



DEBT WORRIES LUNGU

As World Bank reveals Zambia owed \$27bn in 2019

By Stuart Lisulo

ZAMBIA'S total external debt stock has drastically increased to hit a total of US \$27.3 billion as at end-December, 2019, mainly consisting of public and publicly-guaranteed debt of over US \$11 billion, according to the World Bank.

And Zambia's Gross National Income (GNI) fell to just US \$22.7 billion by the end of last year compared to US \$26.6 billion in 2018 despite the principal repayments on the country's external debt having nearly doubled over the corresponding period under review.

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Kambwili gets 12 month jail sentence

By Zondiwe Mbewe

LUSAKA Principal Resident Magistrate David Simusamba yesterday convicted and sentenced NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili to 12 months imprisonment with hard labour on charges of forgery and uttering a false document.

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It's time for Lungu to rest - Simumba


By Ulande Nkomesha

MOVEMENT for Democratic Change chairperson for economics Trevor Simumba says President Edgar Lungu is preoccupied with winning the 2021 general elections at the expense of drowning the economy.

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When is voter registration starting?





✓ Online Pre-registration

Online Pre-registration will start on Monday 21st September, 2020 to Friday 6th November, 2020. Visit the website: www.ovr.elections.org.zm to commence your application.

✓ Mobile Voter Registration

The Mobile Voter Registration will be conducted from 07:00 hrs to 18:00 hrs every day at various registration centers in all the districts. The exercise will run from October 28th to November 30th, 2020.

By Ulande Nkomesha
COPPERBELT PF mobilisation committee chairman Bowman Lusambo says no government or party funds have been used to sponsor the COVID-19 sensitization rally in Ndola on the October 17, 2020.

The event is expected to feature international artists from South Africa; Master KG and Mafikizolo.

In an interview, Lusambo said all arrangements were being made by his committee and well wishers.

“Where is the problem if we bring artists from South Africa? Where is the problem? The problem is when Bowman jumps, the country comes to a stand still. There is no problem. The committee came up with

We didn't use govt, PF funds to invite Mafikizolo, Master KG – Bowman

local artists; it is not Bowman. The committee came up with the decision. We have two local artists there. What if we bring Jay Z? Because Obama brought Jay Z, what are people going to be saying? There is no problem. As a committee, we have the mandate to mobilize. We are mobilizing the people for the party and the people we are mobilizing are from all walks of life including opposition. We are mobilizing even from the opposition. We want numbers in our party. So for us mobilising has no specific area, mobilising is the

entire Copperbelt. In Ndola, the committee thought we can use the team they have picked,” Lusambo said.

“We will be going to Luanshya on the 25th, we will use different people so it is a known issue. When you see us working in politics, it doesn't mean that we don't have friends. We have friends all over the country, we have friends all over, we have friends in other countries. We were not born as politicians. We have passed through other parts of life and we have created friends in the

long run. When we are doing things, our friends come on board, they support the noble call. There is nothing that we have done. The money issue, there is no one who has spent there! For me, the issue of musicians is a non issue. Remember that Mafikizolo has been in Zambia before. This is just a normal thing. The party and government has not spent anything because that is not part and parcel of their responsibility. So forget about the party, forget about government, all the preparations was done



and they are still doing those things as mobilisation.”

He insisted that his committee saw it fit to invite South African artists to entertain the people.

“When you are mobilising, definitely you need to entertain your people. It is more like in church. When you go to

church, there is praise and worship, there is Bible reading and other programs in church. So Copperbelt mobilisation, we are not there just for the name, we are there to work and I can assure you that we are going to work. When you are working and you see critics all over, just ignore and focus on the bigger picture. What is the bigger picture? The bigger picture is to mobilize and that is what we are doing. All these things to do with musicians, we can work without musicians. We can work without any musicians whether a Zambian musician or any. In any function, that is why when you go to a party function, there are people who sing there. As a team they sat, it is not me, they said we are going to use these people. We used Rich Bizz, we used Kings, we used Mathew Ngosa, we used Chester in Mufulira,” he said.

“So those who are talking, why were they not talking when we took Rich Bizzy in Mufulira? What has changed today? They want to start controlling us in our own house? We are not insulting anyone, we are not fighting anyone. We are mobilising the party for 2021. In Zambia when are we going to work as a team? You don't have to condemn everything. They are complaining of Zambian musicians, we have been using Zambian musicians. Our popularity is not coming from the musicians no! These musicians come to perform when the crowd is already full. Then we tell them to entertain. We mobilise supporters for Edgar Lungu and the party.”

When asked whether holding such a big event was the best way to sensitise people about COVID-19, Lusambo dodged the question and referred this reporter to the rest of the committee.

“I started a long time [doing] COVID-19 awareness and I am a survivor of COVID-19, thank God we are here. So for me, I feel like you are troubling me asking me such questions. Me I am just told that today this is where you are going, I go and talk. So the team is there. So look for the team that is organizing. Is it that everything we do is bad? Bowman goes out at 02:00 hours and goes to protect people from COVID, 'no it's bad'. You tell the opposition that we are not here to joke around and we are here to work. We are adding numbers to His Excellency Edgar Chagwa Lungu. Copperbelt Province as we promised them in the next three months, it will be 100 percent PF and those people who want to lie that they have penetrated Copperbelt, we want to tell them that go and show us the penetration you have been talking about,” said Lusambo.



COMMUNIQUÉ on Comprehensive Sexuality Education by Members of Parliament from the Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) HIV/AIDS and Governance Project National Working Group, Zambia Women Parliamentary Caucus, Parliamentary Caucus on Children, members from the Portfolio Committees on Youth, Sport and Child Affairs; Local Governance, Housing and Chiefs' Affairs; Education, Science and Technology; and Legal Affairs, Human Rights, National Guidance, Gender Matters and Governance.

12th October, 2020

Whereas we acknowledge the efforts being put in place and implemented by the Government with regard to Comprehensive Sexuality Education, We the Members of Parliament participating in the multi-stakeholder consultative meeting on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) have taken time today to interrogate and deliberate on CSE with the goal of understanding its development and implementation in Zambia.

We are cognizant that in 2013, the Government of Zambia through the Ministry of General Education developed the Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) framework to enrich the provision of Reproductive Health and Sexuality Education. CSE features as a cross cutting theme in the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework. CSE is not taken as a standalone subject, but its content is integrated in; Integrated Science (at Primary and Junior Secondary), Biology (at Senior Secondary); Social Studies (at Primary and Junior Secondary) and Civic Education (at Senior Secondary); Home Economics and Religious Education.

We acknowledge that the development of the CSE Framework was prompted by data from research indicating high alarming numbers of school dropout due to pregnancy, high infection rate of STIs including HIV prevalence among the 15 to 24 age groups.¹

We note that the content of the CSE framework was subjected to wide stakeholder consultation including; religious leaders, Members of Parliament, traditional Leaders, CSOs, curriculum development experts and the public at large. The consultative process was meant to ensure that CSE was not only age appropriate, but was adapted to the cultural, traditional and religious beliefs and in line with the legal framework of Zambia.

We Support the provision of Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) for all that benefit women and adolescents, and safeguard the health of their children and societies at large and recognize that CSE is an integral part of SRHR.

We are committed to the following:

To leave no one behind. We as the people's representatives are cognizant that Sexual Reproductive Health of Adolescents is of critical importance in attaining SDG Numbers 3 on good health and wellbeing, Number 4 on quality Education and Number 5 on Gender, by the year 2030. In this regard we, shall, through our constitutional mandate support the proposed consultative process by the Government on CSE and ensure that the children are protected from vices that negate the enjoyment of the right to health and education.\

To ensure that every Zambian child and young person has unhindered access to the right to Education including age appropriate CSE, which seeks to promote human dignity and respect especially of the girl child and commit to continue being advocates of good quality education for all and to call upon the Executive to avail resources for the sexual reproductive health of children and young people so that they can freely attain their right to Education.

To engage in appropriate consultation and review of relevant policies in the Education Sector including the CSE policy with a view to demystifying the misconceptions surrounding the implementation and teaching of CSE in Zambia.

To urge the Executive through the Ministry of General Education to take the lead in explaining CSE as custodian of the policy especially in view of deep divergent views among members of the public.

To urge the Executive through the Ministry of General Education to carry out wide public sensitization on CSE, especially in rural areas where the bulk of the girl child are disadvantaged with regard to accessing good quality education and sexual reproductive health services.

To accelerate continued advocacy for CSE and the empowerment of men, women and adolescent girls and boys (with the involvement of traditional leadership, religious and civic leaders) – so that they can make informed decisions about their own lives and get empowered to be agents of change and contributors to Zambia's collective and transformative aspirations;

To promote transparency and accountability in the implementation of CSE programmes through the representative and oversight functions of national Parliaments and relevant parliamentary committees, and to ensure the adoption of public budgets in Parliament that are sensitive to Sexual Reproductive Health in general and CSE in particular.

To urgently call upon all concerned parties irrespective of divergent views, to come to a round table meeting and openly discuss CSE as it is being implemented in Zambia with a view to appreciating its content and implementation.

In Conclusion, allow us to reaffirm our support to the teaching of CSE in the Zambia Education system and to the announcement by the Executive to carry out broad based consultations on CSE, taking into consideration a multi-stakeholder approach in the consultative process.

