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MORE LOOTING



Properties seized by DEC belonging to former ZAF commander Lt Gen Eric Chimese, believed to be proceeds of crimes



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By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Patriotic Front Secretary General Davies Mwila says the ruling party will petition the “violence-induced election results” of the Sesheke parliamentary by-election, which elected UPND’s Romeo Kang’ombe. And Mwila has demanded answers from the Zambia Police Service on why PF members were butchered like criminals at the hands of the police. In a statement issued, Wednesday morning, Mwila argued that PF lost Tuesday’s Sesheke by-election not because its development agenda did not sell, but because enemies of democracy and “violent merchants of death” disturbed the peace and turned the constituency into a blood bath. “The Patriotic Front hates violence. In light of the foregoing, let it, therefore, be made clear that we will petition the violence-induced results of the Sesheke by-election. We also look forward to the Bahati constituency by-election, which we shall adequately be prepared for,” Mwila stated. He accused the opposition UPND of having shattered the peace in Sesheke, which led to the PF’s loss of the seat.

PF will petition Sesheke election results - Mwila

“We lost the Sesheke parliamentary by-election not because our candidate or our development agenda did not sell; but because enemies of democracy and violent merchants of death and destruction disturbed the peace and turned the constituency into a blood bath! The extent of violence to which the UPND resorted when they once again daringly attempted to block the Presidential motorcade is shocking and it is as reprehensible as it is treacherous for all Zambians regardless of regional roots or political affiliation. Let me begin once again by paying tribute to our members in all the structures of Sesheke and Western Province who gallantly campaigned in an environment made hostile not by

the wonderful people of Sesheke; but by an opposition party that practised physical violence and mystical manipulation together with some overzealous policemen who brutalised them. We wish our injured brothers and sisters and sons and daughters in Sesheke a speedy recovery and God’s protection,” Mwila stated. And Mwila demanded answers from the police on why his party members were butchered like criminals by some unscrupulous officers. “We are appalled at the vicious, unprovoked attacks the police unleashed on our members and we seriously question the brutality the PF faithful suffered at the hands of police. We demand answers! We demand answers as

to why our law abiding unarmed members were butchered like criminals at the hands of the police. We once again salute our gallant youths who yesterday escaped from the jaws of death at the hands of those who must protect them,” he stated. Mwila further warned the UPND to expect to reap what they have sown, warning that they will soon receive a dose of their own medicine in upcoming elections. “The UPND have crossed the line; they have gone too far and they must expect to reap what they have sown; just as they must expect to receive a dose of their medicine in upcoming elections. But we say to ourselves, an eye for an eye would make the world blind; we refuse to revenge their

terror and violence because we are not thirsty for the spilling of blood! On Tuesday 12th February, 2019, parliamentary by-elections were conducted in Sesheke constituency, while ward elections took place in various parts of the country. We have received with great joy and humility, news of PF sweeping election victory of all the seven wards in Chavuma, Chifunabuli, Bwacha, Chililabombwe, Kafue, Lundazi and Katete. As we celebrate our victory, we pay glowing tribute to our members, the foot soldiers for the great work they demonstrated in campaigning and informing the electorate of PF achievements and development plans,” stated Mwila. “Our civility and maturity comes with our understanding of the responsibility that comes with governance and being the party

in power. However, we must warn that our meekness must not be taken for granted. PF meekness must not be mistaken for PF weakness. When we choose to be civil, we must not be mistaken for cowards; their behaviour beckons us to return the favour, but we will remain issue-based and focused on uniting Zambia beyond tribal and political divides, among others. The Patriotic Front will continue working with our people across all the 10 provinces of Zambia to fulfil the desire of Zambians to see more development through the leadership of President Edgar Chagwa Lungu and the Patriotic Front in 2021 and beyond. To our party leader and Head of State President Edgar Chagwa Lungu, we salute you, your Excellency, for leading us into a higher dimension of growth.”



MTN Zambia General Manager Mobile Financial Services Edmund Barwuah (l) shakes hands with Access Bank Zambia Country Managing Director (r) during the official launch of the USSD Mobile Banking Integration with MTN Mobile Money in Lusaka, Wednesday. The new service allows Access Bank Zambia customers to conduct mobile money transfers to MTN Mobile Money and vice versa (Photo credit: Access Bank Zambia)

Samfya businessman reports couple that attempted to sell him human heart

By Mirriam Chabala
Police in Samfya District of Luapula Province have arrested a couple for allegedly killing their neighbour’s three-year-old son and removing the heart for sale. However the intended buyer reported the couple to the police, leading to the arrest of the suspects. Bonaventure Mwewa and his wife Esnat of Kabanga area in Samfya are currently in detention at Samfya Police station after being reported to have murdered their neighbour’s son, whose heart they allegedly attempted to sell to Patrick Mwansa, a local businessman. A source at Luapula Police

Division told News Diggers! that Mwansa expressed shock at the offer presented to him, and instead rushed to report the matter to the police, who immediately moved in and apprehended the couple. “There is a couple, which killed their neighbour’s son in Kabanga area. The couple’s names are Bonaventure Mwewa and Esnat Mwewa. They even removed his heart, which they went to sell to a local businessman Patrick Mwansa. They told him that they needed money. But Mr Mwansa expressed shock that he doesn’t deal in ritual dealings and reported the matter to the police. Police quickly moved in and arrested the couple last night (Monday night). The body and heart of the boy, who was only three years old, are lying in the hospital mortuary at Samfya District Hospital,” narrated the source. Police Spokesperson Esther Katongo confirmed the arrest in a statement but could not name the suspects, apart from stating that the couple was aged 27 and 22 respectively and both from Kabanga village in Chief Kasoma Bangweulu’s area. “It was reported that on Sunday, 10th February 2019, around 12:00 hours, the deceased went missing from his home and his uncle aged 47, made a report at Samfya police station. After intensive investigations, the two suspects led the police to the scene of murder where they found the body of the child bundled in a sack and hidden in the bush. Police also recovered a suspected human heart, which was concealed in a lunchbox, believed to have been removed from the deceased,” explained katongo.

There is serious need for national healing before 2021, notes HRC

By Mirriam Chabala
The Human Rights Commission (HRC) has called on political stakeholders to seriously commit to the national dialogue and set the agenda for reconciliation, peace and unity, saying there is need for national healing before the crucial 2021 general election. In a statement issued, Tuesday, HRC spokesperson Mweelwa Muleya condemned the spate of violence that characterised the Sesheke parliamentary by-election campaigns in Western Province, and called for serious commitment to the national dialogue process to prevent future occurrences of violence. The Commission, who were on the ground during the whole election campaign time monitoring proceedings in Sesheke, also condemned the

continued application of excessive force by the Zambia Police Service to respond to perceived or actual threat to the breach of peace. “The Commission condemns the excessive political pressure and threats against police officers, which has resulted in unlawful and unprofessional conduct of the men and women in uniform for fear of political victimisation, such as being transferred to seemingly unfavourable places or position, or being retired in the ‘national interest’ if they disobeyed political orders. The violence and the suppression of the right to freedom of assembly that were witnessed during the campaigns for the on-going by-elections underline the imperative need for an immediate solution. To this effect, the Commission calls upon all stakeholders to immediately

resolve differences over the national dialogue and set the national tone and agenda for national reconciliation, peace and unity,” Muleya appealed. “There is need for national healing before the 2021 presidential and general elections. It is extremely disheartening that the country should continue witnessing and experiencing its own citizens trying to exercise their democratic rights and freedoms being injured, and in some cases, losing lives when such regrettable violations could easily be prevented through political leaders talking to each other and preaching peace and love for each other.” Muleya further called for the independence of the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), saying the Commission must be allowed to conduct their work professionally and legally

without any influence from politicians. “The Commission (HRC) is confident that the ECZ will continue to handle the electoral process, including the counting, transportation and collation of results of the on-going by-elections, with utmost transparency and sensitive to avoid misunderstanding and suspicion. The Commission also appeals to the leaders of the participating political parties to refrain their supporters from engaging in acts of violence and other unlawful acts, which have potential to undermine the integrity and legitimacy of the election outcome. The ECZ must be allowed to professionally and legally conduct their work without undue influence in order to uphold and protect the free expression of the will of the electorate in voting for candidates of their own choice,” insisted Muleya.

