

News Diggers!

Ear to the ground

No 3

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P3 Lawyers to vote Kasonde in/out of LAZ on April 29

P2 Thieves break into Chishimba's house

P5 Intermarket Bank probe exposes BoZ negligence



By Mukosha Funga

Police have charged Hakainde Hichilema with treason on grounds that the opposition UPND leader did not give way to President Edgar Lungu's motorcade in Mongu. And Police destroyed property at HH's house as they hunted him down last night. According to UPND lawyer Jack Mwimbu police have not yet officially charged

HH IN FOR TREASON

...as Lungu vents anger at UPND

HH but had detained him on treason charges before recording a warn and caution statement from him.

...continues on P3



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President Lungu's motorcades overtakes HH's entourage on Limulunga Road in Mongu during Kuomboka Ceremony

Other motorists didn't stop for Lungu – GBM

By Mukosha Funga | vice-president Geoffrey | that there was a traffic jam | on Sunday and it was not
In this Audio, UPND | Bwalya Mwamba explains | on the road to Limulunga | only UPND vehicles which

By Mukosha Funga

United Progressive Party president Saviour Chishimba says thieves have broken into his house and stolen two laptops and some documents.

But Chishimba, who is a trending whistleblower in Zambia, says evidence against corruption at the Zambia Revenue Authority remains intact, adding that he will go into hiding to prevent state agents from killing him.

On October 22, 2016, thieves again broke into Chishimba's house and went away with some computers.

He reported the matter to police and an inquiry was opened.

Narrating the latest ordeal, Chishimba said the "state agents" overtook his vehicle and attempted to shoot him along the Ring Road in Lilayi area as he was driving home.

"I was driving along the Ring Road when after Lilayi one of the two vehicles that were following me overtook my car. But after overtaking me, it reduced the speed and so I indicated and

Thieves break into Chishimba's house

started to overtake it, but the car also changed the lane to stop me from overtaking," Chishimba narrated.

"In my attempt to abort the overtaking, I tried to get back onto the lane when suddenly the Nissan Hardbody which was following behind increased the speed to block me. I applied the brakes, then I saw one of the men in suits in the Nissan Hardbody with a pistol which he held with both hands in a position of aiming to shoot"

He said another motorist who was approaching from behind disturbed the operatives who then sped-off, giving him an opportunity to divert.

"Thankfully, upon noticing another vehicle, which was seen coming from behind, the two vehicles sped off," Chishimba narrated, adding that he later discovered that his house was broken into again.

He said he was an experienced politician and could not keep

evidence" against government institutions in his house or office.

"Fellow comrades in the fight for justice and members of the international community; I have had to go into hiding after escaping a dragnet of armed men in suits. I had received information earlier, but I ignored it," Chishimba said.

"The people of Zambia are suffering because of corruption and God demands justice for all. Why can't state resources be deployed to serve the people instead of pursuing an innocent citizen? Demanding K100 billion (US\$10 billion) from a political party?"

He said the manner in which the thieves broke into his house left no doubt that they were after destroying the evidence he had.

"We have stated before that Zambia belongs to all Zambians and we must all live securely together in dignity, unity and peace. If it is the evidence you want to destroy, make no mistake, it is secure in a place you cannot enter. We were not born yesterday to keep critical documents in our houses or offices," Chishimba said.

"The two laptops and a few documents that you stole, after an illegal entry into my house, are the very last ever!" I am now wiser and smarter."

Chishimba says he has gone into hiding to safeguard evidence against ZRA

He called for prayers from justice-seeking Zambians.

"I urge you all to intensify prayer and fasting for me. God will surely strike all who seek the blood of the innocent. It is not a crime to demand for transparency and accountability from our leaders," said Chishimba.

"One sure thing is that I shall not die, but live to declare the works of the LORD in Zambia and in as many nations as the Lord God of Heaven has given me. I am made for signs and wonders from the Lord!"

did not stop when sirens went off.

GBM also says his party is ready to dialogue with President Edgar Lungu to find solutions to the people's suffering.

GBM told journalists in Kitwe after appearing for a court case today that after realizing that Hakainde Hichilema's entourage was also in the long queue of cars, police tried to bump off his car.

He insists that his party was not aware that President Lungu was in that entourage because they saw him getting on the Nalikwanda.

Before, he could finish responding to queries, some police officers interrupted and asked him to move away from the court premises but he insisted on finishing the interview.

ZEMA approves projects worth \$440,000

By Charles Mafa

The Zambia Environmental Management Agency (ZEMA) has approved 67 Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs) for the month of March 2017 worth over \$440 thousand.

The approved projects are in energy, tourism, urban development, agriculture and forestry, prospecting and mining

as well as manufacturing and processing sectors.

"Out of the 83 projects considered, 67 projects were approved, 12 were deferred, two project documents were upgraded from Environmental Project Brief to Environmental Impact Statement and two projects were rejected," said ZEMA in a statement.