We Thank You.

No. TNOI20-NOI05

By Julia Malunga
 PRESIDENT Edgar Lungu says the debt situation is worrying and that Finance Minister Dr Bwalya Ng'andu is doing everything possible to retain Zambia to a sustainable debt position.

Speaking when he met United States Charge d'Affaires David Young, Wednesday at State House, President Lungu said efforts were being made to ensure that the country met its obligations.

"The other issue of interest to you is the outstanding debt. You can be assured that we take note of all those obligations which we have and the Minister of Finance will talk more to that on what measures will be taken to make sure that we meet our obligations. Because we realise that a bad name is not good enough, you can have good words but then your conduct should also show that

Debt situation is worrying – Lungu

you are good by meeting your obligations. So we are working out something," President Lungu said.

"The debt situation is one worrying area and I think the Minister of Finance is doing everything to retain Zambia to sustainable debt levels. That also entails cancelling some of the pipeline loans or debts and so on. I think it is a question of dialogue with our cooperating partners and bilateral lenders. It is a very important thing to put this on record that we are re-profiling our debt and as you know we engaged legal and financial experts to advise us because we know that it is not business as usual, things have changed especially with the COVID pandemic effects on our economy,"

He thanked the American government for complementing Zambia's efforts to provide social service to the people of Zambia.

"I would like to appreciate the support that the United States of America has provided to Zambia since the establishment of our diplomatic relations in 1964 that is a long time ago. The support we have been getting is common knowledge now mainly in social sectors,

health, education and such areas particularly health, you have remained one of our key development partners from the time we became friends in 1964. For me, I think that the health sector has been the greatest beneficiary. I think we do realise the financial support which Zambia has received in the past ten years exceeds US\$2 billion and that is a lot of money through various programs like PEPFAR and so on," said President Lungu.

"Obviously, this support has been essential in that it has complemented our duty to preserve lives. Without preserving human lives, how do we advance economically? So recently you pledged US\$ 14.5 million to the COVID response, I think we are grateful for this, we know that others are helping and we should take note of that too but I think you stand out. You do this at a time when you are also hit by this COVID and this is

exceptional. You are helping us and your country is one of the worst hit by this COVID-19 so we take this as a great measure of friendship. Otherwise you would be more worried about what is happening back home. This is a true commitment to friendship. Personally, [and] on behalf of the Zambian people, all I can say is thank you to the US government for complementing our efforts in our quest to provide social services to our people."

2021 budget based on resilience, growth – Dora

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
 CHIEF Government Spokesperson Dora Siliya says the Patriotic Front government

has been able to provide a 2021 budget that is based on resilience, growth, food security and hope for young people.

But Mazabuka Central UPND member of parliament Gary Nkombo says the 2021 budget does not address the

hardships which people are facing.

Debating the 2021 national budget in Parliament, Tuesday, Siliya said despite the many economic challenges experienced since 2014, government was still able to provide hope in terms of growth.

"Mr Speaker, to many of us, the 2021 budget is about resilience. Resilience considering that in the last five years, this country has gone through a lot of challenges. We had the Copper prices collapsing in 2015, we had the power crisis in 2015, we saw most extraordinary droughts due to climate change in 2019/2020 resulting in us having to feed two million people in the country. But we are still able, Mr Speaker, to provide hope in the 2021 budget in terms of growth. As you have seen Mr Speaker that the government in the budget has committed to supporting entrepreneurship, and understanding that extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. And the Government has responded by making sure that it supports entrepreneurship and that the fruits of this entrepreneurship, especially from the support in 2020, will bear fruits in 2021 with the incentives such as in the tourism sector," Siliya said.

Siliya said the combination of the new Bank of Zambia Governor Christopher Mvunga and the Ministry of Finance would relieve the country from economic challenges in order for the people to benefit.

"Mr Speaker, we are happy to see in the 2021 budget, proposals of increased support to food security. That is the basis for all economic growth in the country, and support to the Agriculture sector, especially in terms of FISP programmes that are social programmes, is extremely critical for the country to maintain health of the economy. Mr Speaker, the 2021 budget was being presented at an opportune time. Again we are saying extraordinary times call for extraordinary measures. I heard people debating that it is very important to have micro-economists to make things work very well. But I believe that the combination of the new Bank of Zambia Governor and the Ministry of Finance should see us through the challenges because we have to do things differently in 2021 for our people to be able to benefit," she said.

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VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

Position	Project Officer
Reports to:	Executive Director
Contract duration:	2 years 2 months (Fixed term Contract)
Desired start date:	1 st November 2020
Duty station:	Lusaka, Zambia

LIAZ is a development agency for Lions Clubs International District 413. The principal mandate of LIAZ to support interventions to eradicate visual impairment by combating eye diseases, creating infrastructure to improve eye care service delivery, increasing the number of trained eye care professionals and making vision care more equitable and sustainable.

Key Responsibilities

- Project management that includes planning, implementation and monitoring & evaluation
- Coordinate the preparation of activity related reports as well as quarterly and annual reports to donors as may be required
- Implementation of the Project publications policy i.e. provides inputs, content development, coordination of production and dissemination of press releases, publications, articles and sharing of project knowledge and successes
- Assist partners in the preparation and management of budgets for planned activities
- Develop and sustain strategic partnerships with key stakeholders under the project

Candidate profile

- Degree in Public Health, Development studies, Social work, Demography, Project Management or related disciplines
- Extensive experience in programme/project management, ideally in an NGO setting.
- Minimum 2 years working experience. Working in a similar role will be advantageous but not necessary a disqualification

How to apply

Applicants should submit an application letter, a curriculum Vitae, pay rate history for the last three years, three professional references including their email addresses and day contact phone numbers. Please note that copies of Education and Professional qualifications are not required at this stage.

Applications should be emailed to admin@liaz.co.zm not later than Wednesday 21st October, 2020. The applications letters should be addressed to the **Executive Director, Lions Aid Zambia, Plot 6953, Millennium Village, Villa 25 Birdcage Walk, Longacres, Lusaka.**

Any third-party solicitation will result in disqualification

No. TNOI20-NOI04

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EAST PARK MALL, CORNER OF GREAT EAST & THABO MBEKI ROAD
LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

By Stuart Lisulo

ZAMBIA'S total external debt stock has drastically increased to hit a total of US \$27.3 billion as at end-December, 2019, mainly consisting of public and publicly-guaranteed debt of over US \$11 billion, according to the World Bank.

And Zambia's Gross National Income (GNI) fell to just US \$22.7 billion by the end of last year compared to US \$26.6 billion in 2018 despite the principal repayments on the country's external debt having nearly doubled over the corresponding period under review.

According to the World Bank's International Debt Statistics 2021 report, Zambia's total external debt drastically escalated to hit US \$27.3 billion by the end of last year, up from US \$19 billion by end of 2018.

The report, which comprises detailed

Zambia's external debt was \$27.3bn in 2019, reveals World Bank

breakdowns of what each borrowing country owes to official and private creditors by creditor country, discloses more detailed and disaggregated data on external debt than ever before, taking important strides in filling existing data gaps for low and middle-income countries.

Data compiled by the World Bank revealed that Zambia's external debt stock actually stood at an unprecedented US \$27.3 billion, of which public and publicly-guaranteed debt was recorded as US \$11.1 billion, while the private sector debt, which included the US \$3 billion worth of Eurobonds, stood at a cumulative total of US \$14.7 billion.

A detailed breakdown revealed that the country's total external debt stock skyrocketed to US \$27.3 billion compared to just US \$3.6 billion 10 years prior in 2009.

The external debt stock has progressively been climbing at a rapid pace, more than tripling from US \$3.6 billion in 2009 to over US \$11.7 billion in 2015.

But despite the rapid accumulation of external debt over the 10-year period, Zambia's GNI dropped to just US \$22.7 billion by the end of last year compared to US \$26.6 billion in 2018.

GNI is a measure of a country's income, which includes the net income received from abroad,

whereas Gross Domestic Product (GDP) counts only income received from domestic sources.

The Zambian government's principal repayments on the country's external debt nearly doubled over the corresponding period under review, with data revealing that repayments on all its external debt stock jumped to US \$1.7 billion last year compared to US \$666 million in 2018 or just US \$122 million 10 years prior back in 2009.

Zambia's external debt stock also completely overwhelms neighbouring countries, Zimbabwe and Malawi, whose total external debt stock stood at US \$12.3 billion and US \$2.4 billion,

respectively, according to the aggregated report data.

And the latest data showed that the total external debt stocks of low-income countries eligible for the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) rose nine per cent in 2019 to US \$744 billion, equivalent on average to one-third of their combined GNI.

Lending from private creditors was the fastest-growing component of the external debt of DSSI-eligible borrowers, up fivefold since 2010, the report reveals.

"Outcomes at the regional and country levels were divergent. Countries in sub-Saharan Africa recorded the fastest accumulation of external debt stock in 2019,

on average 9.4 per cent, propelled by a comparable rise in the debt stock of the major regional economies, including Nigeria and South Africa and other borrowers across the region. Obligations to private creditors totaled US \$102 billion at the end of 2019," read the report in part.

Earlier this year, the World Bank Assessment Report on Debt Transparency among International Development Associations (IDA) countries exposed Zambia's lack of transparency on debt reporting.

