the T-pin registration process. "We urge our customers, those with bank accounts to take advantage of the good gesture from the Zambian Revenue Authority to extend the deadline and to ensure that first of all, they register and then once they register, they should submit the

T-pin to their respective bank," Mwanza said. "And for those who may have multiple bank accounts from various banks what they need is they need to make copies of their T-pin registration and make sure that it is submitted to all the commercial banks where the account may be held. That will help us to fast track this issue. Confirming is quite an easy process, because when you go on the ZRA web portal, you are able to access those who are registered for a

T-pin. So registration for a T-pin is one thing but submitting to the bank is another thing because it is the responsibility of the customer to ensure that once they register for their T-pin, it is submitted to their respective bank by way of sending an e-copy of the registration or a hard copy of the T-pin registration." He said banks had been trained to help their clients register for T-pins online. "So we are able work with ZRA, track the number that have been registered and I think the last report

from ZRA we talking of close to 800,000 people had so far registered for their T-pin which is quite some good progress but it's not all those who have submitted their T-pin to the banks so registration is one thing. Banks are been trained, they've been trained to help customers to understand how to register their T-pin online which is quite a faster process because the ZRA has able automated and enhanced system plus it doesn't take long for a person to log into to the system and also to apply for a T-pin online," said Mwanza.



*Children of Lusaka's Kalikiliki Compound at a hand pump fetching water
- Picture by Tenson Mkhala*

Lsk carpenter pleads 'guilty' to stealing from his own house

By Zondiwe Mbewe
A 52 year-old carpenter of Chipata Compound has pleaded guilty to allegedly stealing bed sheets, carpets, washing basket, K800 cash, among other things, from his own house when his wife was away. However, the Lusaka Magistrates' Court has entered a plea of not guilty after hearing his defence. In this matter, Boniface Kangwa is facing one count of burglary and theft from his house when his wife was away. It is alleged that during the night of November 19, 2018 in Lusaka, Kangwa with intent to steal, did break and enter Margret Mwachiyawa's house and stole two bedsheets, one duvet, two carpets, one curtain, a vegetable rack, one washing basket, a bag, a pair

of track suit and K800 cash, altogether valued at K2,110. And when the matter came up for plea before magistrate Nsunge Chanda, Thursday, Kangwa admitted the charge. He however added that the complainant was his wife and on that day, she was at her sister's place. Kangwa said he was stopped by neighbours before he could even get the things. "The complainant is my wife. I agree, I entered the house [when] I was not allowed to enter. The door was open. I was stopped by the neighbours even before I could get the things. This was around 04:30. My wife was at the sister's place," he said. The court however recorded a plea of not guilty after hearing his explanation and adjourned the matter to January 17, for trial.

Lsk girl in court for walking past police station in a mini skirt

By Zondiwe Mbewe

A 16 year-old Lusaka juvenile has appeared in court for allegedly walking past a police station while skimpily dressed. In this matter, it is alleged that on December 22, 2018, the juvenile in the company of her auntie, 28 year-old Miriam Mwanza, publicly conducted themselves in a manner likely to cause a breach of the peace. The two are remanded in custody. It is alleged that on the material day, the juvenile wore a short skirt as she passed by Kamanga Police Station in the company of her auntie, and when an officer asked her why she was wearing mini skirt, the aunt challenged the officer for allowing another woman who was dressed in a similar manner to pass through earlier. Her reaction to the police officer's question allegedly led to the apprehension of the two. And when the matter came up for plea before magistrate Chanda, the two denied the charge. The matter comes up on January 14 for trial.

Govt may lose revenue on Kasumbalesa closure – ZACCI

By Geoffrey Zulu

The Zambia Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ZACCI) says the temporary closure of Kasumbalesa, Mokambo and Sakanya entry points due to the presidential election in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) will negatively affect revenue collection given the absence of border taxes. And Home Affairs Permanent Secretary Dr Chileshe Mulenga has announced that all the entry points to that country are now open to the public following the end of voting last Sunday. In an interview, ZACCI president Michael Nyirenda said the closure inconvenienced the travelling public, cross-border businesses, transporters and drivers, who had to wait at the border to be cleared since they were unaware of the closure.

"...On the economic side, both sides, but more for Zambia is that revenue collection... meaning our ZRA (Zambia Revenue Authority) and customs duty did not collect anything during this [closure] period. This meant that there were costs for those that were either exporting to the DRC; the cost of maintaining these people since it was not known how long it was going to take," Nyirenda said. He added that cross-border businesses, transporters, drivers alike were negatively affected by the closure as they experienced additional costs that were not planned for. "We hope after the elections, our brothers and sisters, who are our neighbours and we are together under SADC, and COMESA if not mistaken, there will be peace

so that there will be no need to close the borders once you are holding elections because I don't think we do that here when we are holding elections," Nyirenda added. Last week, Minister of Home Affairs, Steven Kampyongo announced the closure of the Pedicle road, which connects Chembe District in Luapula Province and Mufulira on the Copperbelt, through the DRC, hence affecting Kasumbalesa, Mokambo and Sakanya entry points due to elections in DRC during that weekend. And in a separate interview, Dr Mulenga confirmed that all the entry points are now open to the public. "Yes, the borders were opened the following day after they [DRC] voted, so things are flowing smoothly; goods and people are crossing," said Dr Mulenga.

By Mirriam Chabala

The Policy Monitoring and Research Centre (PMRC) has advised government to think outside the box this year as it seeks to enhance domestic resource mobilization, explore other possibilities and harness the country's natural resources. And PMRC has projected that Zambia's economy will grow by four per cent this year owing to improved performance of various sectors such as construction. In a statement, PMRC Executive Director Bernadette Deko Zulu said the country needs to look at various innovative possibilities that would promote revenue generation, and that such possibilities range from the Mukula tree programme and emeralds

Govt must be innovative, enhance resource mobilisation this year - PMRC

sub-sector, to fisheries, among others.

"This year, we need to explore possibilities and harness our resources for the growth of our economy. The adage: 'thinking outside the box' should be the anchor of our policy alternatives, especially as we seek to enhance domestic resources mobilization. We need to look at various innovative possibilities that will promote revenue generation for the country. Such possibilities range from: the Mukula tree programme,

emerald sub-sector and the fisheries sub-sector, among others. If well-harnessed, these sub-sectors could yield substantial revenue for the treasury," Zulu observed.

"Further, in view of the African Continental Free Trade Agreement (AfCFTA) which will come into effect, Zambia needs to develop a strategy that will ensure that the country benefits immensely from trading under the Continental Free Trade Agreement (CFTA). This will call for growth of the manufacturing sector

and revamping of selected viable industries to promote value-addition that we have spoken about for sometime. We need, as a country, to be very competitive and planning starts now."

PMRC also projected a four per cent economic growth for Zambia this year.

"This year, Zambia has an opportunity to build on the positive economic trajectories that were recorded in 2018, which led to inflation being maintained at single digit and the kwacha maintaining strength against

other major currencies. The economic outlook of this year looks positive and we expect growth of above 4 per cent due to improved performance in sectors, such as construction, among others," Zulu added.

And she urged the implementation agencies involved with the Seventh National Development Plan (7NDP) to expedite efforts this year to ensure that the programmes under the Plan were speedily implemented.

"In this year, 2019, the 7NDP will enter its 3rd year of operation. We have been closely monitoring the implementation progress of the 7NDP, but our call is for all implementation agencies to expedite efforts this year to ensure that the programmes in the Plan are speedily implemented. We expect to see a reduction in developmental inequalities and also a reduction in incidences of poverty and vulnerability because majority of the policy decisions that had been implemented in 2018 will bear fruit this year," Zulu predicted.

Meanwhile, Zulu also urged government to formulate a strategy and technical working groups in order to ensure that everyone benefited from the initiatives under the US \$60 billion granted by China during last year's Forum on China - Africa Cooperation (FOCAC).

"The 2018 Forum on China - Africa Cooperation

(FOCAC) committed US \$60 billion towards Africa under 8 initiatives as follows: Industrial Promotion Initiative; Infrastructure Connectivity Initiative; Trade Facilitation Initiative; Green Development Initiative; Capacity-Building Initiative; Health Care Initiative; People-to-People Exchange Initiative; and Peace and Security Initiative (China-Africa peace and security fund). Zambia, therefore, needs to formulate a strategy and technical working groups in order to benefit from these initiatives. Preparations should commence now and thus within the framework of FOCAC; Zambia can align some of these initiatives to our development efforts under the 7NDP," stated Zulu. "Further, government should this year continue to pursue the International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout deal. We have been submitting to government to pursue the IMF bailout programme for balance of payments support for as long as the bailout terms and conditions are favourable to all Zambians by consolidating growth. As a matter of fact, The IMF presents affordable finance and is significantly more affordable than commercial borrowing from domestic and international markets and, thus, PMRC encourages the government to continue pursuing an IMF package that compliments our homegrown Economic Stabilization and Growth Programme (ESGP)."