ZEMA said deferred projects were

pending additional information from the developers and they were mainly from energy and urban development sectors.

"The Agency approved projects with an estimated investment of USD440,129,973. The total estimated investment for projects considered by ZEMA between January and March, 2017 is over USD1,205,153,000," said ZEMA.

By Mukosha Funga

Wynter Kabimba says it is wrong and against diplomatic convention practice for the Chinese Ambassador's wife to donate K200,000 to First Lady Esther Lungu. In a letter addressed to Ambassador Yang Youming today, Kabimba described the donation as improper, unethical and corrupt. "On Tuesday 04th April, 2017, during the ZNBC main news at 19:00 hours, I saw a clip in which your spouse was presenting a cheque in excess of K200,000 as a donation to the First Lady, Mrs Esther Lungu's foundation on behalf of the embassy. The said donation, according to your spouse was the first of the annual installments to the foundation. Whereas Zambian laws do not prohibit such donations as per se, a donation coming from a foreign embassy and/or government to a personal charity led by a First Lady is not only wrong, improper and unethical, but wholly outside the purview of the normal diplomatic conversions and practices," Kabimba wrote.

Kabimba questions 200,000 Kwacha Chinese donation to Esther Lungu

He also wondered what criteria was used to pick First Lady Esther's foundation as the recipient. "Our position as the Rainbow Party is that the act undertaken by the embassy through your wife is tantamount

to corruption. As you are very well aware, Mrs Lungu is and has been a principal and active campaigner of the Patriotic Front, a role which has a thin line with her purported foundation. In this vain, we view the donation

as Rainbow Party as nothing but the financing of PF as a political party by your government through this foundation which is not accountable to any established board of trustees or subject to any rules and regulations,"

wrote Kabimba. "This is, therefore, political interference by your government in the domestic affairs of another sovereign state. In this regard, we demand that you furnish us with the criteria you used to

make the donation in question to Mrs Lungu's foundation out of the many existing old charities in the country. We also demand that the donation be withdrawn immediately. Yours faithfully, Wynter Kabimba."

Lawyers to vote Kasonde in/out of LAZ on April 29

By Joseph Mwenda

Five lawyers led by Kelvin Bwalya Fube (KBF) have petitioned the Law Association of Zambia to call for an extra-ordinary general meeting at which they wish to propose a vote of no confidence in the entire 16-member LAZ Council. And LAZ, through its honorary secretary Sashi Nchito Kateka has set Saturday April 29, 2017 as date for the proposed meeting to allow debate for the removal of the current executive. According to petitioners: KBF, Tutwa Ngulube, Robson

Malipenga, Terrence Mwape Chabu and Kondwani Musukwa, the LAZ Council has failed to discharge its mandate. "We the undersigned members of the Law Association of Zambia do hereby request your Council to convene an extra-ordinary general meeting, pursuant to section 8 (3) of the Law Association of Zambia (general rules) 1996. The objective of the extra ordinary general meeting shall be to debate and adopt a motion of no confidence against the current Council and office bearers of LAZ,"

the petition read. The petitioners went ahead to list the grounds under which they sought to vote out the Linda Kasonde-led LAZ executive. "1. The Council acted outside the mandate of LAZ when it appointed Mr Musa Mwenye SC to Act on behalf of Mr Nchima Nchito SC in a matter where Mr Nchima Nchito SC has been charged with impersonation; and 2. The Council has failed to discharge its mandate to (a) advance the rule of law: (i) in that the Council has decided to join the High Court of Zambia case involving

the liquidation of The Post Newspapers Ltd as amicus curiae and has proceeded to question the integrity of the court without due regard to procedure; and (ii) on account of the Councils selective approach to condemning members of the public who seek to undermine the courts and bring the judiciary and administration of justice in Zambia into contempt and ridicule; (b) advance the reform of the law by initially refusing to participate in activities to support the referendum on the Bill of Rights; (c) provide a means by which all lawyers can participate fully and effectively in the development of society and its institutions because of the lack of or inadequate consultation of the general membership in taking unprecedented decisions which actions has fostered divisions in LAZ," read the petition signed on March 31, 2017. "3. The acts and omissions as set out above have been detrimental to LAZ and its standing in society. We the undersigned request that the extra-ordinary general meeting precedes the Annual General Meeting. We further request that pursuant to section 8 (16) of the Law Association of Zambia (general rules) 1996, the motion be voted upon by way of poll." In response to the petitioner's proposal, LAZ has allowed the extra ordinary general

meeting to be held at Radisson Blu next Saturday. "It is hereby given that an extra ordinary general meeting of the members of the Law Association of Zambia will be held on Saturday, 29th April 2017 at Radisson Blu Hotel in the ball room, Lusaka at 08:00 hours... To consider a motion of no confidence in the entire LAZ Council as requested by Mr Terrence Mwape Chabu, Mr Kondwani Musukwa, Mr Kelvin Fube Bwalya, Mr Robson Malipenga and Honourable Tutwa Ngulube," read the notice signed on April 19, 2017. The LAZ executive has come under pressure, mostly from the ruling party, on grounds that it is siding with opposition political parties in its decisions, an accusation which Kasonde has described as unfair. Last month, Kasonde sent an alert to LAZ members to stay away from the secretariat in Lusaka's Rhodes Park area following a raid by weapon-wielding PF cadres. The PF cadres were demanding the dissolution of the Law Association of Zambia which they accuse of taking an anti-government position on various matters. Home Affairs Minister Stephen Kampyongo later told Parliament, on the request of the Speaker, that the protest against LAZ was illegal because the protesters did not have a permit.