The Assessment Report on the availability, completeness and timeliness of public debt statistics and debt management documents posted on national authorities website published on April 1, this year, revealed the lack of transparency on Zambia's debt reporting and that there was partial information available about the country's contracted loans.

Last month, the Zambia External Bondholder Committee rejected the Zambian government's 'Consent Solicitation' request to suspend Eurobond interest debt repayments given the absence of clarity on government's debt build-up.

And subsequently, on October 13, Secretary to the Treasury Fredson Yamba eventually conceded that Zambia was unable to pay its scheduled debt obligations despite the failure to reach an agreement with Eurobond holders late last month.

Yamba announced that the country will only be able to pay foreign exchange based debt to multilateral agencies and debt for a few priority projects that had an immediate economic and social impact.

Politicians should engage police if they want to go on radio – Sunday

By Julia Malunga

PATRIOTIC Front media director says Democratic Party president Harry Kalaba should have engaged police if he wanted to feature on a radio program on Mpika to avoid disruptions.

On Monday, Kalaba was stopped by police from having a program on Mpika Community Radio saying he did not get permission from the Mpika District Commissioner.

Commenting on this in an interview, Chanda advised politicians to engage police before appearing on any radio programmes because not everyone was tolerant to divergent views.

"I think what is very important to say is that the PF does not have a policy of stopping anyone from appearing on radio. Yesterday (Tuesday) I am aware that UPND members were on Radio Mano where they featured and still went ahead with their programming uninterrupted. If there is anything that

we can ask for is that there is nothing wrong with the DP leader informing the police that he is going to carry out such political activities in the District for purposes of public order and his own security because we don't know who would act inappropriately and end up destroying property or end up causing harm to other people," Chanda said.

"As we begin to get closer to the general elections, people take politics differently and it is always important when there is such a program happening, politicians engage the police for their own safety and the safety of other people. Because not all of us will be tolerant to divergent views. This happens not just in PF strongholds. Not long ago, Fr Bwalya was beaten by UPND members in Mazabuka when he featured on Mazabuka Radio. So there is a likelihood of such events happening, not just restricted in PF strongholds. Even speaking for myself,

if I want to feature on a radio station whether it is in Monze or in Mazabuka, I am not going to last three minutes on that radio station. So if I want to feature on any radio programme, the first thing I would do is to inform the police because it is not just because of my own safety but the safety of the people working in the radio station."

He said Kalaba was not a threat to the ruling party.

"What did honorable Kalaba stand to lose had he gone to the police? He would have probably asked for coverage and for him to be escorted as he carried out his political programme. The PF did not send anyone to stop Mr Kalaba's programme in Mpika. Mr Kalaba is not a threat, not even in Bahati where he was an area member of parliament. Unless he wants to be so naïve to think that he can go to any part of Zambia, sometimes people don't take divergent views in a tolerant manner. Before you are a victim, wisdom demands you

inform the security wings to ensure that you are protected," he said.

Chanda said the opposition was making the work of the police very difficult.

"I think what the problem is, is the high levels of suspicion that the police are working to disadvantage the opposition. If you followed the altercation and outbursts by the DP leader targeted at this poor officer who is doing his job of maintaining law and order, you would understand that sometimes it is the politicians who make the job of the police very difficult. Clearly, what the officer was trying to do was to negotiate with Mr Kalaba and reason with him because those are officers on the ground in Mpika and they understand the security situation on the ground. It is this level of suspicion by the opposition targeted at the police which I think is not helping and it is going to make the job of the police very difficult," said Chanda.

By Sipilisiwe Ncube
 RENEWED musician Fumbe Chama, popularly known as Pilato, says Tourism and Arts Minister Ronald Chitotela's remarks that artists have assured him of retaining President Edgar Lungu to power in 2021 is biased and personal.

And Chama says the K30 million artists' stimulus package is nothing but a bribe to appease artists.

In an interview, Chama said he wouldn't promise his vote to a bunch of failures.

"I am sure Minister Chitotela was talking about the artists on the payroll who have assured him that [they will retain President Edgar Lungu in power in 2021]. As an artist myself, I do of think that I share that view. It's a biased and personal view. I do not think that President Lungu is capable of running this country. It's like he has failed. And I wouldn't want to risk my country for another five years to be handled by a bunch of failures like these that we have right now," Chama said.

"Firstly, I am not and have not spoken to Minister Chitotela and have not and would not assure him of voting or retaining President Lungu as the Republican president of Zambia. I wouldn't do this because I think doing so would be dangerous for the future of this country. President Lungu has achieved what took Mugabe 33 years to achieve in Zimbabwe. Within his short stay in power, he has messed up the economy, he has messed up the democracy of this country and technically made Zambia a one party state. The only direction he has managed to lead us to is towards the drain. Instead of building on what he inherited, he has destroyed it and has even gone in the negatives. I would never be so cruel to the country I call home by retaining such a misleader."

And Chama said the K30 million artists' stimulus package was nothing but a bribe.

"The K30 million fund is simply a bribe from the presidency and like have commented before on another platforms, this fund was a reaction aimed at quenching the assumed anger by artists and not to necessarily responding to issues affecting the artists. To start with, does the President know how many artists we have in this country? Does minister Chitotela know how many artists are in his constituency? If they don't know, how they did they settle for K30 Million as a fund to address the problems facing artists in the country. In Bemba we say, 'amenshi kulinganya nobunga', how do you prescribe a solution to a problem you don't fully understand? That fund obviously will only benefit those artists they work with and the average artist on the street will only hear about it," said Chama.

Debating the 2021 budget in Parliament, Tuesday, Chitotela said artists had assured him that come 2021,

they would retain President Lungu for giving them the first ever incentive amounting to K30 million.

"And Mr Speaker, I want to encourage the Minister [of Finance] that with these budget presentation and proposals, come 2021, come 2021 we will still be on the right hand side because the Zambian people are looking for stimulus packages, they are looking for a government that is listening to their cries. Mr Speaker it is the first time in the Zambian history that today, we have a reduction in the corporate tax in the

tourism sector 35 per cent to 15 per cent. I think we need to thank the minister that 'minister, job well done'. We need to thank the President that the package that has been given to the tour operators and people who want to engage themselves in the Safari viewing vehicles, coaches, and luxury buses. This incentive Mr Speaker was given last in 1992 by the late President Dr Frederick Titus Jacob Chiluba. That is why Mr Speaker, those people out there, the tourist operators would not risk to change the government that is

I can't promise my 2021 vote to a bunch of failures – Pilato

working for them. With these few words Mr Speaker, I want to encourage the minister and His Excellency the President that Job well done and Zambians out there including the artists who have said, 'go and assure the President that come 2021, we will retain him so that he can continue giving us the incentives that we require,'" said Chitotela.



We'll default on loans if lenders don't agree to delayed payment – Treasury

By Natasha Sakala
 SECRETARY to the Treasury Fredson Yamba says the country is unable to meet its scheduled debt obligations following failure to reach an agreement with Eurobond holders on the proposed six months delayed interest payment.

In a statement, Tuesday, Yamba noted that Zambia would only be able to pay foreign exchange based debt to multilateral agencies and debt for a few priority projects that have an immediate economic and social impact.

"In view of the urgency of the current situation, the Government has determined

to ask all its external creditors to agree to debt service suspension on the same terms. The only FX (foreign exchange) denominated debt that Zambia will continue to pay on a current basis is debt from multilateral agencies and debt for a few priority projects that have an immediate economic and social impact. More information about the perimeter of such priority projects will be provided separately. To be clear, such suspension will apply to all scheduled payments of principal and interest, including accumulated arrears, for a six-month period while it completes its DSA.

Should Zambia fail to reach an agreement with its commercial creditors (including holders of its Eurobonds) on the terms of the appropriate standstills, as previously stated, the Republic with its limited fiscal space will be unable to make payments and, therefore, fail to forestall accumulating arrears," he stated.

"Following the presentation by the Minister of Finance Dr Bwalya Ng'andu, MP, to Creditors on September 29th 2020, the Government of Zambia and its advisers (Lazard Freres and White and Case) have received a number of questions from creditors asking for further

clarification on the Republic's debt strategy, notably in respect of how it intends to approach the servicing of its external debt in the current environment."

He added that if the standstill is accepted, interest accrued on the delayed payments will be considered during the restructuring process.

"Should the Noteholders consent to the standstill, we will recognise interest accruing on deferred coupons in the restructuring process, at a rate to be determined in good faith with Noteholders. The Government would like to take this opportunity to

reiterate its strong desire and willingness to use this standstill to engage, with the assistance of its financial and legal advisors, in a collaborative and constructive dialogue with all its creditors to design a sustainable debt strategy in the weeks and months to come," Yamba added.

"As explained in the Minister of Finance's presentation to the creditors, Zambia is confronting considerable challenges and liquidity difficulties compounded by the impact of the COVID 19 pandemic that has led the government to request the cooperation of all its creditors. In this regard, the government is negotiating debt service suspension agreements under the G20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) with all its official creditors and has requested comparable treatment from commercial creditors. In that connection, the government has sought the consent of the holders of Zambia's outstanding Eurobonds to a standstill on debt service for a period of six months until April 2021 while it finalises its Debt Sustainability Analysis (DSA) and seeks to put the country's debt on a sustainable trajectory."