UNZA to introduce 3 categories of gowns

By Thomas Mulenga

The University of Zambia has revealed that it will introduce three different classes of graduation gowns for undergraduate students in a bid to make the graduation outfit affordable to all students.

In an interview, UNZA public relations manager Damaseke Chibale said there had been complaints from graduating students concerning the price of the graduation gowns, hence the decision to introduce three different classes.

Chibale explained that the old gown was being produced by a South African company, hence the high cost.

"Basically the decision to introduce three different categories of gowns

was arrived at after numerous complaints from our graduating students, most of whom failed to manage to purchase the graduation gown which was in the range of K2,500 to K2,700. Some of our graduating students couldn't even manage to hire a gown. Management therefore decided to come up with this idea to help our students to afford the graduation gown," Chibale said.

"The old graduation gown was costing that much because of the changes in the exchange rate. Previously, when the Kwacha was costing K5 or so to \$1, the price of the gown was also low. But because the old gown was been imported from South Africa, the price was high due to the exchange

rate. So after hearing the complaints, we decided to find a local supplier and introduce the gown in three categories."

He explained that the three different categories of gowns would look the same, except the quality of material would differ.

"There will be no much difference in terms of the appearance of these gowns. They will all have the same features and symbols, except the difference in the quantity of material used. The high quality gown will have more cotton and other material that will be used than the other two," explained Chibale.

And Chibale said that there will be no changes in the 2018-2019 academic calendar despite disruptions last year.

Full media freedoms still lacking in Zambia - MISA

By Geoffrey Zulu

MISA Zambia says the year 2018 closed with no major shift in policies to enhance media freedoms as the Access to Information Bill had not been enacted into law, among two other key pieces of legislation.

In a press statement, MISA Zambia secretariat national director Austin Kayanda stated that media freedom remained vital for democracy and good governance as it offered checks and balances on those entrusted with power and management of public resources.

Commenting on the state of media freedoms in Zambia, Kayanda observed that another year had passed without any major shift in policies to enhance media freedoms and freedom of expression as the Access to Information Bill (ATI) had not been enacted into law, together with Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA) and Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) Acts yet to

be fully realized.

He further stated that the IBA was supposed to be a regulator of all broadcast media in Zambia; ZNBC inclusive, but currently lacks adequate mechanisms to ensure that ZNBC plays its public service broadcaster role.

"This resulted in continued complaints from those holding divergent views from government of not being given sufficient space to contribute towards national debate, especially during the 19:00 hours main news on ZNBC," Kayanda stated.

He further observed that the broadcast media, particularly radio, continued to face limited coverage area, while private TV stations were met with an unfair playing field as they were riding on several signal carriers to have a national coverage, while ZNBC had shares in TopStar, which is a signal carrier.

He added that journalists were subjected to acts of violence and censorship by some security wings

and political party supporters during last year.

"Among such incidents included Michael Miyoba, who faced brutality as he headed home during the fight against cholera. Another incident occurred on 6th June, 2018, where cadres attacked journalists in Chilanga. A report published in the Mast Newspaper alleged that suspected UPND cadres attacked seven journalists from various media houses as they were heading to the totalling Centre of the Chilanga by-election," he narrated.

He narrated that journalists from The Mast, News Diggers, Radio Phoenix and Prime Television were attacked about five minutes after midnight, forcing them to abandon their vehicle and scampering for safety at Munda Wanga Botanical Gardens and nearby shops.

On the morning of January 4, 2018, he continued, cadres stormed Feel Free FM Radio Station in Eastern Province with

intentions of disrupting a paid-for radio programme featuring an official from the National Democratic Congress (NDC) political party Samuel Ligomo Phiri.

And Kayanda narrated that on April 14, 2018, Police in Mansa picked up Chishimba Kambwili from KFM radio where he was having a programme, while noting another sad development, which took place on March 19, 2018, at Radio Mano station where management were summoned by police in Kasama over a Facebook posting made by one of its Fan Club members.

"Threats of cyber regulation and statutory regulation of the media in terms of ethics continued throughout the year and this posed a danger to freedom of expression and right of citizens to access information through the media and via digital spaces," Kayanda observed.

He added that MISA Zambia found the conviction and

subsequent sentencing to 18 months for contempt of Court of Veteran Journalist Derrick Sinjela very saddening as it shook the media industry.

However, Kayanda noted that a few positive developments occurred in that oppressive cyber laws were not enacted, nor did the government put in place statutory regulation of the media.

He stated that it was MISA Zambia's hope that such regulation will not be passed in the country.

"However, there was good political will to dialogue over the named rights and even among security wings such as the Zambia Police. It is our hope that this will continue and will translate into more tangible actions to protect media freedom and freedom of expression, including the right of citizens to public information," stated Kayanda, who further added that MISA Zambia's was hopeful that 2019 this year will see the enactment of the ATI Bill, among others.

Lusambo must respect Nathan Chanda - Kamba

By *Sypilisiwe Ncube*

Aspiring PF Lusaka Provincial Kennedy Kamba says Bowman Lusambo should respect the will of the people and rally behind newly-elected Copperbelt PF Provincial chair Nathan Chanda to avoid divisions.

And Kamba says while others want to assume the provincial chairmanship for self interests, his aim is to organize the party. In an interview, Kamba advised Lusambo to respect the will of the people when he was asked whether he shared the latter's view that those elected as provincial chairmen should not hold parliamentary or local government positions as that would have divided attention.

"The people of Copperbelt have decided, the will of the delegates in the Copperbelt Province has prevailed. That is what the people of Copperbelt want. Even if I can have another view, but the will of the people should prevail. They strongly feel that Nathan Chanda can lead them as the provincial chairman of Copperbelt and for that reason we have to congratulate him and give him all the maximum support so that he can organize and mobilize the party in Copperbelt Province," Kamba said.

"That is his (Bowman Lusambo) own view but that doesn't mean that those views are for the majority. In democracy, majority wins. What my colleague Bowman Lusambo should do is to rally behind Nathan Chanda and support him so that there are no divisions in Copperbelt. And I am sure that my colleague is coming from the youth wing, he is the former Provincial youth chairman, he has been there for quite some time, he has been in the rural districts of Copperbelt. So what we need to do as a party in Copperbelt is we have to support the leadership which has been put in place so that our colleagues in Copperbelt can achieve their main objective. And above all, the will of the people has prevailed in Copperbelt."

And Kamba said he was not vying for the Lusaka PF chairmanship for selfish reasons.

"Mine is different from others, I have never aspired as a member of parliament, I have never aspired as a councillor, I have never aspired to become a

mayor in any of Lusaka district. Mine has been to organize the party whilst others it is self interest. Others are former PS, others have been members of parliament, others have been secretary general of the party, others are mayors of Lusaka Province. So what I am trying to say is my main objective is not to become a member of parliament or a government official. Mine is to organize the party. My main objective is to see to it that come 2021 President Edgar Chagwa Lungu should win with a 50 [percent] plus one percent and that requires unity, that requires mobilization," Kamba said.

Kamba observed that the party was not doing well in the southern districts of Lusaka Province.

"Above all, when we are ushered into office, the PF party is got a challenges in the Southern part of Lusaka Province. As a part, I strongly feel that we need to do a lot in the Southern part of Lusaka Province. That is Chirundu, Chilanga and Kafue Districts. The party is doing very fine in the Eastern part of Lusaka which is Luangwa Rufusa and Chongwe. So when we are ushered into office, our focus will be where we are not doing fine [which is in] the districts which I have just mentioned in the Southern part of Lusaka Province. We need to mobilize the party, we need to increase numbers in Chirundu. In Chirundu we have got ten wards [and] PF doesn't have a councillor. In Chirundu District, PF doesn't have a mayor, In Chirundu District which is Chirundu constituency, PF does not have a member of parliament. In Chilanga we have got ten wards [and] PF has got only four, and recently we won the mayorship and the member of parliament. So we need to do a lot in Chirundu, in Chilanga and in Kafue where we have sixteen wards and out of sixteen wards PF has got only four," Kamba observed.