Hakainde Hichilema at Woodlands police station after being arrested-picture by Tenson Mkhala

Police charge Hichilema with treason

From front page

Mwiimbu explained that the charge was nonsensical and complained that the police were acting on orders from officials in the ruling party. "The reason behind that charge is that Treason is non bailable. The charge is nonsensical and no sensible lawyer can come up with such a charge. There is no

Treason that was committed along that Limulunga Road on that basis. That is just being nonsensical. And the unfortunate part is that the police are being unprofessional considering that it is the PF who have been proposing that HH must be charged with Treason," said Mwiimbu. Meanwhile, police today

blocked private media journalists from filming HH as he was led into detention in Lilayi. But journalists from Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation, Zambia Daily Mail, Times of Zambia and Daily Nation were allowed to enter Lilayi police camp to film.

Dr Matibini defends decision to punish UPND over boycott

By Elias Banda

SPEAKER of the National Assembly Patrick Matibini has contended that there is nothing irrational about his decision to reprimand 54 UPND members of parliament for boycotting the official opening of Parliament last September.

In a High Court filed affidavit signed by deputy clerk-administrator of the National Assembly Cecilia Nsenduluka Mbewe, the Speaker opposed the application for judicial review saying he is guided by law in making such decisions and that he acted in accordance with the Law.

Mbewe contended that the matter was not fit for investigation because the Speaker or an officer of the

National Assembly had exclusive cognizance and jurisdiction in the exercise of any power vested in them by the Constitution.

The MPs are expected to file their reply on May 3 and hearing would resume on May 12 before judge Susan Wanjelani.

The UPND members of parliament in this case applied for leave to commence judicial review proceedings against Speaker Matibini's decision.



Ireen Mambilima (c) Kenneth Kaunda (r) and his granddaughter Masata Kaunda during the admission to the bar of advocates at Supreme Court
Photo credit: Chanda Mwenya

AG opposes HH's application for Judge Chitabo to recuse himself from petition

By Elias Banda

Attorney General Likando Kalaluka has opposed UPND leader Hakainde Hichilema's

application for Lusaka High Court judge Mwila Chitabo to recuse himself from presiding over his

presidential petition case; describing the application as baseless. In an oral response to the application, Kalaluka noted that the petitioners, HH and Geoffrey Bwalya Mwamba, had not exhibited any grounds upon which the judge could recuse himself from presiding over the matter.

In this case, Hichilema wants the High Court to order that the

Constitutional Court breached his rights when it failed to hear and determine the case in which he petitioned the election of President Edgar Lungu. Before the substantive matter could be heard last month, the opposition leader raised preliminary issues; among them an application for judge Chitabo to recuse himself on grounds that he was biased.

He further submitted that judge Chitabo could not preside over the matter due to a conflict of interest which disqualified him. Hichilema asked that the matter be transferred to another judge or panel of High Court judges.

His lawyers Mulambo Haimbe, Robert Simeza and others are expected to reply to Kalaluka's arguments tomorrow.

UPND's Kalimanshi pleads not guilty to 'disturbing peace', gets K8,000 bail

By Elias Banda

Renowned UPND youth, Innocent Kalimanshi who was arrested during a failed rally in Lusaka's Kanyama compound over a week ago, has been granted K8,000 cash bail.

Kalimanshi appeared before Lusaka resident magistrate Brian Simachela and pleaded not guilty to a charge of conduct likely to cause the breach of peace.

Magistrate Simachela granted the accused K8,000 cash with two working sureties who are expected to pay K5,000 each.

His appearance in court today follows a High Court order of Habeas Corpus that he asked for after suing the state for unlawful detention.

The Lusaka High Court on Monday

granted an order compelling the state to take Kalimanshi to court so that he could be tried.

The accused was

initially charged with proposing violence but later the charge was changed to conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace.