He further noted that the six months suspension period would allow government to design a sustainable and equitable debt management strategy.

"The debt service suspension period that the Government is requesting will allow us to work, with the assistance of our financial and legal advisors, and in cooperation with the IMF, and all our creditors including the Noteholders and their Ad-hoc committee, to design a sustainable and equitable debt management strategy. Our common objective will be to normalise our relationship with our valued financial partners as soon as circumstances allow and to orderly address Zambia's debt challenges. We remain committed to ensuring equitable treatment of all our creditors and ensuring transparency in our engagements," stated Yamba.

2021 budget based on resilience, growth – Dora

From P3

SILIYA said the 2021 budget was for the young because as it responded directly to their needs.

"I believe that the budget for 2021 is a budget for the young people. It has directly responded to the call of the young people in this country that they want to do well in their own country. And the best our colleagues from your left, Mr Speaker, is to admit that for a change, under extremely difficult circumstances, not just in Zambia but the whole world, we have been able to do the best that we can with the cloth that we have to provide a budget that is based on resilience, growth, food security and most of all is based on home to the young people of Zambia," said Siliya.

Debating on the same motion, Youth, Sports, and Child Development Emmanuel Mulenga said the increment in allocation of funds under the Food Security pack programme would drastically reduce levels of unemployment among youths.

"The budget has outlined the priority programmes in line with the Patriotic Front manifesto and the Seventh National Development Plan. The budget is also inspirational and has brought hope to many youths and Zambians. The PF Government remains committed to its pro-poor policies as been demonstrated by the increased allocation to the protection programmes by 167 per cent and prioritizing youth empowerment. For this, the Honourable Minister of Finance must be commended. Further to enhance the food security pack programme, the Ministry of Finance increased the allocation for the Food security pack programme from K1 million to K1.1 billion. Mr Speaker, under this, 50 per cent or more than 50 per cent of beneficiaries

are youths, which simply means that levels of unemployment among the youths is going to be reduced drastically," said Mulenga.

And Gender Minister Gender Minister Elizabeth Phiri said the PF Government had been tested and proved that it can survive amidst so many economic shocks.

"Mr Speaker, I want to thank the President for driving Zambia under very difficult conditions with a lot of shocks. It is the only government that has been tested and proved strong. When we just came into power, it wasn't easy Mr Speaker. We had experienced droughts. And with the droughts, this government has proved that we can stand the shocks. Mr Speaker, it was not only the droughts. Talking of Kanyama we had cholera, and through the office of Her Honour the Vice President we came out from that strong shock. We have had the gassing period, we have COVID-19 now, and with this budget Mr Speaker, it is giving Zambians hope that come 2021, with all the stimulus packages that have been given to different sectors by this government, it is a government that means well. Mr Speaker, talking as a Minister of Gender, I think women and the girl child have been given a fair share through economic empowerment. Mr Speaker, Ministry of Gender has received a fair share," said Phiri.

But Nkombo said the budget did not address the hardships which citizens were facing.

"Last year, you (Minister of Finance) came here together with the President and lamented that climate change had ravaged the economy. We gave it to you and now you are boasting that you have a bumper harvest. Was it the same spiritual healing for the economy that now your friends

are saying that 'now let's go to pray for the economy. It was as a result of the hard work of the Zambian people that we got a bumper harvest. I did lament to you here when you brought a supplementary budget about the loftiness of your allocation on Public Order as well as Defense. And I am shocked today when I look at your budget of only K119. It has actually diminished because of inflation, the exchange rate and all the economic fundamentals that we have gone through, and now you are telling us that is because of COVID-19. Don't hide behind your fingers. The acts of these allocations define who you are," said Nkombo.

"Your budget to me does not address the hardships of the people of this country. It is unheard of that you can equate the budget of public order Honourable Minister of Finance together with Defense equals to the budget of health in the midst of you saying 'we are challenged with COVID-19 [which is] a health problem.' Explain to me how you could actually present this to us equating public order and health? That's what it is. Public order and health K8.6 billion, health K9.6 billion, social protection K4.8 billion. The problem you presented to us of the environmental protection Vis-a-vis climate change, you come and allocate 0.8 per cent of the budget. So, who is fooling who? Sir, I encourage the minister to go even here at Soweto market and see how people are suffering and how this budget is not going to have any positive effects on the people of this country."

And Liuwa UPND member of parliament Situmbeko Musokotwane said it was not true that the economy was poorly performing because of privatization but that it was due to PF's over borrowing.

By Julia Malunga

MMD leader Nevers Mumba says there should be no connection between COVID-19 and the state of the economy.

On Monday, Presidential Affairs Minister Freedom Sikazwe said it was unfair to blame the PF government for the biting economy because there was no country which was thriving at the moment due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

But, in an interview, Mumba said the country's problems began long before COVID-19.

"The problems of our country began long before COVID-19. So, there should be no connection between

Economic meltdown shouldn't be tied to COVID-19, says Nevers

COVID-19 and the state of the economy because we borrowed most of the money before COVID-19," Mumba said. "The biggest problem here is not the infrastructure that we are seeing, the biggest problem is the unsustainable debt that we have accrued; that is the biggest challenge that this government cannot wish away. It is not politics, it is economics."

He said Zambia was facing

an enormous challenge as a result of its unsustainable debt levels.

"So I do not know on what my brother is basing his claims but all I can say is that we are in big trouble as a nation economically. And we need to stop all the politics of going after each other's throats and concentrate on fixing the economy. The figures in both external and domestic debt are unrealistically high

and I think that, that should be the concentration of this government," said Mumba.

Sikazwe had claimed that COVID-19, which had affected the whole world, was behind Zambia's economic problems.

"Economically, that is why some of us are very comfortable and relieved if you are saying the economic situation in Zambia is worse than before as compared to all the surrounding countries of

the world, it will be a different story. But what is prevailing in Zambia is the exact situation that is prevailing in all countries. Three days ago there were demonstrations in South Africa, there are confusions in Zimbabwe, and it is everywhere! Why do you want to single out Zambia? Tell me a country that is doing better economically this time especially after coming out of COVID-19, all of us have

been hit by it and you know the effects. We are just trying to rebuild, trying to re-correct ourselves and see how we can improve things," said Sikazwe.

"The situation has been bad, all of us have to accept that COVID has hit us. If we are going to be judged because of the devastating situation that we have undergone, then people will be very unfair. That is why we have the confidence that we are winning. So far, so good. Nobody is saying things are 100 percent perfect, we know that the economy is biting, which is very correct because we know where we are coming from. So, when people tell you that PF is going to lose, just tell them to wait until 12th August, 2021"

By Zondiwe Mbewe

LUSAKA Principal Resident Magistrate David Simusamba yesterday convicted and sentenced NDC leader Chishimba Kambwili to 12 months imprisonment with hard labour on charges of forgery and uttering a false document.

He has, however, acquitted him on the other charge of giving false information to a public officer.

And after he was sentenced, Kambwili thanked Simusamba, to which the magistrate responded: "thank yourself".

Meanwhile, MMD leader Nevers Mumba, says he is surprised that Magistrate Simusamba is still handling court course when the Judicial Complaints Commission recommended that he must be removed from the judiciary for misconducting himself.

In this matter Kambwili was facing charges of forgery, uttering a false document and giving false information to a public officer in relation to the registration of Mwamona Engineering and Technical Services, following a complaint lodged by Economic and Equity Party leader Chilufya Tayali in 2018.

It was alleged that on October 29, 2013, Kambwili with intent to defraud or deceive, forged a 'no change return' (companies form 71) purporting to show that it was

genuinely signed by his son Mwamba when in fact not.

It was further alleged that on the same date, Kambwili knowingly and fraudulently uttered the same document to an officer at Patents and Companies' Registration Agency (PACRA).

Delivering his judgement yesterday, magistrate Simusamba said he found as a fact that Kambwili forged Form 71 (No Change Return Form) which was the subject of the matter by purporting that he was signing on behalf of his son Chishimba Mwamba when in fact he did not sign in a representation form but on his own behalf.

He said that was the reason why Kambwili was called a director of Mwamona Engineering and Technical Services.

Magistrate Simusamba said it was a fact that Kambwili forged the No Change Return form by creating a fictitious name 'Mwamba Chishimba' and uttered the same document to PACRA.

He said the NRC number which was used on the registration forms for Mwamona was for Sampa Kambwili and that Kambwili assigned the said NRC to his son in order to comply with registration procedures.

Magistrate Simusamba said he agreed with Tayali and arresting officer Stanley Mumbula, that

Kambwili gets 12 months, as Nevers wonders why Simusamba is still working

Mwamba Chishimba was a fictitious person used in the incorporation of the company.

"The circumstances of dropping the Kambwili name

by the incorporators of the company was to disguise the name Kambwili and by doing that they created a fictitious person by assigning

him an NRC number for Sampa Kambwili. Mwamba Chishimba is a fictitious person in as far as the documentation of Mwamona is concerned,"

magistrate Simusamba said.

Continues on P10

DEC, ACC must probe culprits swindling govt via dubious salaries - Lifuka

By Sipilisiwe Ncube

T R A N S P A R E N C Y International Zambia Chapter president Rueben Lifuka says the Drug Enforcement Commission (DEC) and the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) should complement the work of Smart Zambia by investigating all culprits who have been swindling government of its resources through unjustified salaries and benefits.