He said once elected as provincial youth chairman, he will mobilize and empower the weakest areas so as to boost the party.

"And mobilization comes with logistical challenges. When we are ushered into the office, we are going to come up with fundraising ventures so that we can raise money for our colleagues in Chirundu where

the party is not doing fine. So that we can empower them financially [and] materially and mobility where we should buy them a vehicle so that they can start mobilizing the party. You know Chirundu District is a Hilly district, it's a district where you cannot cycle. You need vehicles for you to mobilize the party," he said. And Kamba appealed to youths in Lusaka to campaign on issue based matters.

"We would like to congratulate the winner who is our colleague

from the youth wing Nathan Chanda. And the losers I think should work together with the Nathan Chanda led executive committee for the sake of uniting the party and increase numbers. We need everyone in the boat, the boat is not yet full. As for the Lusaka province, we are almost done with the constituencies. Anytime this week they will be voting in Mandevu constituency which is the only remaining constituency to usher in new leadership. We are done with

six constituencies in Lusaka, we are just remaining with Mandevu and Lusaka district," said Kamba.

"My appeal to my fellow youths in Lusaka Province especially in Lusaka District is to campaign on issue based, to tell the party membership what we are going to do, issue based campaigns, what is it we have failed to do and what we are going to do when they usher us into office. Just on myself as the former provincial chairman,

we engaged ourselves in party mobilizations and we raised some money to empower our party structures in Lusaka so that they can go flat-out and mobilize the party. We organized a fundraising dinner dance where we raised about a million kwacha through the office of Honorable Stephen Kampyongo and that money has been given out to the constituencies. about K75, 000...when you go to Matero constituency or Munal, the car wash project is running."



A 15-year-old grade Seven drop out of Kasempa district in North Western Province breast feeding her six-month-old baby - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Dialogue shouldn't be used to embarrass Lungu - Banda

By *Milimo Namangala*

Patriotic Front Mobilizing Committee Chairperson Dr Charles Banda has threatened to have President Edgar Lungu removed from upcoming dialogue process if no respect is given to him.

And Banda says the opposition should not use the dialogue process to embarrass Lungu.

This is according to a statement issued by the Ministry of Tourism Public Relations Officer Sakabilo Kalembwe, Thursday.

"Speaking in his office this morning, Dr Banda who is also Minister of Tourism and Arts said the initiative by the three Church Mother Bodies is good but that the dialogue should bring out what the Zambians expect," Kalembwe stated.

"He said that it should not be an opportunity to disrespect the Head of State because the opposition will have a chance to meet and speak with him on the topic Dialogue for Reconciliation and Unity."

He stated that Dr Banda

commended the initiative by the three Church Mother Bodies but also encouraged the dialogue to bring out what the Zambians expect.

Kalembwe stated that Dr Banda's warning was based on passed attempts at national dialogue.

"Dr Banda said this against a background of what happened in 1996-97 when a meeting of all opposition political parties was called at Mulungushi International Conference Centre to look at where

national problems were lying in order to resolve issues and move in harmony. He disclosed that some political leaders and presidents of political parties thought it was a time to challenge, intimidate and disrespect the sitting President, then late Republican President Mr. Frederick Chiluba and it had to take the National Secretary of the MMD, Brigadier General Miyanda to take his party president out of the meeting," he stated.

Kalembwe insisted that opposition political parties should only use the dialogue process to solve current national issues and avoid seeing it as a show down with the President.

"He said those in opposition should not go to the Indaba for a showdown and that the event is meant to resolve problems for the betterment of the country and the good of the people of Zambian. He advised that respect is part and parcel of the Zambian culture; tradition and President Edgar Lungu should be respected. Dr Banda said should respect seem to be missing in the meeting; his party will remove the President from the meeting," stated Kalembwe.

Goods on promotion may be expired, ZCSA warns consumers

By *Geofrey Zulu*

The Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) has warned the general public to be conscious when buying consumable products that are on promotion because some may be expired.

In an interview, ZCSA Public Relations Officer, Lee Haamunji said the Agency

is deeply concerned that like any other past years, in the first quarter of this year, a lot food products are on promotion, and people are buying in bulk without taking any precautionary measures to guard against expired products.

"We are aware a lot of products are on promotion, and people are buying

products, but what we are urging them is that, they should be mindful and conscious by checking expiry dates, when they were manufactured and make sure they buy products that are safe, essentially," Haamunji advised.

He urged the consumers throughout the country to be ambassadors of good will and advocate for quality products

by putting concerted efforts to ensure products sold on the local market are safe for consumption.

"Consumers play a central role because if consumers shun buying products that are not safe, it means people that are selling those products will not be encouraged to continue that business," observed Haamunji.

TSC calls for patience in recruitment process

By Geoffrey Zulu

The Teaching Service Commission (TSC) has refuted issuing offer letters of employment to teachers who have been employed countrywide.

In an interview in Lusaka, TSC secretary Zachariah Luhanga said that the Commission has not yet published the names of the teachers who have been employed, and a directive has not yet been issued to that effect.

This comes amidst speculation that some teachers had already received letters of employment.

"Yes, that I can confirm we have not published [names] because we do hear that some people are even getting letters in as far as the Commission is concerned. We have not issued even a

single letter to those people who were picked," Luhanga explained.

He further said that it was possible that some unscrupulous people are manufacturing letters, but insisted that people know the procedure.

Luhanga expressed sadness that some people are using dark corner methods and enticing people to collect letters.

"Names always come out in the papers [newspapers], and those picked go and report to provincial education offices where they pick letters," Luhanga added.

And Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNU) general secretary Newman Bubala said salary negotiations for teachers started last month and are still ongoing.

"According to Industrial Labour Act, negotiations take three months, so we are within three months," Bubala said. He has since strongly appealed to teachers to stay calm as negotiations are a process.

"No one should track them [teachers] through social media or anything to the contrary, the truth of the matter is, we are negotiating all teachers' unions and we... I think there's a spokesperson to that effect, if there will be any challenge," explained Bubala, who also added that teachers will be consulted at the right stage of the negotiations.

He also dismissed assertions that negotiations had broken down and emphasised no conclusion has been done yet.

Lusaka man gets one year for stealing K15,000 from employer

By Zondiwe Mbewe

A 38-year-old man of George Compound has been sentenced to one year imprisonment with hard labour for stealing K15,700 from his former employer, ZAMS Milling Company. In this matter, Victor Chisanga, who was charged with one count of

theft by servant, allegedly stole the money, fled to Mansa and lived at a lodge using the money in question.

Particulars of the offence alleged that on November 20, 2018, Lusaka, Chisanga being employed as an off-loader of mealie meal by ZAMS Milling, did steal K15,700, property of the employer.

Facts of the matter were that Chisanga was employed on October 1, 2018, by ZAMS Milling Company.

On November 20, he was dispatched in the field with the driver and others, to deliver mealie meal products and collect cash from wholesalers.

A total of K15,700 cash was collected and put in the truck.

Around midday, the occupants left the truck for lunch, leaving the accused alone in the truck as he claimed to be unwell.

On return, they discovered that the accused was not in the truck, he had disappeared to unknown destination together with the cash.

The matter was reported to Misisi Police Post and investigations were instituted, which led to the apprehension of the accused person.

Under warn and caution statement, the accused said he stole the money, fled to Mansa and lived at a lodge using the same money in question.

He admitted that he had no right to deprive the owner permanently of his property.

Nothing was recovered from the said stolen money.

And taking plea before Magistrate Silvia Munyinya, Monday, Chisanga admitted stealing the said money, saying he didn't get paid for the month of November.

In mitigation, Chisanga asked for forgiveness, saying he was the one taking care of his family.

Magistrate Munyinya, however, sentenced him to one year imprisonment with hard labour with effect from the date of arrest.

Call me idiot, but i will give you sleepless night, Kambwili tells PF

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili says no matter what sort of insults PF media director Sunday Chanda throws at him, he will not relent from challenging bad governance and giving the PF sleepless nights.

On Wednesday, Chanda charged that Kambwili was Hakainde Hichilema's useful idiot who had been promised a position of Prime Minister if UPND formed government.

"We are very much aware that honourable Chishimba Kambwili is a useful idiot for Mr Hakainde Hichilema and that is a fact he can never run away from. Mr Kambwili has always wanted to stand as president and the coalition of opposition political parties has taken the position that they are going to field one candidate in 2021 and that candidate is of course Hakainde Hichilema. This is a rebirth of the UDA and Kambwili has been promised the Prime Minister position from what we know and he cannot deny it," said Chanda.