UPND councillor appeals 18 month jail sentence

By Zondiwe Mbewe

UPND Kanyama Ward 10 Councillor Brighton Bilumba has appealed against his one year six months sentenced slapped on him by Magistrate Felix Kaoma on Monday for theft involving K53,600. And Bilumba has asked the Lusaka Magistrates' Court to grant him bail pending his appeal in the Lusaka High Court. Magistrate Kaoma convicted and sentenced Bilumba to 18 months' imprisonment with hard labour for stealing the said money from the Lusaka City Council (LCC). Bilumba was facing one count of theft by servant contrary to section 272 and 277 of the penal code chapter 87 of the laws of Zambia and had pleaded not guilty in April last year. Particulars of the offence were that Bilumba, 39, between December, 2017, and January, 2018, in Lusaka, being a person employed by the local government as a civic leader stole K53,600 cash, the property of the Government of the Republic of Zambia. In his ground of appeal, Bilumba stated that this conviction was unsafe and against the weight and totality of evidence. Arising from this, he has asked the Lusaka Magistrates' Court to grant him bail, pending his appeal in the

Lusaka High Court, saying his appeal has a higher chance of success. In an affidavit in support of summons for bail pending appeal filed in Lusaka Magistrates' Court criminal registry, Monday, Bilumba claimed that this appeal would not be prejudicial in any way to the State if the court granted him bail. He added that if the High Court was to uphold the sentence, he would serve the sentence imposed on him by the High Court. Bilumba observed that the State would not be able to compensate him for serving the sentence imposed on him if the High Court was to allow the appeal. He also argued that he was not a flight risk because his family resides in Lusaka, adding that he was ready to meet the bail conditions that the Court may impose. "I am ready to furnish sureties to the satisfaction of the Court and I believe that this Court can grant me bail pending appeal with reasonable conditions seeing the circumstances of the case that no loss to government was occasioned for which I can fail to attend court. I reasonably believe that my appeal has higher prospects of success and considering the time that appeals take to dispose," stated Bilumba. The matter will come up on February 15, 2019, for hearing of the bail pending appeal.



L-r: CSO Director Goodson Sinyenga, National Development Planning permanent secretary Chola Chabala and Bank of Zambia deputy governor Dr Bwalya Ng'andu at the dissemination meeting of the Zambia strategic plan for agricultural and rural statistics dissemination at Pamodzi Hotel in Lusaka on February 13, 2019 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Bushemi Clinic drags HPCZ to court over forced closure

By Zondiwe Mbewe

Bushemi Clinic has dragged the Health Professionals Council of Zambia (HPCZ) to court for allegedly closing down the health facility and fining it K540,000 on grounds of dispensing expired drugs. In this matter, Bushemi Clinic (Hands of Divine Blessings Limited) has applied for judicial review in the Lusaka High Court seeking, among others reliefs, a declaration that HPCZ has no

power to fine the health facility and a declaration that the Council's closure of the clinic was procedurally improper. It is further seeking an order to compel HPCZ to reopen the health facility to the general public. In a notice of application for leave to apply for judicial review filed in the Lusaka High Court, Monday, Bushemi Clinic stated that on December 5, 2018, HPCZ inspectors entered its premises and conducted an impromptu inspection of the health facility. It stated that by a letter dated December 5, 2018, HPCZ ordered for the closure of the health facility, adding that it was also fined K540,000 to be paid within 14 days for breach of the provisions of the Health Professions Act. "By a letter dated December 5, 2018, the respondent ordered for the closure of the applicant's health facility anchored on the findings contained in the inspection report generated by the inspectors of the respondent and furnished to the applicant on January 11, 2019. The

inspection report generated by the respondent revealed that the applicant had been dispensing expired drugs and medical supplies to the general public in contravention to the act," read part of the court documents. Bushemi Clinic argued that only a court of competent jurisdiction could fine it after finding it guilty for offending the provisions of the Act and that the fine could only be paid after trial. It now wants the Court to quash the decision of the Council and make a declaration that the HPCZ had no power to fine it for breach of the Health Professionals Act No 24 of 2009, and that the alleged fine imposed on it was illegal. It also wants an order of mandamus to compel HPCZ to reopen the clinic to the general public and also pay damages for loss of business caused. Bushemi Clinic requested for a hearing of the application for judicial review before a judge pursuant to Rule 3 (3) of order 53 of the rules of the Supreme Court.

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The Closing date for receipt of applications is 22nd February 2019 at 17:00 hours. ActionAid is an Equal Opportunity Employer (EoE), however; qualified women are encouraged to apply.

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By Tenson Mkhala
National Development and Planning Minister Alexander Chiteme says there are still inherent weaknesses in the agricultural statistical information system in Zambia. And Chiteme has disclosed that Zambia still lacks contemporary data on the country's forestry sub-sector. Meanwhile, the African Development Bank (AfDB) says it places agriculture as one of its key priorities areas in meeting the challenge of inclusive African development in the country. Delivering a speech on behalf of Chiteme at the dissemination meeting of the Zambia Strategic Plan for Agriculture

Zambia lacks data on forestry sub-sector – Chiteme

and Rural Statistics Dissemination in Lusaka, Wednesday, Permanent Secretary Chola Chabala explained that despite the important role agriculture played in Zambia's rural economy, there are still inherent weaknesses in the agricultural statistical information systems being given out. "Agriculture is the back bone of Zambia's rural economy and this sector contributes on average at least 10 per cent to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which absorbs about 67 per cent of the labour force and supports livelihoods of more than 70 per cent of the population. Therefore, the strategic role of

agriculture and rural sector to the national economy cannot be underplayed. I should admit that there have been weaknesses in the agricultural statistical information system despite the important role agriculture plays in the rural economy of this nation," Chiteme noted. He said the Strategic Plan for agriculture and rural statistics for Zambia would provide the country with an opportunity to improve statistics for food security, sustainable agriculture and rural development. And Chiteme said that although basic statistics on crops, livestock and fisheries production are available, contemporary

statistics on the forestry subsector remained a major challenge in Zambia. "Forestry statistics are especially important given the impact of climate change on our (African) continent and the role that forestry development can play in mitigating this. Let me also state here that, although basic statistics on crops, livestock and fisheries production are available, availability of statistics on forestry is a major challenge in our country," Chiteme said. Meanwhile, AfDB senior private investment officer Mdaniso Sakala said the bank placed agriculture as one of its key priorities areas in meeting the

challenge of inclusive African development in the country. "Agriculture plays a central and strategic role in the development of the country as it is the key to economic growth, increased income, improved living standards, eradication of poverty and improved food and nutrition security. As the bank, we have formulated the Feed Africa Strategy in addressing issues of agriculture as one of its key priorities areas in meeting the challenge of inclusive African development in the country. These include: Light Up and Power Africa; Industrialized Africa; Integrating Africa and Improving the quality of



life of the people of Africa," said Sakala. The Strategic Plan launch for agriculture and rural statistics is aimed at improving the quality and availability of agricultural statistics in the country.

We will send Lungu, Kampyongo to ICC for crimes against Humanity - UPND

By Thomas Mulenga
UPND deputy secretary general Patrick Mucheleka says his party's victory in Tuesday's Sesheke parliamentary by-election shows that people are ready for change despite the hostile political environment created by the ruling party.

In an interview, Wednesday, Mucheleka also warned that President Edgar Lungu and Home Affairs Minister Stephen Kampyongo would be extradited to the International Criminal Court (ICC) for the crimes committed by the police in Sesheke once the UPND formed government.

"The people of Sesheke have spoken loud and clear and they have demonstrated that when it comes to the will of the people, no amount of intimidation, no amount of gun firing, teargassing can stop the will of the people! The people of Sesheke did not fear the guns that President Lungu

and Kampyongo imported into Sesheke as a means of intimidating them and creating fear so that a few PF cohorts could go and cast a vote for them because even in Sesheke, there are a few individuals who eat with PF and those are the few who voted for them! But the reasonable majority of people of Sesheke put fear aside and voted for the UPND," Mucheleka said. "The people of Sesheke have demonstrated that when time comes, they cannot fear guns or any form of intimidation, and sooner than later that will spread out to the rest of the country. People are ready for change, people are saying 'enough is enough!' These are fellows in PF, ministers who are looting, robbing the people of Zambia, daylight robbery! The people of Chitotela, and he is not the only one, it starts from the highest. And this is why they are so desperate and ready to kill! But as they endanger other peoples' lives, they must know that their own lives will also be in danger because people will not sit back and allow Lungu to think that he will always use the police to cause mayhem." And Mucheleka warned that President Lungu and Kampyongo would be extradited to the ICC for crimes against humanity once the UPND forms government. "In Africa, we have examples of dictators who have ended up very badly, even Lungu's godfather Robert Mugabe himself,

next door in Zimbabwe, was it not General Chiwenga himself who turned against Mugabe? People are not happy, the police are not happy, people in the (civil) service are not happy. Yes, he may have (Inspector-General Kakoma) Kanganja, but the body language of the police as shown yesterday, must tell you something. Those same police officers will turn against Lungu, against Kampyongo and we shall use the same police officers at the right time to arrest Lungu and Kampyongo for crimes against humanity! These are people who are likely to end up at the International Criminal Court in the Hague for crimes against humanity because they committed crimes against humanity. They may get away with it now, but time will come for them to be held accountable for these atrocities. The good part is that people are ready to defend themselves, people are ready to defend democracy as the case was in Sesheke," Mucheleka said. "Wherever they go, they instil fear through the use of violence. They carried thugs from Intercity (Bus Terminus), Kulima Tower and other places in Lusaka to go and cause violence in Sesheke; you saw what they were doing and the police reacted, you saw how they were butchered! I want to ask President Lungu and Kampyongo, let them, for once, read a book by George Orwell called 'Animal Farm,' which talks about how a particular pig