And Lifuka has urged Smart Zambia to ensure the exercise to clean up the government payroll should cover all ministries and departments.

In a statement to News Diggers, Lifuka said law enforcement agencies should start applying criminal

sanctions as a deterrent measure against people who swindle the government of its resources.

"Transparency International Zambia, first and foremost would like to commend the measures that the government, through Smart Zambia Institute, is taking to clean up the payroll and conduct head counts of government employees. This exercise is in fact long overdue and should have been conducted much earlier than this. The problem of a bloated government staff establishment and corresponding payroll has been a source of concern for many years and Dr. Martin Mtonga has vindicated many stakeholders' calls against the

massive loss of public resources paid out to phantom employees or deceased persons," Lifuka stated.

"It is our expectation that this exercise will cover all government ministries and departments. It is time that we seriously addressed the problem of national wastage of public resources which has become prevalent. Further, we would like to urge the Drug Enforcement Commission and the Anti-Corruption Commission, to ably complement this exercise by investigating all culprits who have been swindling the government through these unjustified salary and benefit payments, and bring them to justice. We want

to warn against the use of traditional administrative disciplinary action for such fraudulent activities. It is time that as a country, we sent a strong message against such unscrupulous activities. The solution lies in applying criminal sanctions to serve as a deterrent to would be offenders and not merely effecting transfers of erring officers from one post to another."

He stated that there was also need for the government to audit all the contracts held by food suppliers to various government institutions.

"Similarly, it is critical for the Government to conduct a comprehensive audit of all public procurement contracts to ensure that the rightful persons/companies are doing the work contracted for, identify the beneficial owners and most importantly, to assess the validity and cost of the contracts held. We continue to hear of a number of allegations of fraudulent activities in this area where companies are being paid for not supplying anything or invoices are inflated. We want to see the Auditor General's office and other authorities taking an urgent audit of these food supply transactions involving different government entities including schools, prisons, hospitals etc," stated Lifuka. "We cannot continue to hemorrhage public resources like this in the midst of many developmental challenges. It is shocking to see how the government continues to lose resources in many ways, including unnecessary expenditure, inflated invoices, over specification of public works, etc. It is time that Zambia conducted a massive campaign against national wastage of public resources and sealed all loopholes."

High teen pregnancies call for immediate interventions- NGOCC

By Julia Malunga

THE Non-Governmental Gender Organisations' Coordinating Council (NGOCC) says the high number of teenage pregnancies recorded in Eastern Province this year alone points to a deepening problem not only in that Province but in society as a whole.

In a statement, Wednesday, NGOCC executive director Engwase Mwale stated that teenage pregnancies undermined girls' human rights and compromised their opportunity to fully realize their socio-economic development potential.

"NGOCC has noted with concern the increasing number of girls dropping out of school due to pregnancies. The reported 106 school girls, among them a 13-year-old Grade three pupil, who have fallen pregnant in a space of three months in Chadiza District of Eastern Province makes sad reading. The high number of teenage pregnancies recorded in Eastern Province this year alone points to a deepening problem not only in that Province but in society as a whole. Clearly, the disruption of information accessibility and complementary actions around social norms and Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights during the partial lockdown as a result of the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic has further worsened poverty and gender inequalities," Mwale stated.

"Zambia is now experiencing the symbolic telling that the pandemic is putting tremendous strain on our young women and girls by virtue of them having stepped into the crisis from a position of vulnerability – teenage pregnancies and child marriages were already a challenge in pre COVID-19 era and still remains at the core of the pandemic going by the increasing numbers of young women and girls at risk. NGOCC is concerned with this development as cases of teenage pregnancies may continue on the upswing throughout the country. It is a fact that teenage pregnancies undermine girls' human rights and compromise their opportunity to fully realize their socio-economic development potential."

She stated that there should be interventions that would target girls and boys on the negative effects of teenage pregnancies.

"As an organization, such revelations are disheartening because most adolescent girls drop out of school when they are pregnant, which negatively impact their future aspirations because they grow up with limited career options and opportunities. It is also a fact that engaging in unprotected sex also

puts the young people, especially girls, are at higher risk of contracting Sexually Transmitted Infections, including HIV. As NGOCC, we urge government, cooperating partners and other stakeholders to adequately resource and in a more collaborative manner, fast-track public sensitization and awareness raising interventions around Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights," stated Mwale.

"Specifically, our call is for interventions that will target girls and boys on the negative effects of teenage pregnancies, and the need for young people, especially girls, to value education. It is our expectation that this shall receive urgent and specific attention as an integral part of accelerating efforts aimed at mitigating implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. Let us all recognize that women and girls belong in all places and during any crisis, they are the most hit as they seek to balance individual safety and ensure livelihoods and adequate nutrition. Hence, women and girls' issues are national issues which call for economic policies that zero in on addressing gender inequalities by being refocused towards stronger, equitable, inclusive and sustainable growth."

It's time for Lungu to rest – Simumba

By Ulande Nkomesha
MOVEMENT for Democratic Change chairperson for economics Trevor Simumba says President Edgar Lungu is preoccupied with winning the 2021 general elections at the expense of drowning the economy.

And Simumba says the MDC was formed by people who are frustrated with the state of affairs in Zambia.

Speaking on Muvi TV's The Assignment programme, Tuesday, Simumba said it was time for President Edgar Lungu to rest because he had not run the country well.

"The economy has totally worn down, our current President, I have never uttered any bad words towards him, I just believe that he has not managed this country well and I think it is time for him to go and rest and let others take up the mantle. We are in a country where the focus of all our colleagues in government is to win next year's election. Whether or not the economy grinds to a halt, they don't care. All they want is to make sure they win next year's elections. That is very unfortunate when you are dealing with an economy, because even if your focus is to win, there are something you can still do now which will not affect you winning, it will actually improve your chances," Simumba said.

"Why fire (Denny) Kalyaya and replace him with somebody who is not competent? There was no need to bring an outsider to come and run that important institution. The problem is that

my big brother, our President His Excellency the President, unfortunately he is preoccupied with retaining power come 2021. So decisions are being clouded by that forecast to say 'I have to get back into office'. I am not saying there is anything wrong with the President wanting to get back in office, but even though your case is to return power, you still do not need to do the things you are doing because you are undermining the economy as a whole."

And asked if the MDC was formed by frustrated individuals, Simumba said the party was not formed by frustrated individuals, but those who were frustrated with the state of affairs.

"Entering into politics is not about frustration. Leonard Hikaumba who is the vice president political, he is a former unionsit, he is not a frustrated man. He is simply a man who wants to see a better Zambia. Mr Mulusa cannot be called a frustrated man, Mr Mulusa was a very courageous minister; he was the only member of the PF government to say the [procurement of the] 42 fire tenders was a bad decision, that is why he came out of government. So you cannot say he is a frustrated individual. Mr Mutati is not a frustrated individual, madam Sherry Thole is not a frustrated individual, she is a very accomplished former permanent secretary, she worked for the

Bank of Zambia, she was MD of a bank, she has sat on boards; the University of Zambia and many other boards," Simumba said.

"You talk about madam Joyce Musenge, our deputy secretary general is an accomplished diplomat. I am not a frustrated person but I am frustrated at the lack progress for Zambia. If you talk of frustration in terms of frustration at the status that we are in where today people are buying mealie meal at over K80; today our fuel price [is high], look at the load shedding, look at the level of corruption."

He argued that the biggest problem in Zambia was corruption in the procurement system.

"The biggest problem we have is the economy, we are in deep recession. The economy is contracting, poverty has increased. One of the biggest problems we have in Zambia is that a lot of money is leaked out of the

system because of corruption, particularly in the procurement. We need to fast track Smart Zambia, so that this government begins to procure through what we call E-procurement. We need to minimize contact between businessmen and civil servants," he said.

Simumba said the continued appetite to borrow was a danger.

"There is nothing wrong with borrowing but don't borrow to build houses for soldiers, policemen, borrow to build infrastructure that has a return because when you borrow you are not borrowing for free, that is not free money you have to pay it back. That is why the government is stuck because they invested most of the money in things which have no return. This government if they are serious with debt management, they must begin now," Simumba said.

"Stop borrowing! Just stop borrowing for now, put a

moratorium, because in this budget, they want to borrow another \$1.4 billion in external debt and another \$600 million from the domestic market. So if the government has no discipline to say this year we will collect what we can and we will spend what we have. At the moment we are at real danger of the treasury running out of money to even pay salaries because the money we are collecting through ZRA, over 50 percent of that money is going to service debt."

And when asked if the country had benefited from government's decision to award Lazard Freres to restructure debt, Simumba said there was no benefit.

"There is no benefit, have we received any relief? That relief

from China has nothing to do with Lazard. That release from China is based on the G20. That relief from China is only on government concession loans. That relief from China does not cover commercial loans that have come from China Exim Bank, China Development Bank, International Construction Bank of China ICBC which is a shareholder of Stanbic," said Simumba.

"Government has borrowed over almost \$500, \$600 million from Standard Chartered. They are owing money to the Italian banks, they are owing money to the Russians, they are owing money to Israel for this military hospital and other military equipment. So China has nothing to do with Lazard. That came from G20. Beyond that, China says pay us what you are owing the arrears first then we can look at giving you a holiday. So there is still a lot of work to be done."