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Zantel

Intermarket probe exposes BoZ negligence



BANK OF ZAMBIA

By Charles Mafa

Ministry of Finance Director of Economic Management Ireen Musonda Habasimbi says the ministry has not yet received an update from the Bank of Zambia on when Intermarket Bank will reopen to the public. On February 28 this year, Finance Minister Felix Mutati informed Parliament that the bank would reopen within 30 days, which elapsed in March. The minister further revealed that new shareholders had been found who would take up major stake and recapitalize the staggering financial institution. "Trade capital has been injected in the bank to ensure the bank is no longer insolvent. As we speak, the bank is in surplus in terms of cash," Mutati assured Parliament. To date, the doors of Intermarket Bank have remained closed to the public and people's savings are locked up while loans have been going unserved since November last year when the Central Bank announced the takeover. An investigation has revealed that the Bank of Zambia was careless in the handling of the Intermarket Bank – leading to its downfall. This is made clear when you analyse what happened to Intermarket Bank. Under the Zambian law, the minimum capital requirement for local and international banks is

K104 million and K520 million respectively. That means, in order for a local bank to operate in Zambia it needs to have K104 million liquid cash as operating capital, while a foreign registered bank requires K520 million. A competitor Analysis complied by Zambia Business Times. Now, when the central bank moved in to close Intermarket Bank, it was reported that the bank had been in the process of converting from a foreign bank, to a locally owned financial institution – an apparent sign of an already weakened financial position. Indeed, the Bank of Zambia announced that Intermarket Bank was operating below the prescribed minimum requirement for a local bank – meaning the bank was insolvent or cash strapped. Before Mutati declared Intermarket Bank solvent again in Parliament last February, the Central Bank told News Diggers! that the financial institution had been operating with a baggage of unpaid loans. Bank of Zambia Deputy Director of Bank Supervision Raphael Kasonde said "Intermarket was operating with a baggage of unpaid loans over many years. Some of the loans at Intermarket are not a new problem, they are a legacy issue," he said. Sinkonde did not respond to specific questions about why the Central

Bank did not intervene quickly enough, and even his response was after a string of appointment deferments by his senior and several references to other Central Bank offices. Clearly, the Bank of Zambia realised that Intermarket Bank was not properly supervised, but did not want to take the blame for its downfall. This prompted PF Kabwe member of parliament Tutwa Ngulube to ask Mutati on the floor of the House to "confirm or deny if the Central Bank was in some way negligent in the manner they monitored this bank". In response, Mutati said: "Mr. Speaker, the issue of negligence, whether criminal or otherwise will be dealt within the context of the Banking and Financial Services Act." News Diggers! then turned to the Bankers Association of Zambia (BAZ) where Chief Executive Officer Leonard Mwanza said, under the circumstances, the Central Bank did what it could, to protect the integrity of the banking sector. "This action taken by the Bank of Zambia is aimed at protecting the integrity of the country's payments systems and the stability of the Banking sector," he said. Mwanza agreed with the News Diggers! observation that the Central Bank delayed to act and save the collapse of Intermarket Bank, but

contended that it was "a positive delay". "In fact, that was a positive delay. A positive delay towards making sure that the institution was given sufficient time to reorganise itself, sufficient time to find new shareholders as the case was," said Mwanza. A News Diggers! research has gathered that the most recent change to the Intermarket Bank shareholding structure is an addition of an American investor, William Charles Morro. Records at the Patents and Companies Registration Agency (PACRA) show that Intermarket Bank was previously owned by four companies – Active Role, Afriland First Group SA, MMK Corporate Services Limited and Sabre Capital Worldwide Zambia Limited. The three – Gilbert Armenta (US national), Michael Mahachi, (Zimbabwean) and Michael Chanda – a Zambian are registered as directors, while Gibson Muringai, Nicholas Mugwagwa Vingirai and Freeman Terence Kembo (Zimbabweans), (Icelander) and William Morro, an American businessman are registered as shareholders/members. Under Sabre Capital's investment in 2008, Intermarket Bank embarked on an expansion programme to open more branches and roll out more products, with optimism that a US\$10 million injection would help strengthen the

bank's operating capital as well as human resource capacity. In March 2010, Afriland First Bank, based in Yaoundé, Cameroon acquired 80 per cent shareholding in Intermarket Bank Zambia, for an undisclosed sum of money. UK based – Sabre Capital Worldwide, the previous majority shareholder retained 20 per cent ownership. Afriland also took 80 per cent shareholding in Intermarket Securities, which was 100 per cent owned by Intermarket Banking Corporation. There was inconsistency in the shareholding structure of Intermarket Bank as well as its human resource, including management. This led to instability of the bank's operations with reports of money being lost through fraudulent transactions. Former Chief Financial Officer Isaac Kandila wasn't willing to share his experience at Intermarket Bank and the current CEO, Jon Gumundsson was also unresponsive. Since the Bank of Zambia said Intermarket Bank had been staggering with a baggage of unpaid loans, explanations could not only be demanded from the above names. Previous CEOs, Richard Phiri, Sebrendu Chattej, Ackim Sinkala and Robert Nkousi were not available to make any comments on the closure of the bank. But Sherry Thole who was CEO between 2005 and 2007, was gracious enough to confirm that