trained dogs and used them to cause violence on other animals. What happened later on was that the same dogs later on turned against the pig that trained them to be inflicting pain on other animals! It is a clear message on President Lungu and Kampyongo: those PF thugs they are sending to attack innocent people, tomorrow will turn against them! We have seen that before. You saw the police reaction on PF thugs, it was not a good sign, Lungu and Kampyongo must worry." And Mucheleka insisted that Kampyongo was ignorant to suggest that the UPND could not hold rallies where President Lungu was also campaigning in Sesheke, arguing that there is no such a law in the Republican Constitution. "You saw the PF thugs with offensive weapons and how they caused mayhem during the campaigns because they are so dull and shallow, they don't even know the law! Listen, what a Minister of Home Affairs was saying that 'the law will visit you,' because for him, when President Lungu is in Sesheke for campaigns, you don't have to be there as opposition political parties, which law says that? And that was coming from a Minister of Home Affairs? What a shame! How can you have a Minister of Home Affairs who has no iota of even any form of common sense or little intelligence to understand the Constitution? It's such a shame to have such people, thugs masquerading as leaders," said Mucheleka.

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South Africa deports 25 Zambians

About 25 Zambians have been deported from South Africa back to the country for various immigration offences. And Zambia's High Commissioner to South Africa Emmanuel Mwamba has called on Zambians travelling to South Africa to follow the right procedure to avoid inconveniences. According to a statement issued by the First Secretary for Press and Public Relations at the Zambian High Commission in South Africa Naomi Nyawali, Wednesday, the 25 were deported back to Zambia following a round-up operation conducted by South Africa's Ministry of Home Affairs. "The 25 were deported back to Zambia following a round-up operation, which was conducted by that country's Ministry of Home Affairs and were detained at Lindela Holding facilities in Krugersdorp West, Gauteng Province," Nyawali disclosed. She stated that the deported Zambians were found with offences like overstaying in South Africa, others had no immigration permits that allowed them to stay or work in South Africa, while others had finished serving their jail terms for criminal offences. She added that 14 people had since been repatriated to Zambia, whilst 11 were given a grace period for self-repatriation. "According to the information made available to the Zambia High Commission in Pretoria, the deported Zambians were found with offences of overstaying in that country. Others were found with no immigration permits that allow them to stay or work in South Africa, while others had finished serving their jail terms for criminal offences. 14 people have since been repatriated to Zambia by the South African government, whilst 11 were given a grace period for self-repatriation," Nyawali stated. "South African authorities observed that Zambia was among the countries with the lowest number of her nationals that had offended immigration laws as compared to other countries." And High Commissioner Mwamba appealed to Zambians travelling to South Africa to follow the right procedure when travelling to avoid being inconvenienced. He further said the Mission issued 28 gratis travel documents to some Zambians that needed help from the High Commission. Mwamba added that the Mission issued about 983 travel documents in 2018 to Zambian nationals that lost their passports or had overstayed. He noted that the Mission was closely monitoring the welfare of its citizens to ensure that they do not come into conflict with that country's laws.



Local Government Minister Vincent Mwale addressing the press as Higher Education Minister Nkandu Luo listens in Lusaka on February 13, 2019 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Hippo culling exercise to start in May - Govt

By Mirriam Chabala
Ministry of Tourism Permanent Secretary Rev Howard Sikwela has announced that the hippo culling exercise in the Luangwa Valley of Eastern Province will commence in May at the start of the hunting season. Tourism and Arts Public Relations Officer Sakabilo Kalembe said in a statement that Rev Sikwela disclosed this, Wednesday, when he met representatives from various Community Resource Boards (CRBs) across the country. Sakabilo stated that Rev Sikwela informed the meeting that the hippo culling exercise would be preceded by sensitization of the communities and stakeholders involved in the process in order for all to appreciate the benefits of the massive undertaking. Rev Sikwela said those in Eastern Province, where the activity would be conducted from, shall be given an opportunity to contribute and ask questions where they were not sure concerning the culling activity. The PS expressed happiness that a lot of people already had an appreciation of the background and benefits of the culling activity. Earlier in Rev Sikwela's meeting, National CRBs association coordinator Isaac Banda wondered if the hunting story was a rumour or a confirmed position by the Ministry. Banda said he was concerned that local communities in areas where the culling activity would take place had not been fully engaged to appreciate the benefits of such an undertaking. He said the communities were equal partners with government in the conservation process and hence the need to constantly be kept in the know of what was happening in their surroundings. Hippo culling in the Luangwa Valley is a measure necessitated to keep in check the over-population of the wild animals. The function is usually sanctioned by the Zambian Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) as a 'wildlife management tool' to also prevent any possible spread of anthrax among wild animals along a 250Km stretch of riverine forest between Chikwa in North Luangwa and Lusangazi in South Luangwa. But the US Ambassador to Zambia Daniel Foote has objected to the move, arguing that there was no scientific research to prove that the animals were overpopulated and causing harm to humans in the valley.

DEC arrests former ZAF commander, Chimese for theft

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
The Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) has arrested former Zambia Air Force (ZAF) Commander Lt General Eric Chimese for various criminal offences and has since ceased his properties suspected to be proceeds of crime. DEC spokesperson Theresa Katongo told journalists at a media briefing in Lusaka, Wednesday, that Chimese had been arrested, jointly-charged with Chita Lodge director James Chungu (also known as Jimmy Fingers) for concealing property believed to be proceeds of crime, wilfully giving false information, abuse of authority and possession of property reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime. "The Drug Enforcement Commission has arrested former Zambia Air Force commander Lieutenant General Eric Mwaba Chimese for various criminal activities. Eric Mwaba Chimese, 50, a retired Zambia Air Force commander residing at Plot No. F/ 4301/3/3 Baobab area in Lusaka has been arrested and jointly-charged with James Chungu, 51, a director at Chita Lodge Lodges Limited for concealing of property, wilful giving of false information, abuse of authority of office and possession of property reasonably suspected to be proceeds of crime," Katongo revealed. "In the first count, Lt Gen Eric Chimese (Rtd) on dates



One of the properties seized by DEC, believed to be proceeds of crime by Chimese

unknown but between 1st January, 2018, and 31st January, 2019, jointly and whilst acting together with James Chungu and other persons unknown, did conceal a portion of a farm in Ibex on which nine fully-furnished flats, an up-stair house, a gym, visitors quarters and a semi-detached servants' quarters have been constructed purporting to show that the said properties belong to Chita Lodges Limited, a company where James Chungu is a director, when in fact the properties in question are owned and were constructed by Lt General Chimese." The former ZAF commander is also accused of wilfully giving false information to authorised officers by stating that the said properties belonged to Chita Lodges when in fact not. Katongo also disclosed that Chimese had been charged for abuse of authority of office by directing ZAF employees to do construction works at his properties. "In count two, James Chungu on 31st January, 2019, did wilfully give false information to authorised officers by stating that the said properties where for Chita Lodges Limited when in fact not. In count three, Lt Gen Eric Chimese (Rtd.) abused his authority of office in his capacity as Zambia Air Force commander by directing the deployment of some Zambia Air Force employees to do construction works at his properties. In count four, Lt Gen. Chimese (Rtd.) did possess properties suspected to be proceeds of crime contrary to section 71 (1) of the Forfeiture of Proceeds of Crime Act. The Commission has since seized properties, which include 13 fully-furnished houses, one semi-detached house and a gym all within Lusaka. The accused persons are on police bond and will appear in court soon," said Katongo.



GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The NDC is aware of the fact that while sexism, sexual harassment and Gender based violence is pervasive in our society; it is women and children who suffer the most from these vices. Solutions for dealing with gender based violence have been less effective due to the lack of understanding of the root causes for the vulnerability of women. NDC believes that gender-based violence is made worse by the deplorable overall conditions of our people; as such, we believe that **WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IS EMPOWERMENT FOR ALL**. It is paramount that for gender equality to be achieved, women empowerment must be paramount. The NDC government shall do the following;

- Endeavour to have 50% women representation in areas encompassing; economic empowerment, political participation, management and leadership spheres
- We shall introduce compulsory gender education and training for all citizens in areas such as schools, work, church, legislature, executive and civil society.
- Introduce and establish specialised law enforcement units in all police precincts to deal with gender based violence and educate the police on gender justice.
- The NDC shall engage all tradition leaders and faith based leaders to communally find ways of combating Gender based violence.
- The NDC government shall establish an inspectorate in the ministry of Labour to monitor report and enforce gender equality



- in the workplace with heavy penalties on companies, firms and institutions that harbour and tolerate gender based violence in their work places and tolerate repeated offenders.
- The NDC Government shall mandate all institutions to establish whistle-blowing mechanisms for reporting a Sexual harassment, and gender-based violence in the workplaces.
- The NDC government shall recognise works performed by women maids and as house wives; a means of formal labour which contributes to the national economy, GDP and the formal tax system.
- We shall ensure that women cooperatives are formed and shall accesses loans from the agricultural and development bank in the conversion of agricultural produce to finished products.
- We shall facilitate the development of agro processing industries in all the districts for purposes of value addition and job creation, especially for the youth and women.
- We shall introduce a women Aquaculture and Fisheries Fund for fish production for small and medium scale sector. This shall multiply fish production from aquaculture ; especially by small and medium business hence creating employment and reducing poverty amongst the women folk.
- As NDC we shall motivate the women SMEs and cooperatives sector and focus on developing them into large companies that can create jobs and effectively participate in stock exchange markets.
- Implementing these measures to the later shall reduce gender base violence and empower women.