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The winner of 2021 is he who registers his supporters to voter

ABOUT 95 per cent of people reading this editorial opinion have not taken time to visit the Electoral Commission of Zambia (ECZ) website to take part in the pre-registration exercise which comes to an end next month. This is not a fact, but it is a calculated conclusion based on the current ECZ statistics regarding the number of people who have so far registered to vote next year.

There are several reasons why people have not taken interest in this exercise. Some citizens have not heard that the Commission is discarding the old (2016) voters' register in preference for a new one that is currently being populated. This is so because the Commission has not done a good job in educating people about this development. Only a few of those who are in urban settlements have had access to this information. This mean those citizens who are ignorant about this process will be left out.

Some citizens have not paid attention to what is going on because they don't think that it affects them. These are citizens who have used the same voters' card in all previous elections without any problems. What these people know is that as long as they have a green national registration card and a voters card issued by the Electoral Commission of Zambia, they will be counted as voters in 2021. But they are wrong, and unless

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Ear to the ground

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they get on board to register again, they, too will be left out.

Then there is the group of citizens who are fully aware that they have to register again as voters, because the old register will no longer be in use next year; but they have chosen the path of challenging the Electoral Commission to reverse this decision. So far, efforts to change the status quo has yielded nothing, and there is no guarantee that the matter which some citizens have taken to court will be concluded soon. But these people have not registered and time is ticking. This cluster of citizens has nothing to lose if they simply register while waiting for the court to rule on whether or not the Commission is in breach of the law, but they have chosen to ignore the exercise. Unfortunately, if the court upholds the decision of the Commission, these voters will have everything to lose because there will be too little time left to register and they will be left out.

The last group of voters is those who do things at the last minute. They are aware of the ongoing process, they are eager to vote in 2021, they know what they have to do in order to be considered eligible voters, but they are waiting for the second and final phase of voter registration exercise. Even when the physical voter registration exercise starts, they will wait for the last week and last day of registration. They are not even aware that the physical voter registration will also be done within 30 days and not the usual 90 days. These are the last minute risk takers who will also most likely be left out.

Because of the reasons above, we are likely to have fewer voters taking part in the 2021 elections. If we factor in those citizens who have registered to vote, quite alright, but will not make it to the polling station for various reasons, including farming activities, illness, and relocations, then the number of people who will actually vote next year shrinks even further.

What this means is that all the political party campaigns and the social media comments that we are seeing now mean nothing, if people do not register to vote. Members of the Patriotic Front who think their party will bounce back with resounding victory in 2021 are wasting their time, unless they register to vote.

Similarly, those in the opposition who think no sane Zambian can vote for the PF again after all the scandals and the poor economic management, will wake up to a rude shock in August next year if they do not mobilize their supporters to vote. In fact, the opposition must be even more worried about the public's lack of interest to take part in the voter registration exercise because those who support the Patriotic Front have every reason and motivation to register and keep their party in power.

It is on that basis that we say the winner of the 2021 general elections will be the party that will prioritise the

voter registration exercise above everything else. Calling each other names or complaining about this and that will culminate into nothing. At the end of the day, only those who are registered to vote will be allowed to vote. This is the number one formula to winning next year. At this stage, it is not really who has the money to buy campaign materials, or who is speaking the loudest, it's he whom registered his or her supporters to vote.

Our tip to the opposition is that they should leave the fight with ECZ in the hands of their legal committees while the rest of them start encouraging their members to register and vote. They must not discourage their members from taking part in the ongoing process because they may only realise too late that they can't do anything about this decision.

We are not supporting the Electoral Commission of Zambia on its decision to discard the 2016 voters register. We agree with those who are fighting this

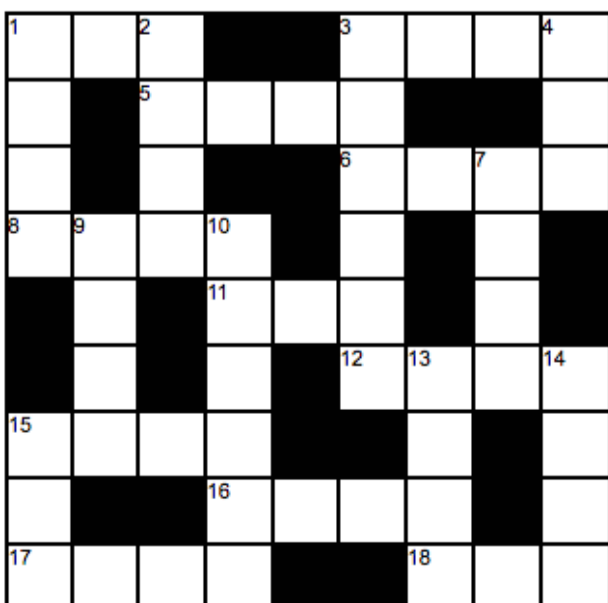
move and we believe it's in the interest of the people and democracy that the 2016 voters' register is used next year, provided there is a cleaning exercise to get rid of ghost voters.

ECZ's argument is that some polling station names have been changed, some have been removed while others have been realigned to other newly created districts and constituencies. But our view is that dealing with those particular polling stations will be less costly such that re-registering voters in those particular districts and constituencies would be more realistic than aiming to register 9 million voters in 30 days.

ECZ knows that the number of eligible voters contained in the 2016 voters' register was not recorded from one election; it took years through a process that added new voters to the existing register every time there was a general election coming. So where this insistence is coming from is difficult to comprehend.

What is easy to understand is that this confusion will lead to unprecedented levels of voter apathy and general low voter turnout. So, we encourage the person reading this to stop now and take a few minutes to do the pre-voter registration exercise on the Electoral Commission of Zambia website: <https://ovr.elections.org.zm/>

Crossword puzzle No 712



"We often miss opportunity because it's dressed in overalls and looks like work"
- Thomas A. Edison

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| <p>Across</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Soda _____ 3. One sheet of paper 5. Put to sleep 6. Yearn for 8. Open-handed blow 11. I have (contraction) 12. Video cartridge 15. Give away for a price 16. Monster like Shrek 17. Snow remover 18. John or Jane | <p>Down</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Decline to bid 2. Defendant's statement 3. Venus or Mercury 4. Female sheep 7. Plucked instrument 9. Cherish 10. Sofa cushion 13. Mimicked 14. Extreme side 15. Wee drink |
|---|--|

Crossword puzzle No 711



Readers' Feedback

MDC's promise of shaking other parties

Editor,

"So he formed his political party on the premise of shaking other parties Lol, one would have thought he formed it to offer an alternative from the prevailing ailing state of affairs. Alas its merely to shake other political parties". - Charles Chilando

At least I can see "truthfulness" in his statement. Them is not to form government but shake other parties which normal considering levels poverty. People will be flocking to him in order to milk him like a cow. Kabili ema politics yamu Zambia". - Clifford Munsongo

"We hope it won't be an opposition party opposing the opposition. We are seriously amazed and not amused, by political parties who, because of love of money, choose to side with the ruling party on everything, including cadre violence". - Mubanga John

"Good luck! They all come and disappear leaving only UPND". - Diana Kaumba

"Are your objectives to shake other parties or to be an alternative to the ruling government?" - Steven Bili Mudenda

"Let us just continue with the party we know some of these others are here just to shake others..." - Patrick Matongo Siwanga

ND! OPINION: The tenacity, resilience, courage and patience of Hakainde Hichilema

Editor,

"Thank you News Diggers for recognising the gentleman, what this man has done for this country as an opposition leader is invaluable. We take it lightly, but when you imagine 'accurately' this PF government under Mr Lungu without HH and UPND, that's the day you will start to respect the man". - Lukonde Chama

"You are spot on on this one Diggers. This is what makes HH a leader that is admired by neighbouring countries, who would say they would bite off the arm of Zambia to have HH in exchange for 3 of their mundane leaders. But, like we say in Shona, Zambia suffers from Shavi rehurombe (suffers from a spirit of poverty) hence this no sense of direction and leadership". - Mary Taguma Bilsborough

"Of course HH has done a tremendous job with UPND in keeping it together and turning it into the biggest opposition party, if Sakwiba Sikota had won the UPND presidency they would be no UPND by now and Zambia would have gone back to a one state party". - Mutinta Mulonda

"This man has really endured great tides, but look at that one in the state house, just a little mockery on social media makes him to go to China and bring the whole police armoury to threaten poor unarmed Zambians who have never even held a gun before". - McGregor Sitali On Politics

"It is not common to hear such Words being said about a living person's attributes and achievements especially about someone who is not in the Office of Republican President. We normally hear them said at grave sides. We still have an opportunity as Zambians to benefit from the attributes of this man during our 2021 elections by casting our ballot for the right candidate. Let us not choose our leaders or promote people to positions of responsibility by looking at which place they come from or which tribe they belong to. We have already lost too much by pursuing this kind of route. Time to Change is 2021". - Christopher Kalima

How P.F views development...



Mucheleka's nolle in aggravated robbery case

Editor,

"Jay Jay Banda butchered the policemen at the biggest police station in the country, the central police, he was charged with aggravated assault, given instant bail and later a nolle was entered, Mucheleka and group were demolishing PF by campaigning hard, they were not seen with a gun anywhere the only crime they committed was campaigning. They were slapped with aggravated robbery charge. This is what PF has done to our democracy". - Mundia

Bwalya

"The politics of vindictiveness being practiced today will come back to haunt the perpetrators who abuse their power. Very soon it'll come to pass". - Kelvin Maximoff

"At times the things we do to our perceived enemies just builds their strong character...simply because God is not foolish or man that he should be lied to.