the bank issued loans to people and businesses that were overlooked by other banks. Although she was disgusted by the repeated pestering from News Diggers! for a face-to-face interview, Thole disconcertingly explained that no loan was given without following procedure. "I gave Zambians loans at a time when all the banks were not looking at that sector (small and medium enterprises). I did not give loans to politicians," she said in an email. "For these loans to be disbursed there was a credit committee at management and board level so I cannot shoulder that responsibility [of the bank's closure]." Asked to comment on the allegation that she gave loans to influential individuals in order to gain political credit, Thole who was appointed Permanent Secretary immediately after Rupiah Banda won the 2008 election, said she left the bank intact. "Please note that I left the bank in July 2007 and decided to join politics in 2008 when there was a presidential by election, after which I was appointed as Permanent Secretary [in the Ministry of Science, Technology and Vocational Training]. Totally nothing to do with the bank nor patronage." The story of Intermarket Bank is that of finger-pointing and no one is willing to take the blame. Even when Mutati assured the nation that the bank was ready to open business to the public, the Ministry of Finance is not ready to take responsibility of the minister's pronouncement. When contacted, Habasimbi said the ministry relies on information from the Bank of Zambia. "They are the ones in charge," she said. "Once they do their internal work, they get back to us. I'm sure there are a few hitches that they're trying to address, otherwise it will open." Meanwhile, in this video, 84-year-old Yotam Cholota together with other depositors are crying for their money. 46-year-old Marketeer Wedson Fubisha narrates that the bank closed just after he had deposited the money.

There is no doubt that the PF government is insensitive towards right or wrong. Its leaders are wallowing in exaggerated self esteem and very few of them, if any, appreciate the fact that they are superintending over a democratic nation.

Just yesterday, we heard Home Affairs Minister Stephen Kampyongo announcing that anyone who does not recognise Edgar Lungu as duly elected Republican President will face treason charges.

Kampyongo said; "Now, we are not going to play. We need to let the country run, and the people of Zambia to be served. We cannot be hijacked by few little individuals who think by the little money they have lined up in their pockets, they can hijack and undermine the governance of this nation. We are in charge and the President is totally in control."

The minister of Home Affairs sounded very macho when sending threats to the UPND leadership. He added that "Those of you who are closer to them, go and tell them that Kampyongo has said 'this time, it's to go by the law and anyone who breaks it will be dealt with firmly, fairly but decisively'."

If you pay, even very little, attention to what Kampyongo was saying, you realise that he was saying a lot of nothing. Nothing, apart from what he has learnt from the PF school of dictatorship.

According to what he has told the National Assembly of Zambia, the Home Affairs Minister is a certificate holder of a public administration course and also has a higher diploma in

Saviour Chishimba is making more sense than Hichilema

information management system – enough for a national leader by our Zambian standards.

But we can confidently say, therefore, that Kampyongo is not a police officer, he has never been one and he should, in fact, never be allowed to be a law officer, because he doesn't understand the law. His job description as Home Affairs minister has nothing to do with enforcing the law.

How can Minister Kampyongo proudly say that "this time, it's to go by the law?" Is he saying the law takes a break sometimes until he decides to use it?

This is not the first time when Hakainde Hichilema, president of the UPND, and his followers have declared that they do not recognise Edgar Lungu as a DULY ELECTED President of Zambia. In fact, there is more evidence in public domain, of UPND members making this pronouncement than there is evidence against Obvious Mwaliteta who was denied constitutional bail for aggravated robbery.

So where was the law all this time? Why haven't the police arrested HH and GBM? On Saturday, UPND national youth spokesperson Gilbert Liswaniso was on live television saying, "Edgar Lungu is a weak leader, a coward, and he does not

recognise him as duly elected President", police watched the TV programme and were sitting ndwii without taking action. And now that Minister Kampyongo says "Now it's to go by the law" then the Inspector General will wake up to act! No, Mr Kakoma Kanganja, you must be ashamed if you have reduced the police service to an enforcement wing for orders coming out of politicians like Kampyongo who are in pursuit of absolute power.

We know Minister Kampyongo is seeking absolute power because he also said allowing the UPND to hold a rally is promoting anarchy because they may tell people to stop recognizing President Edgar Lungu. He added that the opposition party officials will not be allowed to enjoy their freedom of assembly in Zambia until they "sober up".

"Until they sober up"? Is that what the law says now; sober up before addressing a rally? What is wrong with Minister Kampyongo? With all due respect, if Kampyongo is too lazy to read the Constitution, let him step aside before more lives are lost at the hands of the brutal police.

As for HH and his UPND band, they are a complete let down to half the Zambians who voted for regime change on August 11, 2016.

To start with, the Kanyama rally should have been cancelled for the safety of those people who live in Kanyama compound. We appreciate that political rallies in Lusaka are organised in densely populated, low-income neighbourhoods for obvious reasons, but that does not mean citizens who live in these communities are less important human beings. Subjecting them to this type of torture and danger is inhuman.