"And once again he has gone against his own words. His role in that alliance is to attempt to escort Hakainde Hichilema to State House. Again when we say he is a useful idiot for Mr Hakainde Hichilema he must not take it personal because that is what useful idiots do. Again we want to place it on record that the political alliance by opposition political parties stand on sinking sand and it cannot stand the taste of time. It's a bubble that is waiting bursting and it doesn't concern us at all."

But Kambwili, in an



NDC leader CK (c) addresses journalists at his Lusaka house accompanied by his vice Joseph Akafumba (l) and vice secretary general Bridget Attangaon Wednesday – Picture by Tenson Mkhala

interview, said Chanda survived on insulting political opponent.

"Don't worry about the insults from the young man Sunday Chanda. I will not waste my time to answer to Sunday Chanda because you and I, and every Zambian knows that Sunday Chanda has to issue a statement in order for him to survive. I don't issue statements to survive, I am economically independent. I can survive without politics [but] Sunday Chanda cannot survive without being a bootlicker for President Edgar Lungu and the PF. So I will not waste my time to argue with Sunday Chanda because when you argue with a fool, people may not notice the difference," Kambwili said.

"I think he is very much below my political status and to argue with a person who is very below my political

status will be cheapening myself. But I can just thank him for the insults and tell him that I have announced that these politics of Prime Minister [or] Minister, I have passed those positions. I have announced before that in the 2021 elections, I am competing at the level of President. So let him continue day dreaming and hallucinating because that is his level in politics."

He said PF was sending Chanda insult him because the ruling party was feeling the pressure.

"I speak on behalf of the people of Zambia and I speak things as they are. And when people respond it means they are feeling the heat because if you are not feeling the heat you cannot respond to a lunatic or to a useful idiot. But when you respond to a useful idiot then the useful idiot will be

giving you sleepless nights. I should thank him for calling me a useful idiot but time will tell," he said.

"If Chanda doesn't insult me he will not be paid. He will be rendered useless but let him know that all the insults that he has been insulting me and other political leaders are being taken note of and one day he will answer for those insults. He did the same when he insulted Mr Sata day in day out. He had that NGO, that boy is specialised in insults. That's his speciality. It appears he has continued on the same trajectory. But for us all we are doing now is to take note of the insults. All the newspapers where his insults come out, all the records on social media we are just taking note and filing them and then very soon they will be used against him."

Kambwili said he blames

Chanda's mother and father for bad parenting.

"Me I take it lightly and just laugh at him because that's the nature of the boy. That's how his parents raised him, they were teaching him how to insult elders. I can't blame him [but] I only blame his parents for not nurturing him well. But Sunday Chanda comes from fools because if he came from sensible people, they would have told him that insulting elderly people was bad. And the people he works for are also fools because if they were not fools, they would have stopped him from uttering these insults and to be civil in his language. You can even see, if you read what the daily nation have written today, you would tell that they are tired of his insults. They have removed the insults of the 'useful idiot,' said Kambwili.



Happy 2019! Let the dialogue begin

By Andyford Mayele Banda

As we begin the year, on my own behalf and on behalf of PAC, I would like to wish all the people of Zambia a happy New Year and a prosperous 2019. Our hope is that as a people, we can gather enough encouragement to get in-volved in ensuring that we make our country better and get it back on track. Every person must understand that the challenges that we are facing collectively as a country must to a large extent be blamed on those we have temporarily given authority to manage our resources, but must also be blamed on us as we fail to hold them accountable. That said, may the year 2019 be the year you stand up to remind those in leadership that actually as citizen and shareholders of this country, you are the boss not them. They are just caretakers and they are at your mercy.

Having said that, one of the key issues that we need to prioritise and assiduously focus on as a country and ensure by all means it takes place is the national dialogue. Having attended the meeting with the three church mother bodies, I can confidently confirm that we can trust the church to lead the dialogue process. I can confidently affirm that the three church mother bodies are doing this purely for the good of our country and not anyone's interest. And any Zambian who has the best interest of the nation at heart will do what it takes to support the church-led national dialogue. We need to look at the dialogue process as an opportunity that will help reset our country to the ideals that our forefathers stood for when they fought for independence and the ideals that the MMD fought for in 1991.

Prior to Independence on October 24 1964, our country was being exploited by the colonialists in many ways. Colonialism was a policy or practice of acquiring full control of another country or territory with the sole intention of exploiting it economically. When the freedom fighters began fighting to regain control of our resources and sovereignty, they were met with much resistance because those that had colonised us were determined to continue exploiting the resources and ensure that it benefits a few people as opposed to the majority of Zambians. The idea behind the fight for independence was to ensure that this country is controlled by its citizens, and that the resources should

equally be shared for the prosperity of the citizens as opposed to the white minority. Ills such as the prevention of the citizens to freely assemble and discuss issues of national interest were to be abolished. The freedom fighters did not envision that 64 years after independence, the freedom they fought for would be taken away by fellow citizens. Their vision was that Zambia would prosper and be able to distribute the national cake equally as opposed to a few greedy individuals.

Unfortunately, a few years after independence, grave mistakes were made. For instance, the people of Zambia were denied the opportunity to elect leaders of their own through the One Party State rule that assailed our young democracy. This idea prevented our country from sampling various talented leaders as per the choice of the stakeholders. We believe that this prevented development as only the same policy of UNIP that had probably become obsolete were still being applied since there was no system that would create an opportunity for other political parties or individuals to express their visions of this country. Thankfully, a new breed of leaders, who fought to have the One Party State system abolished arose. Today, the coming of a multi-party system, has given an opportunity to many people including ourselves to share the vision we have for this country. It has given the citizens of this country opportunity to sample various leaders in various positions. Posterity must never forget those that ushered in multi-party politics.

Both independence and multi-party system did not come into being for fashion. We got independence and introduced plural politics in order to have a system that would best ensure equal opportunity for all, bring about development and eradicate poverty once and for all. Truth be told, the opposite has happened. Poverty levels have increased, the economy is collapsing and respect for the rule of law is at an all-time low. We still have a system that has been created to support a few people as opposed to the majority. This is no different from the colonial or apartheid rule. We have a system that does not allow citizens to freely assemble as they are at the mercy of the police who take instructions from those in authority through the abuse of the much talked about Public

Order Act.

As PAC we believe the ideals of getting independence and the ideals of multi-party politics are under threat. Thus, we need the dialogue process to remind each other of those ideals. This process will help in putting or at least starting the process to put in place institutions and laws that will make it possible to elect leaders of our choice, leaders who we think can actually make our country prosperous. The dialogue process is mainly about reforms as per our meeting with the three church mother bodies, the key reforms are governance and political issues such as:

- Constitutional & Electoral reforms
- Respect of Human Rights
- Increase political space for Civil Society Organisations, the church
- Application of the Public Order Act
- Institutional reform;
- Media reforms
- Bring back tolerance and civility in politics.
- Rule of Law and Access to Justice

We must remember that these reforms will strengthen electoral laws and also the elections body which is ECZ. This will level the playing field and give an opportunity to Zambians to elect leaders of our choice and remove them when dissatisfied with their performance.

Now we must be alive to the fact that some people will not agree to come to the table and participate in a process that will actually threaten their hold to power through strengthened institutions. You must remember that their existence depends on weak institutions and laws. That's the reason why in many instances they have deliberately weakened institutions and undermined laws. So they will keep playing ping pong just for time to pass in time for the next elections. Let me remind you that the power to change things in this country belongs to you the people of Zambia and not them. Hence, in 2019 ensure that the national dialogue takes place. Make it happen!

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

Things to leave behind in 2019

By Sampa Kabwela

Thing one — the innate behaviour so common in most black Zambians, including myself, of bestowing undue privilege to people of other races on colour value, often at our expense, must be unlearned. This propensity to act overly nice and overly foolish when faced with whiteness should be left behind.

Let me explain whiteness, which is different from racism. Whiteness is that thing that stirs something in us, black Africans, to break rules, to make exceptions, to feel less, when dealing or are in the company of white people.

In graphic terms, whiteness is showing up at a hotel and staff bending backwards including waiving strictly enforced hotel rules to serve you because your colour is white. Racism, on the other hand, is showing up at the same hotel and you are refused entry or service because you are black. Of course the lodge owners on the shores of the Zambezi or an infamous restaurant in Lusaka will not blatantly tell you the reason for refusing you entry because for racism to flourish, it must exist in sophisticated, refined subtleties.