By Mirriam Chabala
The Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) has asked President Edgar Lungu to fire Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela, saying keeping the minster in office while facing corruption charges defeats morality, integrity and the fight against corruption. But LAZ has also observed that there is no law in Zambia that makes it mandatory for the President to fire ministers who are arrested or charged with corruption. Responding to a News Diggers press query, the Council of the Law Association of Zambia, LAZ argued that having Chitotela continue serving as minister would make it almost impossible for the prosecution to take a course of fair justice. LAZ explained that the proposal to have Chitotela suspended or dismissed was not meant to punish him but to ensure that the investigations and prosecution

Fire Chitotela, LAZ tells Lungu

proceeded without interference. “It is our considered view that the rule of law and the national values and principles of good governance and integrity in the discharge of public functions enshrined in our constitution are not and cannot be enhanced by letting a minister to continue serving when he is subject of prosecution. It is for this reason that a number of provisions applicable to public officers require an officer subject of prosecution to be placed on suspension. The purpose of the suspension is not to discipline or impose a penalty on the accused but to ensure sound and proper administration, good governance and above all public interest,” stated the Council.” “It is also to ensure that the investigations and prosecution proceed unhindered and without actual or perceived interference. Further, dismissing a sitting minister facing prosecution does not offend the constitutionally recognized right of presumption of innocence. It is therefore the position of LAZ that the President should indeed consider relieving honourable Chitotela of his duties as not doing so does not support the fight against corruption, which the President has on numerous occasions publicly supported.” LAZ, however said the President was not mandated by law to fire Chitotela. “Following the arrest and charging of Hon Chitotela, certain sections of society called for the dismissal of the minister by the President. However, the President refused to dismiss the minister and in aid of his decision cited Article 18 of the Republican constitution, which presumes an accused person innocent until proven guilty by the courts of law. As law Association of Zambia, we have followed this issue and surrounding debate with keen interest. In doing so, we have had occasion to peruse the constitution of Zambia as amended by Act No. 2 of 2016, chapter 1 of the Laws of Zambia; the Anti- Corruption Act, 2012, the Parliamentary and Ministerial Code of Conduct Act, Chapter 16 of the Laws of Zambia; and the Interpretation of the General Provisions Act, Chapter 2 of the Laws of Zambia. Given the framing of Article 116 of the Constitution, which among other things, deals with the appointment of ministers, we hold the view that the arrest and charging of a minister for any criminal offence does not cause a vacancy in the office of Minister,” the Council explained. “A Minister serves at the President’s pleasure. Under any circumstances, it is only the President who can remove a minister from office. However, the constitution also gives any minister the option to resign at any time.Our perusal of section 18 of the Parliamentary and Ministerial Code of Conduct Act also reveals that there is no provision which compels the President to dismiss a minister on account of being arrested or facing prosecution. However, the said section 18 further provides that nothing stops or limits the right of a minister to resign as Minister. However, given the spirit with which the constitution is couched, the mandate of the Anti-Corruption Commission,

the level of responsibility and power that a minister has, it is our considered view as LAZ that it is not appropriate for honourable Chitotela to continue serving as Minister whilst facing criminal charges and appearing in court pending the determination of the matter. We also hold the view that prosecution of a sitting minister in the courts of law cannot be effective. We therefore call upon honorable Chitotela to seriously reflect on his abilities to effectively and in good conscience run the affairs of his ministry at the same time defend himself in court. We firmly believe that under the current circumstances, the minister ought to resign from public service.” On 5th February, 2019, The Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) arrested and charged Chitotela with two counts of concealing property suspected to be proceeds of crime, contrary to Section 71 (1) of the Forfeiture of Proceeds of Crime Act, Number 19 of 2010.

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
Patriotic Front Secretary General Davies Mwila has written to the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ), complaining about the brutal attacks on his party members in Sesheke.

Mwila in his letter to ECZ charged that the UPND had consistently worked to implicate his party in violent acts in both local and international media with the sole purpose of challenging election results. “We wish to report a series of unwarranted and coordinated attacks against our Patriotic Front party members resident in different wards in Sesheke District. We have had more than 21 cases of assault reported at Sesheke police out of which, 11 dockets have been opened pending court hearing. An incident of arson to one of our command posts has also been reported. These incidences

PF complains to ECZ after brutal attacks in Sesheke

happened between 11th of January and 10th February 2019 in the following wards: Nakatindi, Maondo, Lusu East, and Mulimambango,” Mwila reported. He stated that the violence witnessed in Sesheke was a clear demonstration of the UPND’s unwillingness to resolve issues of community safety. “It should be noted that the violence being experienced in Sesheke is a clear demonstration of the unwillingness of the UPND to collectively resolve

issues pertaining to the safety of the community. The escalation in the incidents as we approached the polling day, forced us to ensure that a report be submitted to the ECZ that will provide the ECZ corroborated information that must be kept on record for reference. Equally the uncalled for behaviour of UPND leader of holding campaign meetings on the same day the Head of State is scheduled to hold one. Each party applied for dates they were going to hold

rallies and an agreement was made regarding the program. However, UPND leader acted to the contrary and held a rally in Maondo ward; this caused the clash between the two parties. Kindly be notified that a meeting on conflict Management was held on 25th January 2019 at the council chambers to resolve the issue of violence; a memorandum of understanding was drawn but UPND refused to sign and walked out of the meeting in the presence of ECZ local indunas

and the church,” Mwila further complained. And Mwila has charged that the UPND has consistently worked to implicate his party in violence acts in both local and international media. “We stand committed to participating in a free, fair and safe electoral process. The Electoral Commission of Zambia must ensure that the election is held within these parameters and that the will of the people is upheld and speaks on the final day. To the contrary,

UPND has consistently worked to implicate us in violence acts in local and international media with the sole purpose of challenging election results should we win. This has been their pattern since 2016 elections. We beg your indulgence to closely examine material and evidence around the Sesheke Constituency by-election campaigns and see the manipulation of information and media used by the UPND to discredit the elections,” stated Mwila.

Breeze FM condemns PF’s continued harassment of journalists

By Geoffrey Zulu
Breeze FM station manager Samuel Ndhlovu has condemned the continued harassment of journalists by the ruling Patriotic Front Party cadres. And People’s Alliance for Change (PAC) party president Andyford Banda says the beating of the Breeze FM

reporter should be blamed on Mwila’s hate for private media journalists. Reacting to a physical altercation where Breeze FM journalist Grace Lungu was beaten up by PF cadres in Lundazi District, Tuesday morning, Ndhlovu condemned the violent acts on their member of staff.

“Yes, I can confirm that our reporter Grace Lungu, who was assigned to cover the Mkomba Ward by-election, has been beaten by PF cadres in Lundazi. The PF cadres suspected that she was a UPND supporter. They got her belongings and money from the hand bag and shared,” Ndhlovu told News Diggers!

in an interview, Tuesday. He, however, explained that Lungu was rushed to the hospital for treatment and that she was feeling much better. And in a separate interview, Tuesday, Banda condemned the beating and robbing of Lungu by the PF cadres in Mkomba Ward in Lundazi as she was assigned to cover the

ward by-election, Tuesday. “I think we just need to have an honest group of leaders; people who understand the actual principles of life to say that you cannot live in a society where you have to agree with everyone. And you see, this attack that has happened on your colleague in the media fraternity, it won’t be wrong for anyone to marry it to what PF secretary general did when he chased Prime TV journalists. That message, from the CEO of the PF; it entails that PF cadres can be brutal, they can be ruthless, they can be hostile to journalists, that what that message was saying. So what has happened in Lundazi to our colleague is not a surprise, and should be squarely blamed on Davies Mwila!” Banda said. He also said President Edgar Lungu and his government must be worried about their legacies when they leave office in 2021 following a series of corrupt activities since occupying office in 2015. “President Lungu and PF must worry about their legacies after they leave office because there are a lot of things that have happened in the last

two years and half after the elections in 2016, even before the elections, the issues of fire tenders is something that happened before the 2016 (general) elections. All these issues should worry them because they (PF) should know that no one will be in office permanently,” Banda said, urging the PF government to start making amends now. He said that it was shocking to see Housing and Infrastructure Minister Ronald Chitotela facing serious corruption allegations, but still use an official government vehicle with impunity. “There’s the issue of Honourable Chitotela, who has been investigated for corruption, but why is he driving a vehicle with a flag? Why is he representing us as a country? All these things are not normal! It is like as a country also; we have come to accept the abnormal to be the normal! All these things, I’m telling you, one day, someone will ask questions,” Banda said. Meanwhile, commenting on the reported 1,000 job opportunities in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), for drivers and maids as announced by Finance Minister Margaret Mwanakatwe, Sunday, Banda urged the government to instead create sustainable local job opportunities to empower Zambians. “I think there are a lot of ways of empowering your own people whether as block-makers, bus drivers, or as maids. I mean you can empower maids to own a cleaning company and give them opportunities to clean government offices, banks and corporate offices through partnerships. Bus drivers can also be given an opportunity to own their own buses; they cash out to the owners of the buses, why can’t they cash to the bank? These are some the things that need restructuring and implementing,” observed Banda.