Mr Hichilema knew that he was not going to address the Kanyama rally yesterday because of the risk involved, and he was probably still in South Africa at the time, but he did not order the rally to be cancelled. As a result, his supporters went ahead to try their luck. As a result, one citizen was stabbed to death in unclear circumstances, leaving another one nursing serious assault wounds. We all know the drill by now – police will (and they already have) accuse UPND of stabbing the victim while the UPND will counter accuse the police.

Surely, does a life have to be lost every time you want to provide checks and balances to the government? People of Kanyama matter just as much as those who aspire to go into State House. Therefore, we condemn the UPND for giving police impetus to cause the death of Stephen Kalipa.

Of course we are not politicians and we can't claim to know politics better than those in the UPND leadership. But we must say that Mr Hichilema's politics is boring! Much as he is an accomplished businessman, HH doesn't seem to understand that he is just about the most monotonous politician Zambia has ever seen.

When given a rare opportunity

to address his supporters, HH wastes it talking about exactly the same things he said in 2016 when recruiting Miles Sampa and Keith Mukata at Chainama Hotel, both of whom have abandoned him already, by the way. He will talk about PF dictatorship, stolen votes, and the presidential petition. Quite alright, those are issues, but who is listening? Every time Mr Hichilema attempts to hold a rally, more and more people get arrested. Even from yesterday's Kanyama rally, which never even took place, police managed to pounce on two; and these people are going to prison to perish under the PF tyrannical regime, together with over 300 other UPND political prisoners. While Minister Kampyongo is keeping HH outside, he is filling prisons with energetic opposition youths who should be out there campaigning – and HH doesn't even realise that sooner than later, his supporters will get tired of this trend and start boycotting his risky rallies.

What Mr Hichilema is failing to do, is changing his strategy. If HH was listening to advice, he would have toured half the country by now, thanking the grass-root voters and building his support base. To do so, HH does not need to go to the police and mention any political rally. He simply needs to look at his party's constitution and find a clause which empowers him to call for ward or constituency committee elections – even if it meant electing the same people back in their positions. If Mr Hichilema succeeded in officiate at just 30 out of the 56 constituency 'election' events organised by local committees, he would understand if his grass-root supporter approve that he should continue pursuing the presidential petition which he keeps talking about. He

would then realise how many of his supporters believe that any court in the world can call for fresh elections in Zambia on account that the PF rigged the 2016 polls. He would realise how many Zambians want him to move on.

While UPND members are busy getting arrested and HH is preoccupied with repeating himself, there is Saviour Chishimba who is making more sense to listen to. You can choose to ignore the president of the United Progressive Party, but he is causing a tiny storm with his political approach and government institutions are sitting up.

Saviour Chishimba, with all his lack of financial support and political acumen, was the first to break the maize-gate scandal, long before the Malawian government acted. Mr Chishimba had all the evidence supporting his allegations and it was very difficult for those he accused to drag him to court, but the Zambian people did not take him seriously. Just last week, Chishimba returned with a corruption exposé targeted at the Zambia Revenue Authority. We saw ZRA jump to its defence, in a rather panic fashion.

We stand to be corrected, but judging by the sizes of the two political parties and the current support base, we would like to believe that Mr Hichilema has more access to intelligence information than Mr Chishimba. We believe that Mr Hichilema is best positioned to know a lot of what is going wrong in the PF government than the leader of the UPP. But we can't recall when the UPND leader fed the Zambian media, porous as it may be, with incriminating evidence of the rampant corruption and theft in the PF government.

We respect the fact that he is leading the biggest opposition political party, perhaps even bigger than the PF in terms of approval ratings, but he needs to change his political game-plan if he wants to truly be a meaningful alternative-government leader worth his salt.

News Diggers! Ear to the ground

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In Defence of Informal Traders



David Julian Wightman is a Zambian-Canadian journalist and human rights activist. He is also available as a guide to the "Salaula Experience".

I love salaula shopping. Not only is it one of my favourite things to do in Lusaka, but also I have taken people including the reviewer from Lonely Planet travel guides on tours of the Lumumba road area specifically to share what I call the "Salaula Experience".

I firmly believe that the thousands of traders plying their wares on the avenues and side streets of downtown represent not just a crucial economic activity but also a unique tourist attraction unlike anything else in Zambia.

So when I hear council officials or politicians crying about marketeers and threatening

to remove them from the streets, sometimes violently, my instinct is to stand with the traders. And not just because I want a discount on my next shopping spree.

Street traders have been a reality since Frederick Chiluba overturned UNIP's stranglehold on the economy and allowed Zambians to trade more or less wherever they wanted. While this created jobs and increased the supply of trade goods, it also meant that over time a free-for-all mentality developed; the ultimate expression of the "free market", manifested by the countless marketeers that ply their wares throughout Zambia. The fact is, informal sector workers outnumber formal employees by a factor of at least two to one, maybe even three to one. There are likely more than two million traders and other informal workers in Zambia, while fewer than a million formal, tax-paying jobs exist.