Although post-colonial Zambia has not been as tainted by deep-seated race issues in the extent of some neighboring countries, it has not escaped whiteness because the big enforcers of whiteness are mostly us, black Zambians.

This is a no easy subject, but it is one that must be taken out of private conversations into the arena of public discussion.

I have wondered what it is about many black Zambians that make us dance-around when in the company of white people. I have observed this over and over, of how even the educated, wealthy black Zambians, including diplomats quickly shade their dignity and stature in the face of whiteness and other races.

I once watched a guy talk non-stop for the entire duration of a function, probably explaining his entire history to a white guy, a total stranger. Surely, he couldn't have been asked for his biography. It was perhaps a simple and straight-forward question such as 'what did you study or where do you work?' needing nothing more than a word, at most, a sentence. And if you think this problem is new, read *The Fading Colour Bar* by Grace Keith, in which she argues why it is easier and better for white women to marry black African men because "an African has few cultural or religious beliefs that are not easily discarded upon his meeting with Western civilisation" writes Keith in her incisive 1966 book. I am afraid to say that Keith, the mother of former VP, Guy Scott, has been proved right by time on many other observations that she made.

Why then, are we overly nice or overly 'stupid' in the company of other racial groups? Years back, on two separate occasions, my children told me that I overly smiled and giggled when talking to people. I wasn't even

aware. On both times, the two people were of European descent.

It is the same giggling and telling whole histories of ourselves that I see all the time when many black people are confronted with whiteness. I have been to meetings where the only white person in the team is unanimously chosen as representative of the group. He did not nominate himself; chances are that he even refused, but there he was - anointed to speak for or lead a group of black people. I keep noticing this very pattern on social media groups such as WhatsApp where views of particular people are taken as sacrosanct on colour value.

I will not blame white people for whiteness because in all fairness, we have created and nurtured it to a point where it's now mistaken as a birthright for many white folks who now expect it and even demand it. Many are stunned at how much easy life can be, especially in Africa for no other reason other than being white. Sadly, I still catch myself time and again trying to lubricate whiteness. For instance, just last week at the gym, upon seeing whiteness, I started apologizing for, well, being black. A guy just walked towards me and, unsolicited, I offered him the 10 kg weights that I had been using, in case he needed them. When I caught my folly, it was too late. Other times, I am well alert. Like a few days ago in New Kasama at some shop. At the till paying for my wares, a woman accustomed to preferential treatment came behind me with such an air and stature beckoning with her eyes and body language to be served first. Not only was I on high whiteness alert, so was the cashier; we exchanged a tiny, but all-knowing smile saying, "sorry, but not today." In silent unison, we claimed our victory and it felt good.

A few years ago, at a notoriously exclusive art gallery in Middle way Kabulonga, celebrating 100 years of the City of Lusaka, I liked and put a 'red dot' on a painting, to mean I wanted to buy it. The artist, a young black Zambian, was elated to sell her work at this exclusive exhibition, except she didn't know who the prospective buyer was. Her work, she imagined, was going to adorn some venerable institution or an art collector's home in Europe. You should have seen her disappointment upon learning that the interested buyer was a black woman from Chinsali. I was not paying less or in a different currency, but I appeared to have robbed her of the bragging rights, and she was not impressed.

The immigration officers at Kenneth Kaunda International Airport diplomatic counter deserve special mention. On more than three occasions, I have witnessed them cut whiteness to size. Once, a family of four, diplomats they were not, went straight to the diplomatic queue with a confidence I will never muster. "Confirm you are diplomats," asked the officer in a loud voice. Inaudibly, the family leader muttered something to the officer who, in response with a stoic face, signaled

them to join a snaking queue where they rightfully belonged. Since then, a friend now greets me with the phrase "confirm you are a diplomat!"

I hope in this new year, more than five decades after colonialism, we will resist the propensity to become clowns in the face of whiteness. We should not become racists, never. Racism is like a worm that eats an apple from inside, it destroys your soul. No person deserves to bear the yoke of being a racist.

Thing two - Needless eating

The number of overweight people, men and women including children, in Lusaka is disturbing. Here, in Chief Mubanga area where I am writing this article from, there is not a single person I have met with a potbelly, not a single man and woman, old and young who is even slightly overweight, forget obese. Here, everyone is lean, toned and muscular.

Why then is there such a disparity between the people of Kasanta and the folks in Lusaka? I am left to conclude that perhaps in Lusaka, especially among the middle class, there is excessive, carefree and needless eating. There is little justification for young men — 55 years and below — not to have a muscular frame. I am not talking about bulking, like bodybuilders, no. I am talking about the absence of beer bellies. Men are positioned biologically and socially to have nothing but strong arms and a six-pack. In most cases, they have the finances, time, physical strength to keep in shape and are unladen by biological factors known to affect weight. Women are not exempt either. Post-pregnancy reasons are largely just excuses. Of the articles I have written in the past, the most significant feedback I ever received was men complaining of how their wives had gained so much weight, and didn't know how to address the issue without offending them.

Let me not belabour this point, but the consequences of piling unwanted weight go beyond mere aesthetics. Don't take my word for it, research and read for yourself.

Being healthy and wading off excess weight requires nothing less than a lifestyle overhaul from fewer pizzas, burgers, snacks, beers and inactivity to more exercise, fasting and healthier food choices.

No one can lose weight for you. And by the way, those slimming pills, powders and teas DON'T work. If they did, we would all be in shape. What works, like for many things in life, is consistency, discipline, persistence, and wanting it bad enough. Anything else won't cut it, sorry.

Losing weight is modern day warfare and we hope to live to see tomorrow.

On this note, a toast to healthier versions of ourselves.

Author is artist, publisher & mother. She can be reached on lyrical.zambia@gmail.com

By Thomas Mulenga

Home Affairs Minister Stephen Kampyongo has told the police command in Western Province to ensure that political parties participating in the Sesheke parliamentary by-election apply to be included on the campaign schedule to avoid conflict.

Speaking when he addressed the police command in Mwandia district, Kampyongo said police officers must work hard the same way they did in Mangango in order to prevent political violence during the Sesheke parliamentary by election scheduled for February 12.

"We are happy to be here and we are happy to be here, to ensure that the preparations for the upcoming by elections are in place, that we are able to hit the ground as soon as the campaigns start. But my appeal to the participating political parties is that they must ensure

Kampyongo orders police to maintain peace in Sesheke polls

that they engage you, they sit down with you, in order to appear on the campaign schedules so that there is no clashing. Just like you did in Mangango, I think it will also be equally important that you do the same here," Kampyongo said.

Kampyongo said government would give the officers the logical support they needed to ensure that they work efficiently during the Sesheke by-election "We expect you to have the required number of officers on the ground so that the campaign and voting in the Sesheke by-election go on smoothly. We don't doubt that the same efforts you had put in in Mangango

will be replicated here so that have zero incidents. On our part, we will ensure that we provide you with the logistical support for you to undertake that assignment. We were bombarded with complaints of lack of transport here and I remember before this police station was constructed, you used to operate under that big tree like in the colonial days, with the rim used to holding the suspect. But I am happy that this facility is up despite not having the housing unity. It is one of the issues I want to raise with the traditional leaders here to see how we can be assisted in terms of land so that when we get into the second phase,

we can straight away get on the ground and make sure that the land is secured," Kampyongo said.

And Kampyongo assured the police command that government would construct houses for police officers to cushion accommodation challenges.

"So just assure your officers that just like they have seen their counterparts in other provinces benefiting from the housing project, you will also see something happening in the province. I am sure before the end of this year we could get on the ground. And we are happy that the contractor we are working with is really equal to the task. They are able

to finish their projects in some cases even ahead of time. And it's pleasing to see the morale of officers being boosted because shelter is one of the many conditions of service that everyone looks up to. So we have determined that we are going to cater for as many officers as we can, of course Rome was not built in a day, we have had these challenges over the years. But your commander in chief, the president is always monitoring us to ensure that this project is not derailed," said Kampyongo.

And speaking earlier, Western Province Police Commissioner Charles Lungu said his officers

were facing a serious accommodation crisis.

"This station here has no accommodation, Sesheke which has a highest population in this area has no police camp. The eight houses that are there are dilapidated as they are old. Some of them have people run away from them because of their state. The situation goes up to Sioma, there is no police camp. We were given land by the chief, a contractor was identified and given a project, he disappeared after getting advance payment, we are looking for him so that he can explain why he disappeared. In Nkeyema, Lwampa, Nalolo, the situation is the same in terms of housing for the officers. Help us with accommodation, with the project of constructing houses for officers that is going on country wide, include us as well sir," said Lungu.