Delegates at the dissemination meeting of the Zambia strategic plan for agricultural and rural statistics dissemination at Pamodzi Hotel in Lusaka on February 13, 2019 - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

Israeli tours company ponders move to start flying tourists directly to Zambia

By Thomas Mulenga
An Israeli travel and tours management company has expressed interest to start charter flights to bring tourists directly to Zambia from Israel. In a statement, Ministry of Tourism and Arts public relations officer Sakabilo Kalembwe stated that the company expressed interest when Tourism and Arts Minister Dr Charles Banda met the firm’s chief executive officer Kramer Ephraim in Israel. “Israeli big destination management company, Eshet, has expressed interest to commence

charter flights to bring Israeli tourists directly to Zambia and Zambians to Israel for pilgrimage. Speaking during a meeting with Zambian Minister of Tourism and Arts Charles Banda in Tel Aviv, company president and chief executive officer Mr Kramer Ephraim of Eshet Tours is conducting charter flights to various destinations in Africa and the world, as well as sending groups on regular flights,” read the statement released, Tuesday. “He said Eshet would start sending tourism groups on regular commercial flights to Zambia

directly as at the moment their clients travel to Zambia via South Africa and Zimbabwe then connect to Livingstone. And the Minister said the deal would benefit both parties as Zambia has a lot to offer as a tourism destination of choice such as safari, diverse waterfalls and adventure tourism.” Kalembwe stated that the Tourism Minister told Ephraim that Zambia persistently faced a challenge of air connectivity for more countries to visit and appreciate the country’s tourism. “Dr Banda said the challenge has been opening up more connectivity

to Zambia and that is the reason the Ministry is discussing with seasoned and established tour companies like Eshet Tours to open up the sector. He also invited Eshet Tours to the Zambia Travel Expo scheduled to take place in April, 2019, and the Zambia Tourism Agency would facilitate local logistics for media and travel agents that would attend the ZATEX under Eshet Tours in order to appreciate the diverse nature of Zambia’s tourism offering. Israel records about 7 million annual travels abroad out about 8.7 million people,” read the statement.

The arrest of Housing and Infrastructure Development Minister Ronald Chitotela and the subsequent refusal by President Edgar Lungu to suspend the Cabinet Minister has, in many ways, exonerated the Anti-Corruption Commission – not completely though, but well enough.

Anyone, including ourselves, who have been bitter with the reluctant and cowardly manner in which the Anti-Corruption Commission has been approaching high profile cases of corruption, can now see what the institution goes through. Yes, we must be angry at the fact that corruption is being fertilized instead of being weeded out, but we must direct our anger to the deserving villain.

The Anti-Corruption Commission arrested this minister, who is also Pambashe member of parliament, and charged him with two counts of concealing property believed to be proceeds of crime. According to the Anti-Corruption Act, such a public officer must be suspended in order for fair justice to be achieved. But President Lungu is, using sugar-coated words, telling the investigative wing to go to hell and leave his ‘innocent’ minister alone.

“They have to prove before the courts of law and I hope they give him a chance to prove himself. I will even fund them to do their operations, but those who are calling for the removal of Honourable Chitotela now, I say no, give me space to breathe

Chitotela’s protection has put the lives of ACC investigators in danger

News

Diggers!

Ear to the ground

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and bring your evidence,” President Lungu said.

“So, let us not politicize the fight against corruption. There is a perception that by doing that they are weakening Lungu, they are not weakening me, they are just killing the systems we have set up to fight corruption genuinely.”

We wonder how Honourable Chitotela is feeling right now. He must be willing to lick President Lungu’s feet, or even drink his bathwater! When a Head of State has your back in that blatant manner, surely you can be assured to be the most untouchable man in government.

Meanwhile, we don’t even understand why the President would like to, all of a sudden, fund the Anti-Corruption Commission officers from his pocket

to ‘investigate’ this arrested minister. Firstly, when the ACC makes an arrest, it means they have already concluded their investigations and they are sure, beyond doubt, that a crime was committed. And secondly, one would think the ACC already has funding from the Treasury for such operations. Or maybe the Great Leader of this Great Country was referring to a special kind of ‘Chitotela’ funding for the officers to shut up. Who knows?

Anyway, whatever the case, this development has exposed the Republican President and restored some level of dignity to the Anti-Corruption Commission. We are just concerned that while protecting one minister, President Lungu has put the lives of ACC investigators in great

danger.

Those officers who arrested the minister must be feeling dead scared, and they have a reason to be afraid because, indeed, anytime soon after the shame dies down, the wounded minister will go for them! We believe that after being cleared by the same Head of State to go ahead and arrest the minister, the ACC officers thought they were well-protected by the State. But now, they have realised that they are on their own. It was just a trap and they fell into it. One way or another, they will definitely be made to pay individually, for humiliating, not only a Cabinet Minister, but a friend of the President.

Those with experience at the Anti-Corruption Commission know very well not to show their teeth

in such cases because you can easily be bruised. It is no wonder a very junior public relations officer announced the arrest of the Minister when the institution has two senior PR managers. They may have had genuine excuses for not being available to announce this “grand arrest” to the cameras, but we are speculating from experience because we know what one of these senior PR managers was subjected to when they merely discussed a corruption matter involving a State House official.

We find it very unfair that apart from making the work of these ACC investigators impossible to do, they have to be subjected to this kind of risk. People may think this is just a small matter, but it is not. When

corruption has been institutionalized, like the case is in Zambia, there is so much at stake. There is a corruption syndicate in this government, which links everyone up the ladder to the President himself. So, anyone who dares to shake it down, gets in direct firing range with the beneficiaries!

In our view, what President Lungu has done in this case is a direct assault on the investigative wing. By accusing the officers there of trying to undermine his government through corruption reports involving his ministers, the President has declared the ACC an enemy of the State.

We are not surprised that Mr Kennedy Kamba, who by the way is President Lungu’s preferred candidate for the position of Lusaka Province PF chairman, can now accuse the ACC of conniving with the opposition to scandalize the Head of State’s most influential ministers. This is not Kennedy Kamba’s own opinion; it is a common belief around those who surround the President.

We would like to prod Zambians to sympathise with the Anti-Corruption Commission investigators and its leadership. If there is any proof that was needed that they are operating under impossible circumstances, it cannot be better than this scandal involving Mr Chitotela and his President. They have redeemed the ACC and exposed the corruption syndicate to which they belong. Shame!

Crossword puzzle 293

Don't let yesterday

Solutions to puzzle 292

1		2		3		4		5
		6						
7	8					9	10	
				11		12		
13						14		
				15	16			
17		18				19		20
		21						
22								23

take too much of today - Will Rogers

Across

1. "___ a Wonderful Life"

4. Duo

6. Trophy or medal

7. Possibly will

9. Nothing

11. Snake-like fish

13. Employs

14. Kind of sax

15. Young seal

17. Single number

19. Indefinitely long time

21. Presidential nickname

22. Coffee alternative

23. Bigg__ Loser

Down

1. "Big Blue" high tech co.