One of the most common arguments against street traders is that they don't pay tax, however this is far from the truth. On average, most traders pay at least 10 kwacha every single day to council officials, cadres, or local thugs, but of course none of this "tax" money reaches the government purse.

Neither do informal workers receive benefits such as NAPSA pension schemes or labour union protection. Instead, traders are treated as cash machines by unscrupulous authorities, and as convenient scapegoats by politicians intent on blaming all of society's ills on those who are incapable of defending themselves. It's no wonder that marketeers resort to violence and rioting when officials threaten them with eviction.

Let's face it: There is currently no equitable solution to the issue of informal marketeers, let alone any accurate data on the phenomenon. Street trading is not viewed as a social and economic fact worthy of study and understanding, therefore the official response is blustering and blundering at best, or violent repression at worst.

No lasting solution can be found without first understanding the realities of street trading, recognizing how important marketeers have become to our economy, and sympathizing with marketeers as people who are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

The first thing we must do is stop scapegoating street vendors and other informal workers. Not

only is it unfair and inaccurate to blame marketeers for the ills of society public urination, uncollected garbage, crime, corruption, congestion, etc but it is also an old and dishonest tactic used by the political class to distract the public from their own failings. (Not to mention the fact that scapegoating and victimizing vulnerable people is also deeply un-Christian!) Second, councils need to hold indabas that include traders and marginalized workers, and recognize them as full participants and stakeholders in the economic life of our communities. It is impossible to continue ignoring these people as if somehow they are less valuable citizens who will just go away if we oppress them. Third, more information must be known about the reality of street trading. Google has been used in Africa to map minibus routes, so why can't we map street vending in order to better understand the extent of the phenomenon and suggest possible solutions?

Fourth, we need to rethink approaches to road traffic in cities like Lusaka that are growing out of control. Major streets such as Lumumba need to be reevaluated as far as vehicular, pedestrian, and

trader use, while side streets could be blocked off from vehicles entirely, allowing some streets to be pedestrian only. This may seem radical in a city that is literally falling apart, but some crises need radical solutions.

Fifth, government should rethink tax policy to include those with special circumstances like informal workers. The PAYE structure may work for formal employment, but informal workers should be taxed as well, not as they are now by crooks who pocket the money but by the ZRA who can and should be responsible for collecting such taxes from all working citizens.

And finally, we must allow and encourage informal workers to organize themselves within a formal trade union, not that informal and politically partisan "associations" that exist now. Informal sector workers are arguably the hardest working people in Zambia. These workers toil from dawn till dark, 6 or 7 days a week, in conditions that put to shame the formal, office-going class of "superior" workers.

Not only do they work in conditions of extreme hardship and disrespect, informal

workers are also denied access to the benefits enjoyed by organized labour union members, such as protections, loan assistance, and the right to strike.

Despite making up at least two-thirds of the Zambian labour force, informal workers are not allowed to march in the labour day march past, as only those unionized workers allied to the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions are allowed to do so.

Excluding the majority of Zambian workers from labour protections and rights is simply unjust and unsustainable. Formal sector unions have existed in this country since long before Independence, meanwhile informal workers have never been organized due to their vulnerability.

Yet there exist labour unions such as the International Workers of the World which specifically organize vulnerable workers. Also known as the One Big Union, the IWW is the only union in the United States to organize prison workers (Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee) while in Canada they organized street beggars into the world's first "Panhandlers Union".

In these tough economic times, we need to show solidarity and support for those in our society who are struggling to make a living, rather than disabusing them of their rights as workers and fellow human beings. It's just the right thing to do.



Power Dynamos players dance in victory celebrations

Power stun stubborn Napsa with late win

By Diggers Reporter
Power Dynamos on Sunday denied Napsa Stars any hope of staying top of the 2017 FAZ Super Division table following

a 1-0 home win at Arthur Davies Stadium in Kitwe. Napsa came into the match on a high after taking the early lead of the table following a

3-0 home win over Nchanga Rangers on April 8. Power were seeking their first league win after drawing 3-3 away to Lusaka Dynamos in

Week 1. Power were also winless in all competition this year and ended the drought in their third game in 2017 with that

home victory. Jimmy Ndhlovu broke the deadlock in the 85th minute of a dramatic showdown that was action packed from start

to finish. Meanwhile in Ndola, promoted side's Buildcon and Real Nakonde recorded draws in their respective league games in a doubleheader at Levy Mwanawasa Stadium. Nakonde finished 1-1 away at Forest Rangers thanks to goals from Danny Silavwe and Green Mumba in the 90th and 84th minutes respectively. Buildcon played out to a 0-0 home draw with Kabwe Warriors. Buildcon, Nakonde and Warriors have 2 points each from as many games played while Forest have 1 point after losing 1-0 away to Lumwana Radiants in Week 1.