Minister of General Education David Mabumba says all the 388,331 pupils who sat for the Grade 7 examinations in 2018 passed. But the Zambia National Union of Teachers (ZNUT) is warning stakeholders that this is not an accurate indicator of performance improvement among the pupils.

ZNUT general secretary Newman Bubala suggests that the 100 per cent pass rate for Grade 7 pupils last year could be mainly attributed to abundant spaces available for Grade 8 pupils countrywide. He says this is because government downgraded some primary schools to basic level, thereby increasing availability of Grade 8 spaces and subsequently lowering the cut-off points.

“The truth of the matter is that, going to Grade 8 has to do with the space available. So, if you have got a lot of space, or if you have a lot of Grade 8 classrooms, as many of those who write exams do make it. So, we cannot really determine by this [pass rate] to say we have improved,” Bubala explained.

“If you build more schools, it will mean that more children will go into grade eight easier. This is

Grade 7 multiple choice exams must be revised



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because the cut-off point will be lowered. We are seeing more space in Grade 8, that means a lot of primary schools have been turned into basic schools.”

The teachers’ union leader expressed concern that most of the pupils who have made it to Grade 8 are likely going to fail Grade 9 because of the nature of Grade 7 exams, which are less challenging. He suggested that Grade 7 exams be revised in order to improve the quality of education being imparted on students.

“I think the Grade seven exams need to be revisited; it’s a situation where you have the multiple-choice questions; the intellectual tests; the IQ tests and so on. As the children are

going to Grade 8, they need to be ready to face serious exams in Grade 9. A lot of Grade 7s are making [it] to Grade 8, but there might be a challenge when they reach Grade 9 if in Grade 10, there is no expansion policy of increasing the infrastructure.”

We find the observations made by the Zambia National Union of Teacher to be very valid. Indeed, Grade 7 examinations need to be revised in order to prepare pupils adequately for secondary education. It should not surprise anybody that in 2018, every single pupil who sat for the exams made it to Grade 8. In fact, the statistics for 2017 are not any different because that year, 99.14 per cent of the pupils passed.

Sometimes, Grade

7 exams are referred to as ‘guesswork tests,’ where even when you absolutely don’t know the answer, you have about a 25 per cent chance of singing “piki piki na piki doli” and circling the correct option.

In the old days, there was a myth that when you are faced with a tough Grade 7 question, you can simply raise the HB pencil a few centimetres above the answer sheet, say a prayer and drop it on the ‘correct’ answer. Funny as these methods of answering Grade 7 exams may sound, for many years, people have been making it to Grade 8 by doing just that.

At Grade 7, the examiners are not interested in your handwriting, your comprehension, your

composition, your narrative skills or creativity; as long as you can shade the correctly guessed answer, then you are a good pupil and deserve to progress to high school. How can that be?

We do not think this is a progressive way of assessing the pupils’ intellectual capacity. This is the reason why hundreds of thousands pass Grade 7, but fail to make it to Grade 10. The Grade 9 exam proves to be too challenging for pupils because it brings into play all the aspects that are ignored at Grade 7. Consequently, the country records more Grade 9 school dropouts than any other grade.

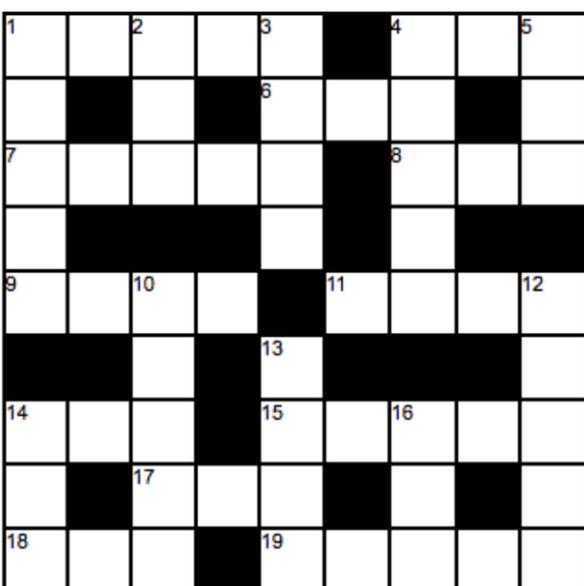
If everyone who sits for a given examination is able to pass with so much

ease, we don’t see how it can affect the education system if such an exam was abolished. Unless the composition of Grade 7 exams is revised to include real IQ test questions demanding exculpatory answers, we find them a waste of government money and time. It is not the multiple choice questions we are against, but we are calling for an inclusion of probing questions that can help examiners understand which areas the pupils were lacking.

The purpose of upgrading some basic schools to Primary and upgrading some primary schools to lower secondary level was to improve the education standards. But this year, that has proved to achieve the opposite. The system has mopped every Tom and Jerry into Grade 8, and some of those undeserving pupils are the ones who desperately look for leakage when faced with Grade 9 exams.

Teacher Bubala is right; the expansion of school infrastructure must go in tandem with adequate teaching staff, improved teaching aids, sufficient materials and real inquisitive examinations.

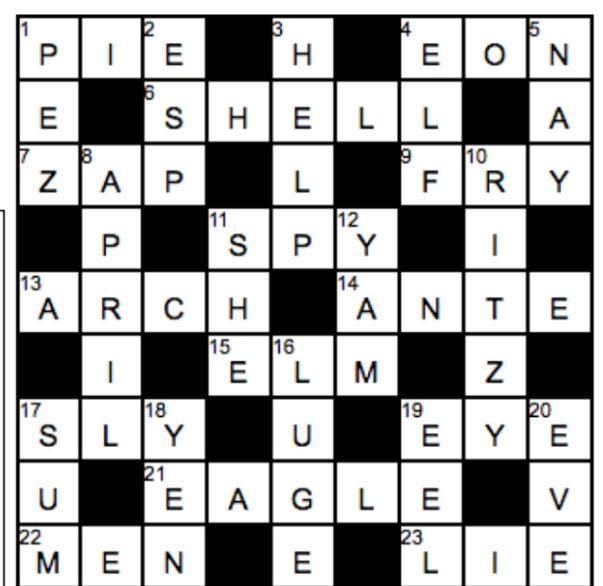
Crossword puzzle 265



“The reasonable man adapts himself to the world: the unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore all progress depends on the unreasonable man.”
- George Bernard Shaw

- | Across | Down |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Address an audience | 1. Present for acceptance |
| 4. Dazzle | 2. Highest card |
| 6. Nothing; zero | 3. Concludes |
| 7. Liberated | 4. Single |
| 8. Hardwood tree | 5. Deer relative |
| 9. Not common | 10. Paper purchases |
| 11. Rhythm in music | 12. Decrease gradually |
| 14. ___-la-la | 13. Pea holders |
| 15. Admit (2 wds.) | 14. Casual top |
| 17. Muck | 16. Wee drink |
| 18. Type measures | |
| 19. Outstanding | |

Solutions to puzzle 264



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.

Opposition Alliance's plan to field one candidate in 2021

Editor,

"Fantastic move! That's being selfless! You must focus on counter-rigging strategy; ensure ECZ is kept under check & balances in pre, during & post-election management. PF is finished without rigging election!" - Kool Int

"I urge the Opposition Alliance to ignore criticism by dictator Edgar Lungu's agents. Lungu is now jittery; he is going to step up efforts to divide the opposition. Opposition Alliance leaders should avoid criticizing each other. Other parties must be encouraged to join the Alliance. The Opposition Alliance is capable of restoring the rule of law in Zambia." - Chivunda Samusungwa

"We have seen this before, and it is not the people who will let them down, but their thirst and egos. They all want to be President at the same time! In fact, they all, apart from NDC, have been in such alliances, which have never worked. We, on the other hand, are ready for one party." - Morris Lupanda

"HH is the candidate, the rest are his campaign managers! This will be the easiest battle for PF in 2021. GBM should open his eyes; let him forget about running mate in 2021 used and damped!" - Honourable Abuid Munyevu Kawangu

"For me, this alliance can be fruitful if organized well without personal interest." - Maluta Stafreds

"Now, I believe that HH will never be Republican President! He has been involved in so many alliances, which never yields tangible results." - Enock Seith

"I am lost for words why some people don't want the opposition to work together; in 2016, PF and MMD went into an alliance and no one saw it wrong..." - Bob Kaima

"Should this move be achieved, it will scare the heck out of the corrupt PF officials because not even rigging will beat the opposition," - Nancy