2. Watch covertly

3. Fragrant wood

4. Four and six

5. Hedwig, e.g.

8. Fiery felony

10. Preface

11. Extra Sensory Perception

12. Legs, when sitting

16. Bring to ruin

17. Not home

18. Greek H

19. See with it

20. Pecan or almond

1	D	I	A	L		3	W	O	R	M
	O		I					N		A
6	H	A	L	F		9	S	E	A	T
				11						
12	T	R	I	O		13	I	M	P	S
				14						
15	O	W	E	D		17	L	I	E	D
	A		A					C		U
20	T	O	R	N		21	H	E	R	B

Reader's feedback

Lusambo & his threats to crush HH

Editor,
"Can someone shut this cadre up! Don't we have enough threats of bad economics and corruption, coupled with mismanagement to listen to this? The post of Lusaka Province Minister should be preserved for the Lusaka MPs!" - Mthoniswa Banda

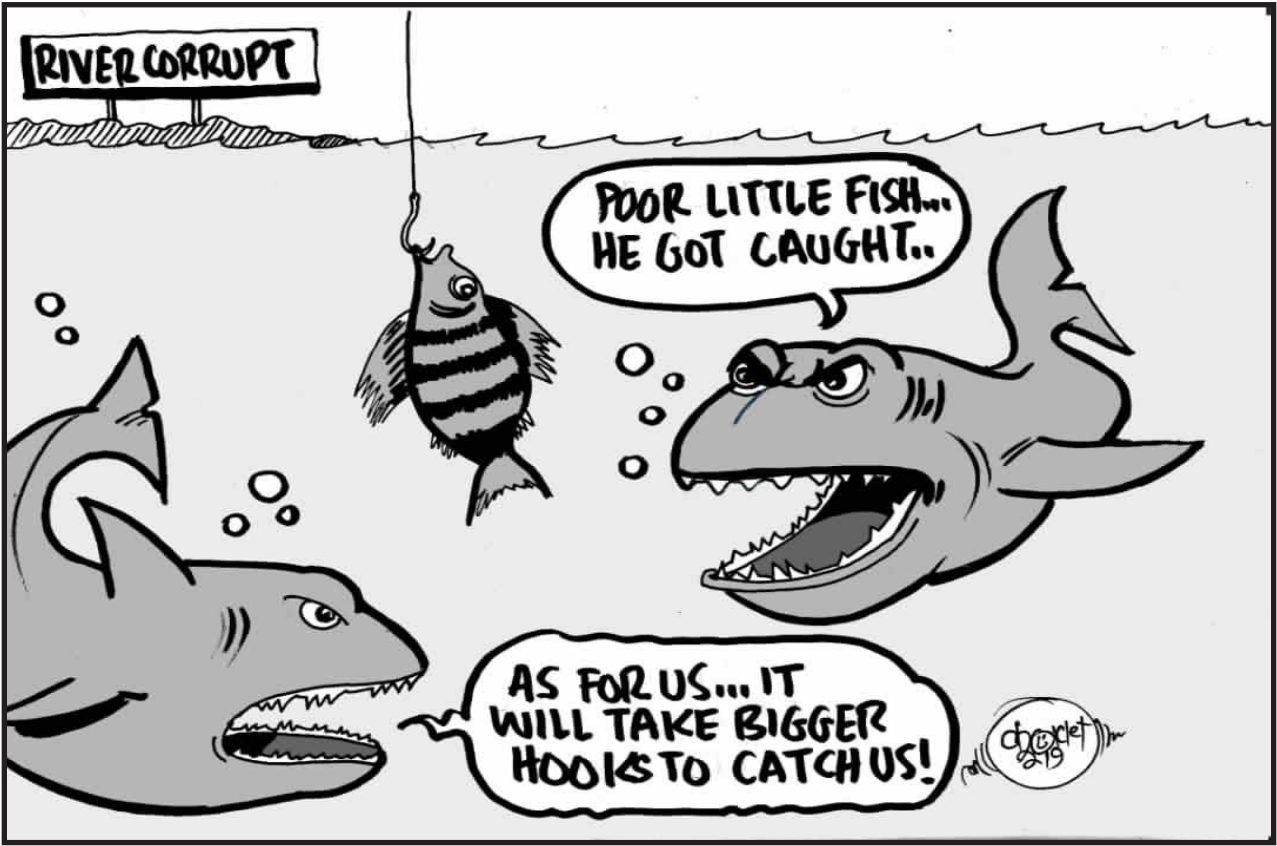
"Chinese money in Africa is making people big-headed!" - Sylvester Chongo

"PF has a lot of fools, but this one stands out to be amongst the most foolish fools Zambia has ever witnessed in politics!" - Mainde D Keembe

"Known criminals who have brought the level of thinking in Zambia to its lowest! People power, our power, will crush you, too! Watch the space." - Matakala Musialela

"You are the people who've got no brains! How do you crush someone

who is way, far ahead of you?? He commands such a multitude when you are being dragged into positions corruptly...sucker!" - Briven Hakapali
"Zambian politics is just threatening individuals with violence and hate as opposed to threatening with ideas on real governance." - Mcfarlane Munyanga
"Just continue stealing, iwe! And you are too small for over 2 million UPND supporters across the country!" - MP Frank



'There's need to continue voicing out over Luo's scrapping of meal allowances!'

Editor,
"Let's continue speaking for the voiceless! We can't lose our objectivity based on the fact that we are friends

of the system. Prof Nkandu Luo's decision-making of late is questionable." - Baldwin Progress Chinyama

"My suggestion is let parents throughout Zambia demonstrate against this pronouncement!" - Joseph Kashiwa

"Ba Nkandu Luo, madam, whatever prompted you to cut the meal allowance used you to promote evil. Dr Kaunda gave you free meal allowance, free education, but you have forgotten the promises you and your party gave the people. You have departed from that and deceived us... posterity is the best judge!" - Herbert ES

"Whatever the result of this shameful decision, Nkandu Luo should refund all the allowances she got as a student from her days." - Gregory Mshoka

"Let us do away with the by-elections; the ones induced by the incumbents' crossing overs to the other political parties 'except' in the case of the demise of the incumbent. That would save money for meal allowances and tuition loans for the students." - Grace Shankaya

Dr Sishuwa on the real reasons why Lungu won't fire Chitotela

Editor,
"Well explained! I read the article and it's clear, and if at all the writer summarized it, he could have left very important information." - Paul Mushota
"Sishuwa's articles are always factual and objective." - Kekamu Kekamu
"Another classical analysis. Keep it up." - Manfred Kumwenda
"Great points, and to me, the last possibility sounds more likely." - Stephen K. Manda
"Chitotela is being used by the President, that's why he created that irrelevant Ministry because you can't have a Ministry of Works and Supply and Ministry of Infrastructure when the roads that were made by Chinese last year are being washed away by rains!" - Izu Mwape

PF, UPND cadres' clash at Sesheke Police station

Dear Editor,
"Something is not adding up! Two cadres against six and six cadres beaten by who since the two were apprehended! I think it's the police who beat them and this statement is coined to frame the two. Then, since morning the whole police still don't know what happened at guest house?" - Emelda Litana
"One can never know when the police are telling the truth!" - Mukonka Mukonka
"Shame to you all police officers! The day when you lose a family member is when you are going to act diligently. We saw this cadre assaulting his colleague, but you did nothing!" - Chris Banda

"There's a leadership failure in Zambia!" - Chivunga Zebron

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.

Zimbabwe’s reserve bank and the country’s information ministry have been forced to deny rumours that a new national currency is being introduced. “This has no base in fact or reality,” the information ministry said in a tweet, adding, “this needs to be dismissed with the contempt it deserves.” Govt has noted with concern falsehoods coming from some political quarters claiming that Zimbabwe will issue new currency next week. This needs to be dismissed with the contempt it deserves. This has no base in fact or reality. It’s unfounded Fake News. “The country shall continue to use the multi-currency system,” the Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe rubbishes ‘new currency’ rumours

confirmed. The Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe would like to urge members of the public to dismiss, with utmost contempt, claims being circulated on social media regarding the introduction of a new Zimbabwe currency. The country shall continue to use the multi-currency system. ReportReport this social embed, make a complaint Bond notes, which can only be traded in Zimbabwe, were introduced in 2016. They were brought in because of a shortage of US dollars and South African rand - the main currencies in daily use after rampant inflation killed off the old Zimbabwean dollar in 2009. But inflation means that bond

notes are losing their value - and many people prefer to US dollars or EcoCash, a mobile phone payment system. Yesterday, PROGRESSIVE Teachers’ Union of Zimbabwe (PTUZ) has petitioned the High Court seeking an order to reverse last month’s 150% fuel price hike made by President Emmerson Mnangagwa, arguing that the move was illegal and unconstitutional. PTUZ filed the urgent chamber application alongside its secretary-general Raymond Majongwe, who filed in his personal capacity, while Mnangagwa, Finance minister Mthuli Ncube, Energy minister Joram Gumbo and the Zimbabwe Energy Regulatory Authority were cited as co-

respondents. The move to petition the court followed Mnangagwa’s announcement of new fuel prices on January 12 2019, making the commodity the most expensive in the world. “This is an application seeking a provisional order and then a final order to set aside all recently ordered fuel price rises on the grounds of being patently illegal and also unconstitutional and of irreparable harm to us and others,” Majongwe said in his founding affidavit. In his proclamation, Mnangagwa pegged the price of petrol at \$3,36 from \$1,32 and diesel from \$1,24 to \$3,11. The fuel increase however, led to violent protests, which resulted in extensive damage to

property and looting. A brutal military crackdown, which ensued, resulted in the death of 17 people, torture and arrest of thousands. “These increases made our fuel the most expensive in the world by a long way overnight, as can easily be confirmed from globalpetrolprices.com. We later found that the Presidential statement on fuel prices was not binding in law, but merely set as a policy. We have also found out that for all law-abiding citizens our fuel prices before the increases were already higher than the fuel prices for all of our neighbours,” Majongwe said. “We also later found out that two Statutory Instruments (SI) were published in an extraordinary Government Gazette on the same day as the President’s statement. The two SIs were apparently meant to give legal effect to the President’s Press announcement, with the Minister of Finance increasing duty on petroleum products, while the Minister of Energy prescribed new pricing formulae for these.”**BBC**