Outrageous refereeing blunder sees Chinese team play with TWELVE players

The officials failed to spot a player returning to the pitch despite having already been substituted, with the away supporters forced to intervene. A fixture in the second tier of Chinese football was marred by huge controversy as a team fielded a 12th man towards the end of the game. With Beijing Renhe leading against Baoding Rongda and defending a corner in the 89th minute, Rao Weihui hadn't realised he'd been substituted and he subsequently re-entered the field of play. The midfielder had been receiving medical treatment on the touchline, with

Beijing deciding that they would replace him with substitute Han Xuan. He clearly didn't get the message, though, with Rao Weihui coming back on to leave the home side with 12 men and the match officials initially not realising what had happened. Play resumed for around 40 seconds until the blunder was finally spotted, with the away supporters attempting to draw the attention of referee Zhen Wei by chanting "12 men, they had 12 men!" Rao Weihui would eventually depart although Beijing Renhe held out to claim a 1-0 win that will undoubtedly have angered

Baoding Rongda, given the incredible officiating blunder. Neither Zhen Wei nor the

Chinese football association made any official note regarding the incident although reports in China

have suggested that the referee is now in danger of being removed from his duties. - Goal.com

Diggers Rugby coach Njobvu wary of tricky 2017 season

By Diggers Reporter
Diggers Rugby coach Lawrence Njobvu is not happy with his side's start to the 2017 Zambia Rugby Union league season despite Saturday's 15-3 home win over Chibuluma in Kitwe. The narrow result against their neighbours from Kalulushi

saw the 2016 rugby league runners-up sit in mid-table at the end of Week 1. "Tough game. We started well but second half was terrible but we have identified our weakness and areas where we need to work on," Njobvu said. "It was a good win for the start of the season but we need to work extra hard." Njobvu admitted that his side was still short on experience after he successfully moulded a youthful side last season following a mass exodus of players from Diggers due to internal problems at the club in 2015. "We have identified some players who we need in order to beef up our team," Njobvu said. "If we are to challenge for the league, we need strong and mature players. For the time being we will work with what we have." Diggers are 7th in the 14-team league on 4 points, one point behind leaders and defending champions Arrows who lead with a bonus point thanks to their responding 63-3 away win over promoted Mufulira B. Meanwhile, Njobvu has a little time to regroup and plot for their next game due to a bye in Week 2. Diggers return to action on April 22 away in Lusaka to 3rd placed Buffaloes who beat Roan 41-10 away in Luanshya over the weekend.

Fwayo targets CHAN, AfCON debuts

By Diggers Reporter
Power Dynamos striker Fwayo Tembo is very eager to make his senior tournament debut with Chipolopolo. Despite his football career taking him on a seven year journey from Tunisia to Switzerland and Romania, Fwayo's national team CV does not include any AFCON or CHAN final appearance. Fwayo's only shot at fame in a Zambia shirt was at junior level at the 2007 CAF U20 Cup in Congo-Brazzaville

and at the FIFA U20 World Cup in Canada the same year. The striker said he is hoping to work hard to help Zambia qualify for the 2018 CHAN tournament to be hosted by Kenya in January. "I have never won anything at the national team. Now the CHAN is near so I hope I can win something with the national team," Fwayo said. "It is not going to be an easy year with the CHAN, Africa Cup and World Cup qualifiers but we will do our best."

Fwayo is part of Zambia coach Wedson Nyirenda's provisional 2018 CHAN that held a three day training camp in Lusaka that ends on April 12 ahead of the teams' July first round clash against Swaziland. Swaziland will host Zambia in the CHAN first leg qualifiers during the weekend of July 16 while the return leg will be played on July 22. Winner will advance to the final qualifying stage in August to play either South Africa or Botswana.



Power stun stubborn Napsa with late win Page 7

Diggers Rugby coach wary of tricky 2017 season Page 7

BWALYA GETS 3-MATCH BAN

By Diggers Reporter

Nkana are reeling from the news that their key striker Walter Bwalya has been slapped with a three-match ban by FAZ.

The 2016 FAZ Golden Boot winner was suspended by the FAZ disciplinary committee following his conduct in Nkana's 2-0 loss to Zesco United on April 2 in the 2017 Charity Shield final.

His conduct came after his clubmate and captain Donashano Malama was red carded in the 58th

minute by referee Wellington Kaoma for a crude tackle on Zesco defender Ben Adama.

"The Football Association of Zambia (FAZ) has handed Nkana Football Club striker Walter Bwalya a three match ban after being found guilty of inappropriate conduct during the April 2, 2017 'Samuel' Zoom Ndhlovu Charity Shield final featuring Zesco United and Nkana at the Levy Mwanawasa stadium in Ndola," FAZ spokesperson Desmond Katongo said.

Katongo added that Bwalya has also been fined

K2,200.00 and has been told to pay the fine within 14 days of the verdict.

Bwalya's suspension begins this Friday when Nkana visit Nchanga Rangers in a Week 2 league fixture away in Chingola.

He will also miss Nkana's Week 4 showdown at home against Zesco on April 29 in Kitwe.

Meanwhile, Bwalya has already made a promising start to the season scoring two goals from three competitive matches in 2017.