Lungu's challenge to mining companies to justify opposing Sales Tax

Editor,

"Please, Amos/State House Stop posturing! Quietly engage with the mining companies to chart the way forward. Diplomacy! Diplomacy! You can achieve a lot!" - Anderson Chibwa

"What do govt. representatives on these mining company boards do? How come the issue of tax is always a problem? Mining is a long-term undertaking. Shifting cost structures every year is not good for any business. We should move away from yearly planning for long-term sectors." - Brian Tembo

"Govt is just wasting its time; these mining companies will never give in! Besides, govt

has no capacity to run with their billions in self-inflicted debts!" - Callaghan Mwamba

"A much stronger warning was issued to Mopani a few years back when they threatened to lay off some workers, but they still went ahead and trimmed their workforce!" - Lumbwa Lupeta

"Sata warned the mine owners some time back that he will lay them off if they lay off a single miner; they still went ahead and laid off miners! So, this is just talking." - Scofield Manyoni

"The mining companies cannot demand for dialogue with the President! They should just comply. I hope the govt maintains this stance." - Sichaba Lyambai

The perception that Ministry of Fisheries and Livestock is least important

Editor,

"Unfortunately, for as long as we do not have honest and hardworking leaders, this sector will never be developed. We have been spoiled by the culture of brown envelopes; 'get rich quick' schemes and so many retrogressive policies." - Mukanthu Banda

"In 2017, the following were earnings from fish exports by our cooperating partners: 1. China US \$14.1 billion; 2. Norway US \$8.8 billion; 3. USA US \$ 5.1 billion; 4. India US \$4.6 billion; 5. Canada. US \$4.2 billion; 6 Sweden US \$ 3.7 billion. Can you see that most of the loans and aid we get from these countries are raised due the proper functioning of their Ministries of Fisheries? It, therefore, follows that if our Ministry of Fisheries & Livestock was given the attention that is due to it, we would not be getting expensive loans from China." - Mateyo F Muloongo

"The PF don't understand it; they are after tollgate money than creating more farms and livestock!" - Dorothy M Siasesa

"In fact, it's a Ministry that should be highly-funded as it has great potential where employment and entrepreneurship is concerned; same with Agriculture Ministry. I'm tired of hearing people complain about mine jobs when this land has great potential!" - Robinson Katumbi

"Fisheries are a big industry and only a shallow-thinking country like Zambia would play around with such an important area." - Nabuyanda Mwaka

"The Ministry of Livestock & Fisheries is the ONLY Ministry that can develop Zambia." - Chanda Pochoko

Ethnic clashes kill 13 in Burkina Faso as security worsens

Thirteen civilians have been killed in ethnic violence in central Burkina Faso, the government said on Wednesday, echoing a rise in inter-communal conflicts in neighboring Mali linked to Islamist violence.

Burkina has seen a spike in Islamist attacks in recent months as jihadists seek to increase their influence across the Sahel. On Dec. 31, the government declared a state of emergency in several northern provinces bordering Mali.

Attacks this week show how that violence may be fuelling ethnic clashes for the first time in Burkina.

After nightfall on Dec. 31, armed men on motorbikes descended on the village of Yirgou, made up largely of people of the Mossi ethnicity, and killed six people, including the village chief, government spokesman Jean Paul Badoun said.

The following day, Badoun said, Yirgou residents killed seven Fulani herders in apparent retaliation. The residents blamed the herders for sheltering the men who attacked them the day before.

The ethnic violence echoes problems seen in neighboring Mali where Fulani have been accused of hiding Islamists who have carried out attacks across the region in recent years. Armed men killed 37 Fulani civilians there on Tuesday.

Ten gendarmes were shot dead near the Malian border last week in an attack claimed by Jama'at Nasr al-Islam wa al-Muslimin (JNIM), an umbrella group for al-Qaeda-linked militants in the Sahara.

JNIM claimed responsibility for other attacks this year, including one in the capital Ouagadougou in March that killed about eight security agents and wounded dozens of others.

Thousands of people have fled their homes due to the attacks and reprisals by security forces. **REUTERS**



Pope Francis plays with a ball as members of Circus of Cuba perform during the Wednesday general audience in Paul VI Hall at the Vatican January 2, 2019. PHOTO: REUTERS

South Korea's spy agency has told officials that North Korea's ambassador to Italy has gone into hiding.

The announcement follows unconfirmed reports that Pyongyang's top diplomat in Italy had sought asylum from an unidentified Western country.

Jo Song-gil, the acting North Korean ambassador to Rome, is believed to be the son or son-in-law of

North Korea ambassador to Italy 'in hiding' says South

one of the highest level officials in North Korea.

The last senior diplomat to defect was the deputy ambassador in London.

Thae Yong-ho abandoned his post in 2016, along with

his wife and children. He defected to South Korea.

As one of the highest-ranking officials to ever defect from the North, his move was seen as a blow to Kim Jong-un's

regime. He would go on to urge the world to spread information in North Korea to undermine Mr Kim's status among his people.

Speaking after a briefing from the spy agency on Thursday, Kim Min-ki, a government MP, told reporters that Mr Jo went into hiding more than a month ago.

"Acting ambassador Jo Song-gil's term was ending in late November last year and he escaped the diplomatic compound in early November," the MP said.

Mr Jo's wife is believed to be with him.

Italy's foreign ministry has told the BBC that it has no record of an asylum request made by Mr Jo.

Mr Jo, 48, has been acting ambassador in Rome since October 2017 after Italy expelled then-ambassador Mun Jong-nam in protest over a North Korean nuclear test a month earlier.

North Korea's diplomatic mission in Italy is important for Pyongyang as the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization is based in Rome and North Korea often suffers from chronic food shortages.

North Korean diplomats stationed abroad usually have to leave several family members behind in Pyongyang to prevent their defection.

But Mr Jo is thought to have been in Rome with his wife and children, suggesting he may be from a privileged or influential family, citing a diplomatic source. **BBC**

DR Congo election results 'may be delayed' as ballots trickle in, says Electoral Commission

Results from the Democratic Republic of Congo's (DRC) long-delayed presidential election could be pushed back past Sunday's deadline, the country's electoral commission has said, as ballots trickle in and tensions prevail over the vote count.

As of Wednesday, three days after the election, counting centres had received just 17 percent of the tally sheets drawn up by individual polling stations, the president of the CENI electoral commission, Corneille Nangaa, told Reuters news agency.

"We will try as hard as possible to meet Sunday's deadline, but it will be challenging," Nangaa said, without mentioning the reason for the delays.

Election monitors from the Southern African Development Community (SADC) said the December 30 vote "went relatively well" despite chaotic scenes that prevented many from voting. The crucial election is meant to lead to DRC's first democratic transfer of power in 59 years of independence. But more than a million Congolese in three opposition strongholds were unable to vote due to

an Ebola outbreak, security concerns, local factional conflict and various logistical problems.

A spokesman for Felix Tshisekedi, one of the two opposition candidates, said he doesn't mind when the results are published as long as they are an honest reflection of the vote.

"I doubt it will be Sunday, because some corners of the country have not transmitted their results, but I can't speak for the commission," Vital

Kamerhe told reporters in the capital, Kinshasa

"Whether it's on Sunday or Monday, Tuesday, we don't mind. What we want are results published that reflect the truth of the ballot boxes, that is the most important thing," he added.

The elections will determine the successor of President Joseph Kabila at the helm of sub-Saharan Africa's biggest country for nearly 18 years.

Kabila refused to step down after his two-term

constitutional limit ended in 2016, sparking protests that were quelled at the cost of scores of lives.

Pre-election polling showed Kabila's preferred candidate, ex-interior minister Emmanuel Ramazani Shadary, trailing the main opposition candidates, Martin Fayulu and Tshisekedi, but both sides say they expect to win.

The African Union (AU) issued a statement on Wednesday saying Sunday's

vote had taken place "in a peaceful and tranquil atmosphere, despite interference and all the security, political and organisational challenges."

"The holding of these elections constitutes, in itself, a first great victory for the Congolese people," the statement said. "The mission strongly wishes that the results that will be declared are true to the vote of the Congolese people." **NEWS AGENCIES**



Liverpool warned Salah will leave for Spain if he enjoys another 25-goal season

Liverpool have been told to brace themselves for bids from Real Madrid and Barcelona if Mohamed Salah enjoys another 25-goal season, with Mido expecting a move to be made.

The reigning PFA Player of the Year and current holder of the Premier League Golden Boot found the target 44 times across all competitions in 2017-18. Replicating those achievements was always going to be a big ask, but Salah has recorded another 16 efforts this term and helped to fire Liverpool to the top of the Premier League table.