Let's practice politics with love because God is love himself... we cannot continue calling our nation a Christian nation when it's full of people who are hurting and can stop at nothing but inflict pain on others, then after that ati let us pray. Before we change this government change must be seen in all our leaders otherwise it will be a nation of continuous revenge. I wish you well Hon. Mucheleka and just hold on in there and forgive them as God shall do the rest for you". - Emelda Litana

EDITOR'S NOTE:

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'Stakeholders should push for reform at ECZ'

Editor,

"ECZ, like other gafulumende institutions is a classic textbook failure of the system, not individuals. No matter the CV of the individual you put there, as long as we maintain a system where head of ECZ is appointed by the head of state, the appointee will unfailingly side with the appointer and marginalise the people's interest whenever given the option. The head of ECZ, the IG, etc, should be selected on merit and

swear allegiance to the people of Zambia in parliament, not swearing to the one temporarily in state house. Change the bulaly system". - Daniel Maswahu

"As long as ECZ is attached to the government of the day, nothing good will come out. Some institutions were suppose to be independent may be that's when they can perform their duties diligently". - Kondwelani

Steyn Mugwede

"Very true.. Stakeholders push for reform at ECZ". - Kool Int

"Fire Chulu now". - Fisher Moole

"They are busy abrogating the electoral act which they swore to defend, anyway they're under a failed government where THE constitution no longer matters but ego to continue destroying economy and democracy". - Pious Emmanuel Sungah

Two Catholic priests have gone on trial in the Vatican, marking the first time the city state has prosecuted a case of alleged sexual abuse.

Gabriele Martinelli, 28, is accused of sexually assaulting an altar boy between 2007 and 2012.

Enrico Radice, 72, is charged with covering up the alleged assault while he was rector of the theological school where it is claimed the abuse happened.

Neither man has submitted a plea or commented on the case.

While scores of priests have faced abuse charges around the world, the Vatican has never held a trial concerning allegations of sexual abuse within its own walls.

The trial, which began with a short hearing on Wednesday, is symbolic as the Vatican is home to the spiritual leadership of the Roman Catholic Church.

What are the allegations?

Two Priests accused in Vatican's first sex abuse trial

Mr Martinelli is accused of sexually assaulting a boy at the Pius X Seminary in the Vatican, which houses altar boys who serve Mass in St Peter's Basilica.

He attended the seminary himself and later became a priest, and prosecutors claim Mr Radice did not block his ordination despite knowing about the allegations.

On Wednesday, during an eight minute hearing in a small courtroom, the charges against both men were read aloud.

Mr Martinelli was accused of forcing a boy, who cannot

be named for legal reasons, to undergo "carnal acts" over a period of several years. The abuse is alleged to have started when the child was 13-years-old.

Mr Radice, meanwhile, was accused of covering up the alleged assault and trying to divert official investigations.

Neither man spoke during the hearing and the trial has been adjourned for two weeks.

Pope Francis called for "decisive action" when he was elected in 2013, but critics say he has not done enough to hold to account bishops who allegedly covered up sexual abuse.

In August 2018, he wrote to all Roman Catholics condemning clerical sex abuse and demanded an end to cover ups.

And last year, he made it mandatory for Roman Catholic clergy to report cases of clerical sexual abuse and cover-ups to the Church. *BBC*

Kambwili gets 12 months, as Nevers wonders why Simusamba is still working



Police take Chishimba Kambwili into custody shortly after receiving a 12 month jail sentence at Lusaka Magistrates Court yesterday - Picture by Tenson Mkhala

From P6

He found Kambwili guilty of forgery and uttering a false document but acquitted him of giving false information to a public officer.

Earlier, magistrate Simusamba said it became clear that Kambwili never wanted to see the proceedings come to a logical conclusion as the said proceedings were characterised by numerous applications calculated to delay progression of the case.

He added that it was clear that Kambwili never wanted to see the judgement day come to pass.

Magistrate Simusamba said by copy of the judgment, the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) would have an opportunity to see for themselves the conduct of some of its members (advocates).

In mitigation, Kambwili through one of his defence lawyers Musa Mwenye, State Counsel, pleaded for maximum lenience as he was a family man with a huge extended family as per Zambian culture.

Mwenye said Kambwili was a well known diabetic and hypertensive patient.

He added that Kambwili was also the president of a political party who had served the country in various capacities and continues to do so by providing checks and balances.

But passing his sentence,

magistrate Simusamba said Kambwili deserved a punitive sentence to serve as a warning to those who thought they could disrespect the court.

He said he had considered that Kambwili was a first offender but added that he had also considered the convict's conduct during trial, which he said was not honourable.

Magistrate Simusamba said he had tried many high profile people, including Nevers Mumba but that none of them conducted themselves like Kambwili.

He therefore sentenced Kambwili to 12 months with hard labour in the charge of forgery and another 12 months in the charge of uttering a false document, which sentences would run concurrently.

After the sentence was passed, Kambwili looked at magistrate Simusamba and thanked him but the magistrate told him: "thank yourself".

And as the magistrate was about to rise, Mwenye said the defence wanted to apply for bail, pending appeal but magistrate Simusamba said that was unprecedented as he had just finished reading the judgment.

He set next week, Tuesday for bail hearing.

MMD leader Nevers Mumba, UPND deputy secretary general Getrude Imenda, former Republican President Rupiah Banda's son

Andrew Banda, Kambwili's relatives and NDC officials led by their secretary general Bridget Akatanga were at court to offer solidarity.

And speaking after the judgement was passed, the MMD leader hoped that there would be no hindrances to Kambwili getting bail, pending appeal.

He added that he was surprised that magistrate Simusamba was still practicing after the Judicial Complaints Commission (JCC) recommendation that the magistrate be removed from the judiciary following complaints against him.

"I had received a letter from the Judicial [Complaints] Commission in which it was recommended that magistrate Simusamba will be retired based on some of the concerns that we raised especially about my case and I am a little bit surprised that he is still practicing. We are going to wait for the lawyers to lodge in their application for bail and we pray that there will be no hindrances to him getting the bail. It is his constitutional right to get his bail and we are waiting. Because when I was arrested and sent to jail, the judge (magistrate) ran away to Ndola and I couldn't get bail for 12 to 13 days. I hope that he has changed and he is going to give justice to our brother," Mumba said.

After Kambwili was whisked away to prison in the Kasalanga (prison ferry truck), NDC vice-president Joseph Akafumba said: "this has been a PF persecution to try and put Kambwili where they wanted him to be."

UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema on a Facebook posting urged Kambwili to remain strong.

"Our thoughts are with our brother, Chishimba Kambwili. Remain strong as this is a passing phase. We encourage our citizens to be fully supportive of each other. There will be lots of turbulence phases during this period of reclaiming our freedoms," he said.

Meanwhile, DPP leader Harry Kalaba said Kambwili's conviction marked yet another sad development for the country.

"These are the constant battles we keep fighting in our country but eventually it shall be well," he said in a Facebook posting.

YouTube bans misleading Covid-19 vaccine videos

YOUTUBE has pledged to delete misleading claims about coronavirus vaccines as part of a fresh effort to tackle Covid-19 misinformation.

It said any videos that contradict expert consensus from local health authorities, such as the NHS or World Health Organization, will be removed.

It follows an announcement by Facebook that it would ban ads that discourage people from getting vaccinated.

However, that restriction will not apply to unpaid posts or comments.

YouTube had already banned "medically unsubstantiated" claims relating to coronavirus on its platform.

But it is now explicitly expanding the policy to include content relating to vaccines.

'Imminent vaccine'

"A Covid-19 vaccine may be imminent, therefore we're ensuring we have the right policies in place to be able to remove [related] misinformation," the Google-owned service said in a statement.

It said it would remove any suggestions that the vaccine would:

kill people
cause infertility

involve microchips being implanted in people who receive the treatment

YouTube said it had already removed 200,000 dangerous or misleading videos about the virus since February.

False claims

Facebook's new policy is designed to stop it facing accusations of profiting from the spread of anti-vaccination messages.

The social network had previously allowed ads to express opposition to vaccines if they did not contain false claims.

It said the new rules would be enforced "over the next few days", but some ads would still run in the meantime.

It added that it was launching a campaign to provide users information about the flu vaccine, including where to get flu shots in the US.

"Our goal is to help messages about the safety and efficacy of vaccines reach a broad group of people, while prohibiting ads with misinformation that could harm public health efforts," the company blogged.

Anti-vaccination groups will still be allowed on its platform.

Unpaid posts or comments that discourage people from getting a vaccination are also still permitted.

Earlier in the year, Facebook's public policy manager Jason Hirsch told Reuters the company believed users should be able to express personal anti-vaccine views. He said that more aggressive censorship could push people hesitant about vaccines towards the anti-vaccine camp.

The subsequent change is one of many that have recently been made to its free speech principles.

On Monday, Facebook banned posts denying the Holocaust, following years of pressure.

And last week it also banned content related to the QAnon conspiracy theory ahead of the US election.