Valentine’s Day behind the romantic date

Valentine’s Day is here, with heart-adorned cards, bumper boxes of chocolate, bouquets of red roses and teddy bears wearing T-shirts emblazoned with cutesy messages starting to appear in shops across the country. Now heavily commercialised and laden with expectation, the annual event was once a day where people earnestly showed their love and affection for another person. The oldest surviving Valentine’s poem was written by a prison-entrapped, pining lover: Charles, Duke of Orleans wrote it for his wife

in 1415, confined in the Tower of London after being captured at the Battle of Agincourt. However Valentine’s Day was celebrated for centuries before that. From who the saint was to the best romantic gift ideas, here is everything you need to know about Valentine’s Day. Valentine’s Day doesn’t have to mean buying out-of-season strawberries or boring boxes of chocolates - nowadays, there are more creative food gifts to show the love. From choux-art to cookery classes, here is how to woo the ravenous and romantic in style. **Daily News**



Katy Perry ‘saddened’ by blackface claims about her shoe range

Katy Perry has removed two items from her shoe range after complaints that one of the designs was racist. Katy says she is “saddened” that her design - blue eyes and red lips on black leather - was compared with “painful images” of blackface by critics online. The shoes have reportedly also been taken off shelves at US retailers. Katy says the shoes, The Rue and The Ora, were “envisioned as a nod to modern art and surrealism”. Blackface is a centuries-old practice rooted in depicting a negative stereotype of black



people in Europe and the US. White actors would paint their faces black and play

caricatures of black people. “I was saddened when it was brought to my attention that it was being compared to painful images reminiscent of blackface,” Katy says in a statement. “Our intention was never to inflict any pain. We have immediately removed them.” The shoes that offended some people were part of a Katy Perry Collection launched last summer which was sold in US stores such as Dillard’s and Walmart. They were also available in blue, gold, graphite, lead, nude, pink, red and silver, according to a statement by Global, the company Katy Perry is in partnership with. In the UK they’re available through Amazon, but neither The Rue or The Ora are on sale. Last week, Gucci was forced to pull a jumper from its new collection after similar accusations about blackface. Fashion designer Suril Patel thinks that fashion companies and houses are creating products “on purpose just to spark the controversy”. “More sensitive subjects are more likely to be shared wider,” the 25-year-old told the BBC’s Victoria Derbyshire Programme. “Off the back of that they’re going to get more traffic to their website and make more sales.” **BBC**

Lovers, comrades! Forbidden love in North Korea finds a way in Vietnam

It was 31 years after Pham Ngoc Canh, 69, took that first photo of Ri Yong Hui, before the two were finally allowed to get married in 2002 when North Korea took the rare step of allowing one of its citizens to marry a foreigner. “From the moment I saw him, I was so sad because I felt it would be a love that could never be realized,” said Ri, 70, speaking from the small Soviet-era apartment she and Canh share in the Vietnamese capital, Hanoi. Now enjoying freedoms in Vietnam that would be impossible in North Korea, Canh and Ri are hoping the upcoming summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Hanoi will help end hostilities with Pyongyang. “If you’re a North Korean, you want to see this resolved. But politics is complicated,” Ri said. “When people first heard Kim Jong Un decided to meet Trump, they expected reunification to happen soon. But that’s hard to realize in just one or two days. I hope things work out well.” Today one of Asia’s fastest growing economies and integrated into the international community, Vietnam has been touted as a model for isolated and impoverished North Korea to follow. Back in 1967, as Vietnam and the United States were locked in war, Canh was one

of 200 Vietnamese students sent to North Korea to gain the skills the state needed to rebuild itself once the war was over. Several years later, during a chemical engineering apprenticeship at a fertilizer factory on North Korea’s east coast, Canh spotted Ri working in a laboratory. “I thought to myself, ‘I must marry that girl,’” said Canh, who eventually plucked up the courage to approach Ri and ask her for her address. Ri obliged: Her friends had told her one of the “Viet Cong” working at the factory looked just like her, and she was curious. “As soon as I saw him, I knew it was him,” said Ri. “He looked so gorgeous.” “Until then, when I had seen so-called handsome guys I hadn’t felt anything, but when he opened the door, my heart just melted”. But there were challenges. Until this day in North Korea, and in Vietnam at the time, relationships with foreigners are strictly forbidden. After the couple exchanged several letters, Ri agreed to let Canh visit her at home. He had to be careful. A Vietnamese comrade had been beaten when he had been found with a local girl. Dressed in North Korean clothes, Canh embarked on the three-hour bus journey and two km walk to Ri’s home - a trip he

repeated monthly until he returned to Vietnam in 1973. “I went to her house secretly, just like a guerrilla,” said Canh. Upon his return to Hanoi, Canh felt disillusioned. The son of a high-ranking cadre, Canh refused to join the Communist Party, forgoing the bright future the state had planned for him. “I just couldn’t agree with a socialism that stops people from loving each other,” Canh said. Five years later, in 1978, the Vietnamese chemical engineering institute Canh was attached to organized a trip to North Korea. He asked to join, and managed to meet Ri. But every time they saw each other, Ri said, she became more heartbroken at the thought that they might never meet again. He had brought with him a letter he had written to the North Korean leadership, begging for permission for them to marry. “When she saw the letter, she asked: ‘Comrade, do you intend to persuade my government?’, said Canh, who never sent the letter and instead asked Ri to wait for him. Later that year, Vietnam invaded Cambodia, triggering a border war with China. With North Korea on the side of Beijing and Phnom Penh, the couple stopped writing.

“My mother was crying while caring for me,” said Ri. “I think she knew that I was lovesick.” In 1992, Canh again managed to get himself on a trip to North Korea as a translator with a Vietnamese sporting delegation, but couldn’t meet Ri. When he returned to Hanoi, Canh found Ri had sent him a letter. She still loved him. In the late 1990s, North Korea was gripped by a devastating famine and a desperate delegation from Pyongyang visited Hanoi to ask for rice. Vietnam, which by then had undertaken major economic and political reforms and re-engaged with the West, refused. Canh was so concerned for Ri and her people that he raised seven tonnes of rice in donations from friends to send to North Korea. It was an act of generosity which finally paved the way for he and Ri to reunite: The North Koreans learned of Canh’s act and agreed he could marry Ri and live in either country - provided Ri maintained her North Korean citizenship. In 2002, the two finally married in the Vietnamese embassy in Pyongyang, and settled into their new life together in Hanoi, where they still live today. “In the end, love beat socialism,” said Canh. **Reuters**

Wenger backs Solskjaer decision to leave out Alexis

The former Arsenal manager does not think the Chilean can have any complaints about not being in the starting XI, given the Frenchman's form

Former Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger has backed Ole Gunnar Solskjaer's decision to bench his former player Alexis Sanchez, with the Frenchman suggesting Anthony Martial has made the left-wing position his own at the club.

Martial has blossomed this season, scoring nine goals in 20 Premier League appearances so far, while he has managed to hit the net three times in all competitions since Solskjaer's appointment as interim boss.

Chile international Sanchez, meanwhile, has struggled to force his way into Solskjaer's plans, with an injury at the start of the Norwegian's tenure not helping matters, coupled with the improvement in



form of his team-mates.

Indeed, Sanchez has not shown his best since swapping Arsenal for United in January 2018 and has scored just five times in all competitions for the club since then.

And the 30-year-old again found himself on the end of criticism for his latest display after replacing Martial at half-time in United's 2-0 home defeat against Paris Saint-Germain, with the game scoreless at the break.

Despite signing Alexis for Arsenal back in 2014 from Barcelona, Wenger believes Solskjaer's decision to leave him out is completely

justified.

"[Sanchez] has lost his position, but he plays in the position of Martial," Wenger told beIN SPORTS.

"Today, who would dispute that Martial is indispensable for Man United? That's competition. That's fair competition in my opinion."

With both Martial and Jesse Lingard having suffered injuries on Tuesday night, Sanchez is likely to get a chance to prove himself in the coming games, starting with the trip to Stamford Bridge in the FA Cup to face Chelsea.