That consistency continues to see him linked to leading sides outside of England, with a fellow countryman of the opinion that a big-money transfer could be pushed through in the summer. Former Ajax and Tottenham striker Mido told CNN: "You never know in football.

"If Barcelona or Real Madrid come for you your head is going to flip, all the players are like that.

"Barcelona and Real Madrid are different - no disrespect to Liverpool.

"I think Barcelona and Real Madrid were waiting to see how Salah would do this season; they don't buy players after only one good or great season.

"I think if Salah scores 25-plus goals, I think they will come for him and it will be difficult for Liverpool to keep him."

Worryingly for Liverpool, Mido believes Salah will surge past that mark.

He added: "I'm sure he's going to score at least score 25-plus this season.

"He's playing in a great club and he knows that he's much appreciated by everyone around him. And a great manager, of course, who's helping him off the pitch and on the pitch."

Mido is also backing Salah to cement a standing as the finest player to have ever emerged

from his country.

There have been several contenders for that crown down the years, but a star of the modern era boasts the potential to raise the bar of individual excellence to previously unseen heights.

"I think Salah is the greatest Egyptian player," Mido said.

"If I judge all players, we had so many great players in the Egyptian history, we've had fantastic players who have done great for the country and for their own clubs back in Egypt as well.

"But football is in Europe. If a player can play at the top for 10, 12 years in Europe, I think he should be considered the best player in Egyptian history."

Goal.com



Netball star eyes national accolade

By Alex Chilumbwe

Netball Association of Zambia (NAZ) has expressed happiness that the National Sports Council of Zambia (NSCZ) has for the first time in more than five years nominated a netball player for the 2018 Sports Person of the year award.

Diana Banda, a Zambia Correctional Service officer who plays netball for Prison Leopards is nominated for the award alongside Zambia Police sprinter, Sydney Siame.

In an interview with Goal Diggers! NAZ president Getrude Mukumi said that Banda's nomination for the award spoke volumes of the strides that the association made in ensuring that the netball status in the country is escalated.

"We are very excited as an association because her nomination says a lot about the new standards of the sport in the country. We haven't had any netballer nominated for this award in



more than five years. That is why we are very happy as an association. Banda is also a great shooter in the game

and she always outdoes herself," said Mukumi. Meanwhile, Banda called her nomination for the

award a timely blessing that she will forever remember, adding that she was the oldest active netball

national team player in the country.

"I was speechless when I heard the news through my fellow netballers in Lusaka and it is a big blessing to me. I'm the oldest active national team player currently so it gives me so much joy that I am finally being recognised. I will always remember this nomination whether I win or not," said Banda.

Banda was awarded the Best Shooter during last year's Diamond Challenge netball tournament in South Africa and during the Regional Africa Netball tournament that Zambia hosted in August last year, she scored a tournament high of three hundred and twenty-one scores in four games only.

Banda, a national team skipper, has also won a total of eight local netball awards under the Midlands Netball Association

(MINA) Zambia National Service Commandant, Zambia Air Force, NAZ, Commissioners

Tournament, Labour Day and Independence tournaments respectively.

Meanwhile, Banda's rival for the nomination Sydney Siame said that it is the second time he was being nominated and hoped to scoop the award this year.

"I feel honoured that I have been nominated for the same award this year. It means am doing something great for this country and I hope I win it this year. It is really encouraging to be nominated for the same award twice and in two consecutive years," said Siame.

Charles Musonda gets Mazembe coaching job

By Alex Chilumbwe

TP Mazembe yesterday (Wednesday) announced the appointment of Charles Musonda as assistant coach of the professional team and young people's team, in charge of specific training.

The 49-year-old Zambian has been integrated in the technical staff led by Pamphile Mihayo and assisted by David Mwakasu and Robert Kidiaba.

Zamfoot, an online publication run down a brief football history of Musonda and highlighted accolades that qualified him for the

position at the Congolese football house:

His debut as a professional for Zambia came in 1988 against Ghana in Lusaka which Zambia won 2-0 and Musonda did not disappoint, tellingly imposing himself on the game. He was one of the star players at the 1988 Summer Olympics in Seoul 1988 as Zambia reached the quarter finals, trouncing Italy and Guatemala with 4-0 score lines along the way.

Musonda was to be part of the Zambian selection expected on April 28, 1993 in Dakar to play

a qualifying match of the 1994 World Cup against Senegal. He was summoned to participate, but at the request of the general manager of Anderlecht, he declined the invitation to play a major match in the league at the weekend.

This defection saved the then young lad his life. The plane carrying the Zambian team to Senegal crashed at sea off Libreville, killing all occupants of the aircraft. Traumatized by the crash, he decided to never play for Zambia again, causing discontent among Zambian fans. He however

reconsidered his decision in November 1995.

On Tuesday, January 1st, 2019, TP Mazembe Vice President Mohamed Kamwanya introduced Musonda to the club's technical staff and management.

He said he was very happy to join the technical staff of the TPM, a team whose pressure is permanent. "In the company of all the staff, I am extremely determined to meet the challenges that lie ahead," said Musonda.

He was presented to the players and the press on Wednesday.



I don't want to leave Man Utd - Solskjaer

Ole Gunnar Solskjaer confessed he hopes to remain in charge of Manchester United beyond May, after watching his side beat Newcastle United 2-0 on Wednesday evening.

When asked if he will leave United in May, Solskjaer replied: "I don't want to." "I'm just thinking about the next game

because if you win four you can win another four with this club," he told Sky Sports. "That's the challenge, that's the standard we're used to."

"It was a very professional performance. We never hit the heights that we can do but I felt we were in control, kept plugging away," "It was a great goal again by Marcus and a

great reaction again by Rom - good first touch as a sub.

"In the first half it was sluggish, it was almost like a testimonial at times - too slow, too many touches and too many square passes and back

"But the big, big plus was the clean sheet." **Goal.com**

Messi not at the same level as Maradona, Pele - Brazil's Zico

Barcelona star Lionel Messi is almost at the level of Diego Maradona but Pele is the greatest of all time, according to Brazil legend Zico.

Messi is enjoying another wonderful season, having scored 15 times in as many games for the Catalan club in La Liga.

He is well on course to surpassing 30 goals in a single league season for an eighth time, while Barca are favourites to win the title and likely to be among the Champions League frontrunners.

The Argentina forward has won everything with Barca and has a record-tying five Ballons d'Or to his name.

Yet Zico - who starred for Brazil in the 1970s and 80s - thinks Messi is still not at the standard Maradona was in his heyday, while he ranks Pele above both because he had "everything".

"Messi is close to Maradona," Zico, who works as a director at Kashima Antlers, told Omnisport.

"That means, in my opinion, he can't be compared to Pele. I still consider Maradona in front of Messi. With Pele, no. Pele has all the qualities and characteristic that a football player has to have.

"When God created him [Pele], he put every quality a footballer needs; speed, strength, impulse, technique, kicking ability, heading, dribbling - all of it, everything that a player might have. **Goal.com**



Serena sweeps Hopman Cup singles ahead of Slam record bid

Serena Williams completed a clean sweep of her singles matches at the mixed teams Hopman Cup in Perth Thursday as she prepares for her bid to make Grand Slam history at the Australian Open.

The winner of 23 Slam

singles titles, Williams was made to work a little harder than expected by young Brit Katie Boulter in the United States' final group tie, but prevailed in straight sets to make it three victories from as many outings.

However, the 37-year-old's

perfect singles record this week wasn't enough to keep the USA in contention at what is expected to be the last Hopman Cup, where she has twice been a winner.

Williams and Frances Tiafoe were already eliminated after losing their opening two ties.

Watched by her daughter Alexis Olympia, Williams' 6-1, 7-6 (7/2) win over the 97th-ranked Boulter followed victories over former top 10 player Belinda Bencic and Greece's Maria Sakkari earlier in the week.

Currently ranked 16th, Williams needs just one more Grand Slam singles title to equal the record of Australian Margaret Court, but hasn't won a major since the Australian Open in 2017. She gave birth to her daughter in late 2017 and was beaten in the Wimbledon and US Open finals last year.

It was at the latter that she had a major meltdown during her loss to Naomi Osaka.

With the Australian Open in Melbourne less than two weeks away, Williams dropped just one set in her singles matches, although at different times she seemed to be troubled by a right shoulder problem and had both ankles strapped. **AFP**

CHARLY GETS

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MAZEMBE JOB