Govt releases K20m to clear agro dealers' debt

By Natasha Sakala

AGRICULTURE Minister Michael Katambo says K20 million has been released for the dismantling of debt owed to agro dealers.

And Katambo has refuted reports that his ministry is in the process of formulating a Statutory Instrument that will see the formation of a farmers' association to regulate the industry.

In an interview, Katambo said the government was resolved to clear arrears owed to agro dealers to reduce the debt stock.

"The ministry of Finance is dismantling these arrears. Last week, K20 million was released towards whatever debt that we owed, so government is very committed, we are engaging the Treasury all the time. We will dismantle, it was in billions now it's coming into fewer figures, which means we are committed to dismantling those arrears," Katambo said.

And the minister said he was not

aware of any SI that the ZNFU was referring to.

According to the Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU) media and public relations manager Calvin Kaleyi, the Minister and his permanent secretary had been cited as having blessed the formation of a new farmers' organization and having okayed the drafting of a Statutory Instrument (SI) to regulate the industry.

"We challenge the Minister of Agriculture and his Permanent Secretary to come clean over this matter as remaining quiet may send a wrong signal to the industry over the position regarding a farmer organization propagating theories of an SI to regulate the agriculture industry in Zambia. It is a well-known fact that membership to any farmer organization is voluntary. Therefore, the Union totally rejects any overtures to formulate an SI to regulate agriculture as an industry as membership is purely voluntary and the

Union will not cooperate with such. The Union also urges farmers and industry players to be wary of unknown entities attempting to snuff industry growth through veiled propositions," stated Kaleyi.

However, Katambo said he was not aware of any such plans and urged the union to be factual in its allegations.

"Those are lies. I am the minister who is supposed to sign the SI so I am not aware of those things that you are talking about [regarding] the minister signing an SI, I am not aware. You are talking to the rightful minister here, I am not aware of those things, the unions that are being formed and whatever allegation the Zambia National Farmers Union are pushing forward," Katambo said. "Let the Zambia National Farmers Union talk to those who formed those [unions], they are the bigger union representing the farmers in this country so they should engage those smaller entities or bigger entities, according to

them, who are trying to form unions or anything. It's not up to me to say which union has been formed, I have not signed an SI and that issue has not been brought to my attention. All we hear is social media stories. So let the Zambia National Farmers Union substantiate the facts that they have themselves. Let them approach the group of whoever has formed that association."

He said the government always operates in a transparent way and would, therefore, not push for the formation of another farmers' union without engaging the ZNFU.

"Does government plan in the back door, does government plan underground? Government planning is transparent and government operations are stakeholder engagement. So, where did we engage stakeholders for us to come up with an SI? These are not small instruments that have to be signed where government is concerned; people need to realise that," said Katambo.

Serie A awards Juventus 3-0 win after Napoli decline to travel for match in Turin

SERIE A announced that Juventus have been awarded a 3-0 win over Napoli after the visitors did not travel to Turin for a scheduled match on October 4.

In addition, Napoli have been punished with a one-point deduction for failing to turn up for the game at Allianz Stadium.

Napoli were blocked from travelling to the match by local health authorities after two players, Piotr Zielinski and Eljif Elmas, tested positive for Covid-19 along with a member of staff at the club.

Though Napoli did not travel, Juventus did turn up to the game, which was officially cancelled 45 minutes after kick-off by the referee.

Gennaro Gattuso's side had hoped that the match would be rescheduled, but a judge from Serie A has ruled that "force majeure", the legal term for an extraordinary event or circumstance beyond any party's control, did not exist in this case.

"In the opinion of this sports judge, the case of force majeure is not proven," a statement read.

The judge would go on

to indicate that Napoli's impediment from travelling to Turin was evident only on the day of the match, but that the club had already decided in the days leading up to the game that they would not be heading to Turin.

Napoli have indicated that they will appeal to the Court of Arbitration for Sport and then to CONI, the highest Italian sports authority.

After the game was postponed, Juve president Andrea Agnelli said that he believed his side should be awarded the win.

"Napoli president [Aurelio] De Laurentiis sent me a message and I replied that [we], as always, abide by the rules," Agnelli said.

"He wanted to postpone the match, but we have regulations that tell us how to proceed. Every industry has its rules and we need to respect them. I don't think the ASL [local health authority] of Naples can intervene if the FIGC protocol, which refers back to the government's circular, is not observed at some point. If the protocol changes, we will once again abide by it." **GOAL**



Wenger reveals denying Arsenal return for Van Persie after Man Utd move

ARSENE Wenger has revealed that Robin van Persie wanted to return to Arsenal in 2015 but the manager

turned down the chance to bring the Dutchman back to north London.

Van Persie became one of the Premier League's top players under Wenger at Arsenal, scoring 132 goals in 278 games after joining from Feyenoord in 2004.

As the Dutch star's contract wound down in 2012 he announced that he would not be signing a new deal with the Gunners, causing plenty of dismay among the club's fans.

To make matters worse, Van Persie would be sold to Arsenal's rivals Manchester United later that year, where he would go on to win the Premier League in his first season under Sir Alex Ferguson.

Wenger detailed the process that led to the striker's departure in an

excerpt from his new book, "Arsene Wenger: My Life in Red and White".

"In 2012, he announced his intention not to extend his contract," Wenger said. "All the big clubs were courting him. I sold him to Manchester United.

"The supporters were angry with me for this but we could not match the offer. I managed to negotiate his departure for £24 million, which was a huge amount at the time for a player with a year left on his contract. I had only the interest of the club in mind.

"My relationship with Alex Ferguson and Manchester United had improved by then, but every transfer is a polite game of poker where you attempt to give not anything away.

"Van Persie had a

fantastic first six months at Old Trafford: he put the team on track for the Premiership title and made it even more difficult for us."

After three seasons at Man Utd, Van Persie was on the fringe of the team and was looking for a way out. He phoned his old manager in the hope of securing a reunion, but Wenger told the striker he was unable to sanction a return.

"After three years of the four that he signed for, he was injured and Ferguson (note: it was actually Louis van Gaal) sold him to the Turkish club Fenerbahce," Wenger continued.

"He called me because he wanted to come back, but it was impossible: he was at the end of his career and we were investing in young players."

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KUNDANANJI WINS GOLDEN BOOT AWARD

RACHEAL Kundanaji has clinched the top scorer gong and helped BIIK Kazygurt to retain the Kazakhstan Women's Premier League title.

Following Monday's 4-1 triumph over Koksetao, BIIK clinched a record 14th Kazakhstan crown and eighth in a row, with the Zambia international playing a crucial role in their final-day victory.

Before the encounter, the Zambian star had netted eight goals in four

...as she helps BIIK Kazygurt retain Kazakhstan Women's League title

outings for the Kazakhstan giants but placed second on the scorers' chart, one short of the league's leading scorer.

The 20-year-old striker scored twice along with

efforts from Yekaterina Babshuk and Gulnara Gabelia which ensured Kaloyan Petkov's side wrapped up the 2020 season on a high.

The triumph over

Koksetao guaranteed their eighth win in eight league outings and confirmed their automatic qualification to the Round of 32 of the 2020-21 Uefa Women's Champions League.

BIIK will gear up for their Champions League Round of 32 draw on October 20 as they aim to surpass their Round of 16 feat in their last outing after a 7-0 aggregate loss to

Bayern Munich.

On her part, Kundanaji's brace on the final day helped her to edge leading scorer and teammate Gabelia, on superior assists to clinch the coveted prize.

Her exploits this term also saw her surpass her debut season's feat when she managed only four goals and nine assists in 11 outings.

She also becomes the second Zambian female to clinch a golden boot in 2020 season after compatriot Barbra Banda won the gong, with 18 goals from 13 outings, for Shanghai Shengli in China.

Both Zambian stars are likely to be on parade when the Southern Africa nation take on Chile in a build-up to their Tokyo 2021 outing. **GOAL**



I have nothing against Chongo, Chama and Chirwa - Micho

By Ngosa Chalwe

CHIPOLOPOLO coach Milutin 'Micho' Sredojevic says he has not closed the door on players that he has previously dropped from the national team for various reasons.

Last week, Micho dropped skipper Kabaso Chongo for what he termed as technical reasons after barring midfielder Clatous Chama and striker Obrey Chirwa for missing flights.

Speaking during a press briefing, Wednesday, the Serbian also said Zambia should not relax after a relatively successful training period where they won two matches and lost during the international break.

"There are so many critical aspects to look at and Chipolopolo at present is far from what it is supposed to be and we shall be critical because we want bigger physical output from the players. With the availability of GPS, we want much more from the point of defending and sharper upfront," Micho said.

Meanwhile, the coach said he had nothing against Chongo.

"What happened to the captain of the national team, Kabaso Chongo, was because of technical reasons, it has nothing to do with discipline, and he is coming from a very organized club. Zambia, in two matches

of qualifiers and against Kenya, conceded nine goals in three matches and the chemistry in central defense did not work so I wanted to try a new chemistry in central defence and overall with the team and it worked positively," Micho said.

He said Chongo was a top class player who deserved to be respected for the positive contribution to the Zambian game and for being an ambassador, representing Zambia as one of the best defenders in Congo.

Micho said he would not close the door for any player, including the Tanzanian duo of Chama and Chirwa who were dropped earlier.