It remains to be seen if he will start, though, with the likes of Marcus Rashford, Romelu Lukaku and Juan Mata all also potential options across the attacking line.

Solskjaer, meanwhile, has admitted he is unsure what to do to help solve Alexis's struggles at United, suggesting it's down to the player to rediscover his best form.

He told reporters after the PSG game: "I can't do anything about Alexis. He needs to find himself as we know there is a quality player there."

After United face Chelsea on Monday they turn their attentions back to the Premier League and a potentially daunting fixture with title-chasing Liverpool.

The return leg against PSG in the Champions League, meanwhile, is scheduled for March 6. *Goal.com*

FAZ appoint first female spokesperson

By Abraham Kalito

Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) has appointed Mwazipeza Sakala Chanda as new communications manager, taking over from Desmond Katongo who resigned last week.

FAZ General Secretary Adrian Kashala announced Sakala's appointment, who became the first female to hold the post to date.

"I wish to announce to the public that FAZ has engaged a new communications manager after the departure of Desmond Katongo who officially resigned last week from his position as communication manager. We have picked on one Mwazipeza Sakala Chanda. She has been appointed as new communications manager. She is former employee and editor at the

Zambia Daily Mail and also worked as Public Relation Manager at Top Star," he said.

"Other than the appointment of the communications manager we have gone ahead i'm sure you are aware that our technical department has been lagging. But we are not saying we have appointed a technical director that is another item we are yet to address. We have brought in a young man, Layson Zulu to take care of the technical development. He has been appointed as technical development manager, football development manager. And we have set 8th March as the date for interviews for the position of technical director," Kashala said.

And Kashala says the Andrew Kamanga led

administration has performed far much better and is well organised than it previously was.

He said he is aware of individuals trying to dent the name of the institution and bring it to its knees but that FAZ would keep on doing better under the

current leadership.

"We urge people to work with us. If you have a contribution bring them forward rather than you averting your anger through social media. I'm aware than some people want to think that the association is really on its

knees. To the contrary, we are doing far much better and well organised than the case has always been. We know quite a lot that we cannot let out of the bag. But I think much of it is just organising our work culture and improving further," said Kashala.

Exodus Boxing to host 21 fights

By Abraham Kalito

Exodus Boxing Academy promoter Antony Mwamba says the academy will host 21 bouts scheduled to take place on 6th April at the government complex.

Addressing the media during a briefing in Lusaka, Wednesday, Mwamba said there would be 11 professional fights and 10 amateur fights.

He said the academy has

already raised 25 per cent of the K250, 000 needed to host the tournament.

"We will have 11 professional bouts and 10 bouts of amateur boxers all in one day. Our opponents will be coming from neighbouring countries including Zimbabwe and Malawi. We are going to add on 10 amateur bouts, the best amateur boxers that you will see fight on the same day. So

that's a full day of boxing. Hosting the tournament will cost us K250, 000 and we have already raised about 25 per cent of that money. And we believe that before the due day, we shall raise that money. So it will be a full day of Zambian boxing and for us there will be nothing be a day to enjoy boxing," he said.

Meanwhile sponsors ZESCO LTD stressed the

need for consistency among upcoming boxers.

ZESCO public relation manager Henry Kapata said the company is willing to contribute more towards the development of the fraternity but that inconsistency was a let-down.

"But we are also concerned with the inconsistencies of the of the boxers irrespective of what we put in as sponsors in this boxing industry. You know that the coach here has vast experience, but we want to urge our friends the participants, the boxers that we are more like coming to put in a lot but sometimes we have seen the life span of these events in the country. They would come two months they disappear. So, if there is consistency, I can assure you that the coffers of ZESCO ltd will be more than willing to pump in more so that we can do as we are doing with soccer. We have so much interest in soccer because there is consistency but with boxing there is somewhere where we are lagging and if there is need for advice in terms of what to do, I can propose that to management."

Lsk Dynamos suspend Kabwe, technical bench, appoint Phiri

By Alex Chilumbwe

Lusaka Dynamos has suspended the entire Daniel Kabwe-led technical bench after a string of bad results in the super league and re-appointed Patrick Phiri as caretaker coach.

Club president Hanif Adams has confirmed the development to Goal Diggers! that Daniel Kabwe and his assistants Ronald Mukosha, Chris Tembo and Mansh Janza have all been suspended until further notice.

"Their suspension is true and we will

be giving an update as executive in due time to talk about their stance with us. We are always looking for good results in football and that's just it," he said.

Asked if veteran coach Phiri will be given a contract, Adams said that there was nothing in the pipeline of that nature.

He however mentioned that club management would consider drawing a contract for Phiri if he impresses in his tenure as caretaker

coach.

Meanwhile, sidelined coach Daniel Kabwe said that he was not in a hurry to align himself with any other club.

"I have not aligned myself with another club yet, it is all too soon. It would also be disrespectful to my employers because I still have a contract with them," said Kabwe.

As a coach, Phiri led the Zambia U-20 national team to its first ever appearance at the 1999 FIFA World Youth Championship in Nigeria

and was voted Zambian Coach of the Year. He was also in charge of Zambia at the 2008 African Cup of Nations in Ghana and has managed ten different club sides, with three of them more than once. Before being appointed caretaker coach at Lusaka Dynamos, Phiri was manning Nakambala Leopards.

Lusaka Dynamos are sixth on Stream A table with two points. They have played three games of which two are draws and one a loss.



Icardi stripped of Inter Milan captaincy amid exit speculation

Mauro Icardi has been stripped of the Inter Milan captaincy in favour of goalkeeper Samir Handanovic amid speculation the Argentina forward is set to leave the club, the Italian outfit announced on Wednesday. "The club can confirm that Samir Handanovic is the new captain of the team," the Serie A outfit tweeted. The switch comes as Icardi, 25, has yet to sign a new contract amid protracted negotiations between the club and his wife Wanda Nara, who also acts as his agent. The Argentine has been left out of the team's Europa League round of 32, first-leg game at Rapid Vienna on Thursday. Icardi, valued at 100 million euros (\$113 million), has been linked with a move away from Italy to Spanish giants Real Madrid or Chelsea in England. The forward -- joint top scorer in Serie A last season with 29 goals -- has scored 15 this season in all competitions, but has gone seven Serie A games without a goal. "Nobody on the team puts him in a position to play well," complained Nara recently. "The contract is still very far away from being signed. "There are some very important clubs interested in signing him. "There are the two biggest clubs in Spain, with whom we have excellent relationships, plus an English team and a French one." Inter are third in Serie A, 20 points behind champions Juventus, and five points ahead of city rivals AC Milan in fourth. Luciano Spalletti's side returned to winning ways last weekend against Parma having taken just one point from their three previous Serie A games. Spalletti had after the game demanded a swift conclusion to the contract negotiations. The former Barcelona academy recruit joined Inter in 2013 from Sampdoria, scoring 122 goals in 208 appearances, with his contract running until 2021. Handanovic, 34, arrived in 2012 from Udinese. **AFP**

Hamilton fires F1 title warning as he takes new Mercedes for a spin

Lewis Hamilton has delivered an ominous warning to his Formula One rivals by vowing to improve on his almost flawless championship-winning campaign in his Mercedes. The British driver emerged from his winter hibernation at Silverstone on Wednesday to get his first taste of the car that he hopes will fire him to a sixth world title. The 34-year-old won 11 of the 21 races in 2018 to beat Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel and secure his fifth championship with two rounds to spare. And as he enters the first campaign of the new two-year Mercedes deal that will earn him £40 million (\$52 million) a season, a fully refreshed Hamilton is ready to extend his dominance of the sport. "2018 was a great year, but I feel like 2019 can be even better," he said. "I want to achieve more, I want to continue to keep pushing. I feel energised and I am ready to attack." Hamilton, who will be partnered at Mercedes for a third successive season by Valtteri Bottas, is entering the 13th season of his remarkable career, and will move to within just one title of Michael Schumacher's record haul of seven should he triumph again this term. The British driver said he switched off from racing in the off-season to recharge his batteries. **AFP**



NKANA TRIUMPHS

By Abraham Kalito
Nkana FC has elevated its hopes of qualifying for the next round of the confederation cup after beating Al Hilal of Sudan by two goals to one at a water-logged pitch in Kitwe. Nkana went behind in the 6th minutes when former employee Idris Mbombo assisted Waleed Hamid to put the visitors ahead. The Kitwe based club however equalised seven minutes later through Freddy Tshimenga before captain Walter Bwalya adding another in the 75th minute to collect maximum points. The match which was played at CAF's approved Arthur Davies stadium in Kitwe has catapulted Nkana into a better position of qualifying if the side wins the matches that follow. Former Nkana player Idris Mbombo was tormented by former team mates after the match, and the Al Hilal striker subsequently refused to exchange jerseys. Al Hilal now has a point at the log after two matches while Nkana has three.